



SABHA NEWS

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July 2012

EDITORS SPEAK:

We are happy to place before you the 40th edition of our Sabha News. A number of pages in this issue deal with scriptural and philosophical subjects. The fact that our readers have responded only with articles on these subjects makes us wonder whether other topics are not too popular. What we insist is our readers should contribute more articles on topics like cookery, travel and adventure, literature, wit and humorous life experiences, or any other topic in which they are interested. After all Sabha News is a platform for our readers to share their views and interests with other members. The Sabha is not responsible for the views conveyed in these articles which are entirely those of the contributors.

Happy reading

AWARD FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

Prof. U.S. Nayak, Plastic Surgeon was honoured with the "Lifetime Achievement Award" by the International Cleft Palate Foundation by the Minister of Health of Seychelles at the International Conference held in May 2012 at Mahe Seychelles. Prof. Nayak is a Life Member of our Sabha.

The Sabha is proud of his achievement and wishes him many more such laurels.



**Dr. U.S. Nayak receiving the award from
the Minister of Health of Seychelles**

GOOD TEACHER AWARD

Dr. U. Anand Kini (son-in-law of Dr. U.S. Nayak), Consultant Plastic Surgeon and Associate Professor of General Surgery, Department of Surgery, Kasturba Medical College, Mangalore was awarded the “Good Teacher Award”, an award for the Clinical Section staff whose classes makes the most impact on the students during the year 2011-2012. The award was presented to him by the Vice Chancellor of the Manipal University, Prof. K. Ramnarayan on March 23rd 2012 at the College Day function held at TMA Pai Convention Centre in Mangalore.



Dr. U. Anand Kini receiving the award from Prof. K. Ramnarayan

We are very proud of his achievement and wish him a very successful career.



Rohan, 9 years, son of Sangeetha Nayak and Sanjay Nambiar and grandson of Dr. U.S. Nayak and Dr. Vidya Nayak received an award for standing first in Aloha Mental Maths, at New Jersey, U.S.A. in November 2011

The Sabha wishes Rohan many more laurels and awards throughout his educational career.

THE PURPOSE OF LIFE

- K. R. Baliga

The first part of this article which appeared in our July 2011 issue, examined various goals of life – health, wealth, happiness, power etc. – as usually understood by people and came to the conclusion that none of these, desirable and pleasant as they may be, cannot be the real purpose of life. After raising a question – “what then can the purpose of life be” to provoke thoughts; comments were invited from readers so that the second part of the article (now in your hands) can throw light on the real purpose of life.

It gives one great pleasure that two readers – Mr. D.J. Kamath and K.P. Ramesh Rao – have sent their well-thought-out views as follows:

Mr. D.J. Kamath said:

You have stated: We, humans, endowed with superior capabilities, sometimes ask, ‘Is there any purpose or aim of life?’ We also introspect, “Am I progressing towards it or moving away? How do I attain the aim of life.” I beg to differ. Very, very few persons ask these questions. The vast majority are so caught up in the struggle for survival that they have neither the time nor the inclination to ask these questions. Then, there are those persons whose material needs have been met, but they are caught up in the struggle for more and more.

Of the very few persons who ask these questions, a vast majority realizes that these

questions may look simple, but they have no simple answers. In fact, each question can have more than one valid answer.

Honestly, seeking replies to these questions can lead to realization of very disturbing truths. Hence, most persons tend to address these questions to persons whom they consider more knowledgeable or enlightened, and accept their answers as gospel truth. Very, very few persons who try to seek the answers themselves; each person comes up with a different set of possible answers. The questions will be addressed, but they will always have no definite answers.

I am not suggesting that asking these questions is a waste of time.

The quest for answers to these questions is a churning process in which many useful thoughts, which definitely enrich the person's life, are thrown up.

Mr. K.P. Ramesh Rao wrote:

If we want to achieve something permanent we may aim for "NIRVANA" which according to Buddhism "a state in which individuality becomes extinct by being absorbed into the Supreme Spirit. According to our Hindu beliefs, we may aim for "Moksha" which is freedom from the cycle of births and deaths. To overcome the materialistic needs in toto we may have to take several Janmas and ultimately tread the spiritual path which may lead us to MOKSHA under the guidance of a GURU.

Being a Hindu this is my belief. I have not made an in depth study.

If you analyze carefully, all our struggles for acquiring more wealth, power, knowledge, happiness etc. is born out of not being content with one's present status. One feels that something is lacking – Apoornatvam. This is what prompts one to seek something to become something else which he feels he has not or is not. He is not happy and prepared to accept himself as he perceiving himself to be now. Everyone tries to remove

this apoornatvam – lack of something as he sees it, and become poorna – complete and not lacking anything. As long as the feeling of apoornatvam is there, one is forced to act by the desires to fulfill the want. If the actions do not yield the desired favourable results one is sorry, angry, depressed or feels victimized. These feelings bind one (bandha) to the material world – samsara. Freeing oneself from these bondages – bandhana – is liberation or mukti.

Liberation is thus one's own mental state born out of intellectual conviction. What binds one are only ones perceptions about one's state; and what can liberate one are also thoughts. A story explains this notional bondage and liberation.

A Guru and his disciple were returning to the ashram with a herd of cows received as gifts. When night fell they had to break their journey half-way and the disciple was worried whether the cows would all wander off in the night. The Guru asked the disciple to take them to the nearest tree and pretend as though they were being tied. Next morning, all the cows were found where they had been "tied". But the cows would not budge now when they wanted to move on. The Guru asked the disciple to pretend to "untie" them, whereupon they all started moving.

The purpose of life is thus to be poorna or complete – not lacking in any respect. Can any human being be poorna? Poorna implies infinity because there can be only one infinity. Each one of us has very little knowledge (we are not sarvajnas) very little power (we are not sarvashaktimaan) and are limited by space (we are not sarvavyaapi) and time (we are not nithya). Those great qualities belong to God and so we pray to God for strength, guidance and help to achieve our object. Our limited intellect (and consequent ignorance) has prevented us from knowing that we are already liberated but, like the cows in the preceding story, we feel we are bound. Logically, a thing cannot become another unless the qualities of the other are inherently and already available in the original. Unless we have the potentiality of Moksha, we cannot be liberated.

So in our quest for poornatva, we have to establish some sort of relationship with something poorna that we aspire to be. “The purpose of a knife cannot be found within the knife itself, but in its relationship to something else say a fruit, which is not a knife” – said Yogi Krishnaprem.

So the purpose of life cannot be found within the ambit of our human life. Either our life has no meaning at all as Charvakas (who said “Eat well and enjoy now; who knows whether there is any life after this”); or else the purpose must be sought in some Reality which is not limited to or by life.

And what is that Reality? Has anyone seen it? How do we know it exists and it is not just a figment of imagination? This leads us to ask – how do we gain any knowledge. In the material world, it is by the inter-action of our sensory organs – eyes, ears, nose etc - with the sense objects. Each sensory organ can give a particular type of knowledge. It has no validity in any other type of knowledge which it can neither prove nor disprove. For example, eyes can see colour; ears cannot. Ears can hear but one cannot know the form by ears. The colour seen by the eyes can neither be proved nor disproved by the ears. Similarly in trying to establish a relationship with a “Reality” which transcends life, the five sensory organs which give us knowledge of the material world are of no use. We need what is called “shabda pramana” – the words of scriptures and guru to know that there is a Reality. This is what is called the spiritual quest.

How can mere words give knowledge? An Englishman (not an Indian who will readily start conversing with strangers) had come to India to meet an Indian spiritual teacher. On the one-hour flight to Trivandrum the person sitting next to him started conversing with him. As the flight was landing, the English man asked this person how do I meet Sri so and so the spiritual Guru. The person replied “I am that person”. And all the while the English man was not aware at all that he was talking with the very person he was seeking.

Similarly, the words in our ancient scriptures especially the Upanishads tell us about the ultimate Reality which in basic terms is nothing but our own real nature. This very knowledge is corroborated in the teachings of various Acharyas who have expounded the teachings of Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita and Brahma Sutras (which bring out the validity of the teaching of the Upanishads) The purpose of life is to realize one’s real nature. This has to be achieved by listening (shravana) by thinking over these teachings and clearing one’s doubts (manana) and observing these truths in living one’s life (nidhiidhyasanam) .

But are we not running the risk of self-complacency and despondency if we abjure all ambitions to do better, progress in life etc. and sink into inactivity? The scriptures do not ask us to desist from action (purusha prayatna); what they want us is to avoid obsessive hankering after results. Actions intended for the welfare of our fellow-beings (not just one’s personal gains) contribute to happiness all-round without any adverse effect on the person doing the action.

A guru put it very pithily – Kaamanaa chodo; Kaam na chodo; Vaasanaa chodo; vaas na chodo.

A Mother is Born

- Suchitra Shenoy

Dawn’s early light creeps in through the windows. I glance up from the bathtub and welcome the morning. A few hours later, I am having a conversation about the traditions of the Amish in Northern America. Occasionally, I sip cool Litchi juice, and someone leans over to give me a back massage.

No, this is not the recounting of a five-star spa experience. My surroundings are fairly humble and the five people surrounding me have been there about eight hours now, with more to come. The time in the tub and the friendly chats are regularly interrupted by contractions. Each time, I squeeze the hands

of those nearest and breathe through the rush. When it passes, I pick up the conversation, or take little naps. When so instructed, I sit in water, on a large ball, or on a birthing stool. Or experiment with a variety of positions that harness gravity, along with all the potential of the human body. This is labour, *au-naturel*.

Why choose to undergo childbirth without medication, you may ask. That was my reaction as well, initially. Scheduling a Caesarean section seemed the practical thing to do: set a date that suits everyone; do it pain-free. Come pregnancy, however, those views began to change.

As first-timers we explored the options, visiting well-known hospitals, speaking to those who had recently given birth, gathering information as we went. What we learnt was troubling. Parents routinely waited long hours to see their gynecologists, despite having made appointments in advance. When they got to the doctor, it seemed as though she wasn't really listening. Information, when it came their way, could be alarming. "Your baby's umbilical cord is wrapped around its neck!" or "Your baby's drinking amniotic fluid!"

Our exploratory hospital visits were not encouraging; while their birthing suites were alluring, their statistics were not. They talked about "pain-free" birth, but were less than forthcoming about the possible effects of medication on mother and child.

Then we chanced upon Healthy Mother, one of India's few natural birthing centers. A friend had given birth there and raved about it. Our parents were skeptical, as was the extended family, which has its share of gynecologists. "What, my child, are you going to give birth in a bucket of water?" my great-aunt exclaimed. But her eyes were twinkling. She came around over time, and so did everyone else.

They saw how our visits to Healthy Mother strengthened our conviction. We felt cared for by a team that saw us on time, nurtured my pregnancy based on our needs (and the baby's), and did not rush us through medical check-ups. One of the highlights was the

opportunity to take their six-week Lamaze course. The anxious couples in this class soon turned confident with knowledge about the 'why' and the 'how' of pregnancy, child-birth and new-born care. Our family learnt (through our enthusiastic after-class phone calls and e-mail summaries) about much more than stereotyped breathing techniques; their knowledge increased their confidence too.

And was the natural birth full of pain? Yes, there was pain. But there was so much else: freedom of movement, a sense of control and a deep recognition of what the human body is capable of. Above all, the sheer joy of being fully present when a group of women, whom you now consider friends, along with your stalwart husband, all work with you to bring a miracle into this world. At 6.20pm on a sunny summer day, a mother was born.

This article first appeared in Channel 6, in Hyderabad

God created man or man created God

- K. Venkatraya Pai

Chapter IX of Bhagawad Gita has this to say:

Infinite pervades the finite, what exactly is the relationship? Did the finite rise from the Infinite? Or is it that the infinite PRODUCED the finite.

LORD KRISHNA SAYS

(1) THEY ARE IN ME, I AM NOT IN THEM

(2) THEY ARE NOT IN ME, I AM NOT IN THEM

(3) THEY ARE IN ME, I AM IN THEM

These statements appear to be contradictory when we read them first. Naturally, it creates confusion or doubt in our minds.

In the first statement, the Lord says, "This whole world is pervaded by me" Then comes the second statement: " All things and beings

exist in Me, but I am not in them" Then there is a third statement "Actually, nothing is in me" It is really very confusing, But if we understand the stand point from which each statement is made, we will realize that there is really no contradiction. The Lord is here revealing Himself as the very cause-the ultimate cause .The relationship between the two entities is the relation between cause and effect.

Let us take the analogy of the ocean and the waves. By ocean, I mean the entire vast expanse of the oceanic waters. If the ocean says," I pervade all the waves." it is definitely understandable. The oceanic water pervades all waves because it the very cause of the waves.

If the ocean were to say," all waves exist in me, but I am not in them," we must understand that this statement has a different connotation or meaning. Here the meaning of "All waves exist in me" is that "all waves depend on me for their existence- the waves cannot "be" without me", Further," My existence does not depend upon the existence of the waves"

It is quite clear that there cannot be any wave without water, but water can exist without the form of a wave. We often see water without any reference to a wave. If water and waves coexisted inseparably, we might as well ask for 'a glass of waves' instead of a 'glass of water'. So when the Lord says, "They are in me, but I am not in them," he means that " They depend on me, but I do not depend on them". The cause does not depend on the effect, but the effect depends upon the cause.

Finally. the Lord says," Nothing exists in me". If you look at the cause as cause alone, where is the effect? For example, when you buy some gold, you see only gold at that time-you see only gold at that time-not the ornaments. Even after it is made into an ornament, you can still see it from the standpoint of the basic substance, the gold alone. A bangle can be turned into a necklace or a ring. But the gold remains the

same, and nothing else exists. In the same way, if you see water as water from its own standpoint, there is no wave, no foam, ripples, or anything else. Water alone exists.

So the entire meaning of that part of the exposition is: "I alone exist. There is one Absolute reality that alone exists, and even if you see many, in different forms, it is that one alone appearing as many". Generally, when we see many, we get lost in 'many-ness' and that One reality is completely forgotten. If you remember that one while seeing the many, there is no problem. That is the vision advocated by The Lord.

In sloka 29 the Lord says, 'They are in me and I am in them' This has to be seen in the context of the full sloka. Lord says." I am the same to all. I do not love anybody; nor do I hate anybody; nobody is dear or not dear to Me. But those who love Me and Worship me with devotion-they are in me and I am in them".

As far as Paramatma- the cause -is concerned, He is the same towards all. He is the same in all and the same towards all, but not all are the same towards Him! Some love Him, some hate Him, some are indifferent, and some even deny His very existence.

Shankara has given a very nice example in his commentary on this sloka. He says that fire is the same to all. Those who sit around the fire in cold, wintry weather keep themselves warm, while one who stands far away, shivers and complains that the fire is partial and selective in sharing its heat! The fire can only say " I am one and the same to all. If you come near you will also benefit.

The objects of the world conveying their stimuli through the doors of sense organs create mental waves which are illumined by the conscious Principle residing in all forms. If the awareness is not there, the external world must necessarily fail in giving the mind and intellect the concept of its life as a series of unbroken experiences. Just as the cotton is in the cloth, or the gold in all ornaments, or the heat in the fire, so too, the imperishable is in

the perishable. The dreamer can function only in the waker; the waker pervades the dream experiences, and at the same time, the waker is not in the dream nor in fact, when awakened fully, does the dream ever exist in the waker.

MOVEMENT – A MOBILITY

- Dr. Vidya Nayak

A movement – a little mobility – how thrilling it is for the mother when she feels the first movement her child in pregnancy – first evidence of life within her. The mobility became a monitoring tool through pregnancy much to satisfaction of the mother and the doctor.

After birth the mobility of the baby marks the well-being of the baby and is welcome milestone.

This goes through the growing years. As a matter of fact it is so rapid that even parents are amazed with the speed of mobility, maturity far ahead of their age.

Yet another mobile factor comes into each one's life these days – mobile phone. Its use starts when the child is born, it gurgles to his father. The infant wants to talk on the real phone and not a toy. One forgets to take the wallet but never the mobile. It is walk the talk even through the crowded road while walking or even driving, exposing themselves to risk of accident.

The hazard of the phone is carcinoma of brain, infertility, cardiac irregularity etc. depending on which organ the phone is kept close to.

What was the mode for communication in emergency has now become an addiction, and addiction is bad.

Even the kids carry the cell phone to class and ring up the parents to pick up them after school over in Netherlands (Nokia).

The mobility in old age when the joints creek, the muscles ache and weakness gets better of them, even when a walker or walking stick is required, and few steps can be taken with effort when asked.

“How are you today”

“Fine thank you, don't you see, I am MOBILE”

HAANVA TUGELE LEKTHALI

Most people would have experienced this. You are attending a wedding or some other function in Mangalore, when you see someone you have never seen before smile at you. Just when you are looking around to see whether she is smiling at someone else, she walks towards you. "Haava kona mthonu kalle ve??" she asks. You have two options, either you say yes and risk the chance of her asking you something you have no clue about or just say "no"! You decide on the latter and shake your head from side to side. "Haanva Manohar bappale ajjale bhaineli nathi". You hurriedly start scanning your brain for a face for Manohar bappa and you draw a blank. Meanwhile she starts talking about a whole lot of other relatives and how she stays next to Ammani pacchi and what not. In the meantime your eyes glaze over and you zone out. Time stops for you and breathing becomes difficult.

All of a sudden she says "Kasturi mai thai assa. Tigelaggi ullonu etta" and she vanishes. You look at your watch and try to figure out why you have no clue as to what happened in the last one hour. These kinds of episodes have happened to me so many times that now whenever I have to attend any function in Mangalore I spend the previous day planning out my strategy. I make it a point to see that I am always with my mother and if possible with my other aunts. This, so that if possible I can hide behind them. Also, if I see new faces, somebody will always be around to make the appropriate introductions.

Most often than not this strategy works. What really gets to me is the complex names assigned to relatives such as dhuvdi and

mevno and bhaccho. It took me a lot of time and diagrams to decipher these complex names and who they refer to. Given a choice I would have preferred to call anyone and everyone my uncle, aunt or cousin. But no, people won't let you get away so easily.

"Tu Babbanule bhacchi nave" - I nod my head although it is spinning like crazy and have no clue as to who Babbanu is. To my husband "tuggele mevnile shikhunu jalle ve" - blank look, what on earth is a mevni. "Tugeli jaava Mysoranthu assa ve" - look of absolute panic, do I have a jaava??. "Tuggeli phagarmai America chamkali khai nave" - get me out of here!!!!

I have people give me comical looks when I explain my relatives.. like "Haanva miggele bamnale bhainile gharkade doni disa rabli". "Tuggele nananda kodialanthu assa ve?" "Makka nananda na". Dialogues like these have made me the butt of numerous jokes amongst my relatives.

I am still lost after five years of marriage but not as lost as I was five years ago. Give me easy words such as dhuva, putu and soona anyday.

My only prayer would be that someone would come out with an English/ Konkani dictionary or if such a thing already exists maybe I would get my hands on one.

Then, if someone asks me "tuggelo bhayyo atta khai assa?", I can open my little book , "eka minute. B....Bh..... Bhayya... ..aha Bhayyo. Migelo bhayyo Mysoranthu assa" and give a look of triumph.

Once you get a hang of it, these titles are not that complex but living so far away from home one is out of touch with these things. With the result, when you go home and attend some functions, you need to refresh your memory or give blank stares when someone mentions unfamiliar words.

The best case scenario - practice on your relatives here in America.

For example if your husband's younger brother lives nearby, always refer to him as deru and his wife as jaava.

Of course, they will think you are nuts and not let their kids visit you but at least you are not forgetting these main words.

If worst comes to worst, do what I do.

Tell everyone you meet "Haanva tugele lekthali" and let them figure out all the complex details.

SWAMIJI'S VISIT



His Holiness Shrimad Shivananda Saraswati Swamiji, Mathadhipati of Shri Samsthan Goudapadacharya Math of Kavale, Ponda-Goa visited the Sabha in the evening on Wednesday, 11th January 2012. This visit has a special significance as the first visit to the Sabha of a Mathadhipati during the Sabha's Centenary Year. Members assembled in large numbers to give His Holiness a fitting reception. His Holiness was received with Purna Kumbham followed by Veda Ghosh, Welcome Address by the President, Pada Puja, Presentation of Kanika to His Holiness and Ashirvachan by His Holiness. Prasadam was distributed after Ashirvachan. The Sabha also contributed for a Mahasamradhana Seva on the same day at Madras Shri Kashi Math where Swamiji was camping.

His Holiness recounted his visit to the Sabha in 1998 when he was the Patta Shishya and commended the remarkable achievements of the Sabha during the last few years.

Advise by a father to his son on how to live one's life.

Following is a letter to his son from a renowned Hong Kong TV broadcaster/Child Psychologist. The words are actually applicable to all of us, young or old. All parents can use this to guide their children. This has been taken from internet.

Dear son,

I am writing this to you for three reasons.

1. Life, fortune and mishaps are unpredictable; nobody knows how long one lives. Some words are better said early.

2. I am your father, and if I don't tell you these, no one else will.

3. What is written is based on my own personal experiences that perhaps could save you a lot of unnecessary heartaches.

Remember the following as you go through life:

1. Do not bear grudge towards those who are not good to you. No one has the responsibility of treating you well, except your mother and I. To those who are good to you, you have to be thankful, and ALSO you have to be cautious, because, everyone has a motive for every move. When a person is good to you, it does not mean he really likes you. You have to be careful, don't hastily regard him as a real friend.

2. No one is indispensable, nothing in the world that you must possess. Once you understand this idea, it would be easier for you to go through life when people around you don't want you anymore, or when you lose what or who you love most.

3. Life is short. When you waste your life today, tomorrow you would find that life is leaving you. The earlier you treasure your life, the better you enjoy life.

4. Love is but a transient feeling, and this feeling would fade with time and with one's mood. If your so called loved one leaves you, be patient, time will wash away your aches and sadness. Don't over exaggerate the beauty and sweetness of love, and don't over exaggerate the sadness of falling out of love.

5. A lot of successful people did not receive a good education, that does not mean that you can be successful by not studying hard! Whatever knowledge you gain is your weapon in life. One can go from rags to riches, but one has to start from some rags!

6. I do not expect you to financially support me when I am old, neither would I financially support your whole life. My responsibility as a supporter ends when you are grown up. After that, you decide whether you want to travel in a public transport or in your limousine, whether you want to be rich or poor.

7. You honour your words, but don't expect others to be so. You can be good to people, but don't expect people to be good to you. If you don't understand this, you would end up with unnecessary troubles.

8. I have bought lotteries for umpteen years, but I never won any prize. That shows if you want to be rich, you have to work hard! There is no free lunch!

9. No matter how much time I have with you, let's treasure the time we have together. We do not know if we would meet again in our next life.

Regards,
Your Dad

YOUNG ACHIEVERS AWARD 2012

Members are requested to send the names, brief profile and the nature of achievement in educational, service, sports or cultural field of the persons you would like to recommend for the Young Achievers Award 2012. Only the National or State level excellence of achievement is recognized. The Sabha, as

in the previous years, will recognize and honour the Young Achievers at the Cultural Evening to be held in October 2012. The proposals should reach the Sabha Office before 15th September 2012.

SCHOLARS' GRATITUDE

We are happy that an ex scholar of the Sabha Mr. Premananda Kamath, Bangalore made a generous donation of Rupees One lakh towards free scholarship endowments. He intends to make further donations in future too if possible. This is the highest contribution received from a person during the year who had been benefited by the Sabha scholarships. The Sabha wishes Mr. Kamath all the best and many more years of useful life.

Mr. Raghunandan Kamath, Bangalore wrote on 7th June 2012-

"I have been one of the students who was receiving scholarship from SGS Sabha during my studies. God has been benevolent and given me enough growth so that I can provide financial assistance to deserving students through your scholarship scheme. I would like to contribute year on year to the Sabha."

Mr. Raghunandan Kamath sent us Rs.5000 towards two free scholarship endowments.

Mr. V.R. Baliga,, father of Mr. Vishnuprasad V. Baliga wrote from Bangalore in March:

"You were very kind to Mr. Vishnuprasad V. Baliga, who approached you for the S.G.S. Sabha Scholarship for 2001-2002.

I thought it was our duty to return the amount to S.G.S. Sabha, but due to paucity of time, we could not do so, for which kindly excuse us.

We are enclosing a cheque of Rs.2000 which please accept and send us the receipt.

The Sabha wishes Raghunandan Kamath and Mr. Vishnuprasad V. Baliga all success in

life. The Sabha values and welcome donations, big or small, from the Sabha's beneficiaries. The sentiments expressed by these ex-scholars will no doubt inspire others. We would very much like to be in touch with them and it would be a nice gesture if each of them could become our Life Member for a one-time subscription of just `500 as soon as they are employed and thereafter furnish us their fresh address as and when there is a change.

BHAGWAN SRI KRISHNA IN MY WALLET

A small but touching story with a deep message.

A ticket collector in a train found an old worn-out wallet in a compartment full of many people. He looked inside to find the name of its owner. There was no clue. All that there was in it, was some money and a picture of Bhagwan Sri Krishna. He held it up and asked, 'Who does this wallet belong to?'

An old man said, 'That's my wallet, please give it to me'. The ticket collector said, 'You'll have to prove that it is yours. Only then I can hand it over to you'. The old man smiled a toothless smile and said, 'It has a picture of Sri Krishna in it'. The ticket collector said, 'That is no proof; any one can have a picture of Sri Krishna in his wallet. What is special about that? Why is your picture not there in it?'

The old man took a deep breath and said, 'Let me tell you why my picture is not there in it. My father gave this wallet to me when I was in school. I used to get a small sum as pocket money then. I had kept a picture of my parents in it..

When I was a teenager I was greatly enamoured by my good looks. I removed my parent's picture and put in, one of my own. I loved to see my own face and my thick black hair. Some years later, I got married. My wife was very beautiful and I loved her a lot. I replaced my own picture in this wallet with a

picture of her. I spent hours gazing at her pretty face.

When my first child was born, my life started a new chapter. I shortened my working hours, to play with my baby. I went late to work and returned home early too. Obviously, my baby's picture occupied the prized position in my wallet.'

The old man's eyes brimmed with tears as he went on. My parents passed away many years ago. Last year my wife too left her mortal coil. My son, my only son is too busy with his family. He has no time to look after me. All that I had ever held close to my heart is far, far away from my reach now.

Now I have put this picture of Bhagwan Sri Krishna in my wallet. It is only now that I have realized that He is the eternal companion. He will never leave me. Alas! If only I had realized this before. If only I had loved the Lord Krishna all these years, with the same intensity as I loved my family, I would not have been so lonely today!'

The collector quietly gave the wallet to the old man. When the train stopped at the next station, the ticket collector went to the book stall at the platform and asked the salesman, 'Please give me a small picture of Sri Krishna' I need one to put in my wallet!'

The Question we need to ask is where is Bhagwan Sri Krishna in our lives today? Think of it because it could make a difference to your life today and in the days to come.

A TWIST IN THE TALE

We have all heard when we were young about the tale of the "Cap Seller and Monkeys"

The story goes like this. An old cap-seller was taking a bundle of caps for selling in the market. He was tired while walking in the sun and rested under a tree. It was so cool he dozed off. When he woke up, he was startled to find that the bundle of caps was empty.

When he looked up, he saw a whole lot of monkeys on the tree each wearing a cap. He tried to threaten them, shout at them and even tried to shake the branches – all to no avail. Then out of sheer frustration, he took the cap on his head and threw it down. Instantly, all the monkeys on the tree too threw down the caps. The cap-seller collected the caps and happily proceeded to the market.

Banta Singh, a present day cap-seller had the same experience as the cap-seller in the story. He remembered the story he had heard as a small child and he threw his cap on the ground. But there was no response from the monkeys. An old monkey climbed down the tree, slapped Banta and told him.....

Guess what?

Do not see the correct answer on page 13 until you have made your guess.

RELEVANCE OF JOINT FAMILY SYSTEM IN MODERN TIMES

- Mrs. R. Meera Rao

I may be treading into a mine field of controversies. What is in the minds of several of us, I am expressing openly. It has become a fashion of the day to blame either a lady or the western culture for the crumbling of the erstwhile joint family system.

A joint family as we understood was a large family of close relatives living together. There were sub-families or nuclear families under one roof.

Let me begin with an elementary question like – when does the family start? Now see what Sir Winston Churchill said: It starts with a young man falling in love with a girl – no superior alternative has been found."

No doubt, it was not that simple here when his party ruled India! Basically, the family is the nucleus of the civilization. Joint family system flourished at a time when there was

no family planning! India's population was commensurate with the availability of fertile land and cheap labour. To be more explicit, the joint family system was more prevalent among the rich like Mirazdars and the rich landlords, with several acres of fertile land to plough and palatial bungalows to live. There was a large retinue of loyal labour force to support the system. The Head of the joint family had 'sky-high' powers; thus commanded and even demanded respect of the entire family members.

With an autobiographical note I would state that I moved from one joint family, my father's "Tharawaad" to another one viz. my husband's "Tharawaad", bigger and older one. As per the prevalent custom, my family was not important for me as that of my husband. I acquired the surname of my husband and the name of his revered grandmother as well! So, I have the credentials to write about at least two large joint families in Kerala.

The young girls, mostly in their early teens, had no idea of the life-style of the family when they entered the threshold of their new family. They were awestricken with the powers the Head of the family wielded. Some of the women living in the same household could be more vicious than the Her Majesty of the British Empire! She had no option of having a family of her own either! Nor could she join her parents in case of any problem!! The young man with whom she had cast her lot could be of precious little help for her as he was expected to be subservient to the tyrant; with no place to go if ousted from the joint family!!!

.But who could be the happy lot in the household? No doubt, the growing children, pampered by the elderly but devoid of any parental control or affection.

Most of the big "Tharawaads" are in disrepair now. Tenants and lessees of lands either do not pay the dues or they pay too little. The legal documents are either non-existent or legally toothless. Some of the old households present a ghastly picture with utter neglect due to lack of liquidity of assets

to do repairs. It could be a living death for those destined to live in such households in the sun set years of their lives. Believe me, they are sitting pretty on a treasure trove with no succour in sight. The realty worth crores of rupees! Alas! its development is involved in legal wrangles for want of clear documents!

Is not a nuclear family much more manageable with its own peculiar problems, as said below:

"The trouble with family today is that everybody wears the trousers" – Down Fraser.

True, then why blame the woman for the problem? "When you pay a piper, you have a right for the tune" When the lady of the house is a co-earner, give her the rightful place in the management of the affairs of the household. Then there would be no problem.

In conclusion, in the present times, joint family has a different connotation i.e. it means an "attached family", where its members do not necessarily live under one roof but still emotionally is a close-knit one. Such families do not pray together nor do they stay together, but they are emotionally and spiritually bound together; with members in different parts of the globe! Can we call it a GLOBAL FAMILY? Perhaps, a much superior alternative for now.

The Book of Your Life

Are we OBSESSED with acquiring Money, Property, Prestige?

When we die all our money, power, property- - all our possessions pass on to somebody else.

What remains?

Not much! In the sands of time only memories remain in the minds of people that we have helped.

What would you wish to leave behind you?

Beautiful remembrances of happy times! Or pages you wish you will tear out for ever?

Today you have been given a grand opportunity to rewrite with a fresh sheet. Make your own script.

It is up to you to choose the colours. Even in adversity. You can add soft pastels of serenity.

If you know that you had only one more day to live, how would you use this precious time?

Would you now be able to appreciate golden rays of the sun, the gentle breeze? A page that you will treasure.

Enjoy this new day. Take Inventory of all the good things in your life. LIVE each hour with cheer.

Love and affection for the special people in your life; all the things you never did before it is too late.

Sometimes we take people for granted. Tell them how you feel. Offer a helping hand.

Live each day as if there was no tomorrow.

BE HAPPY. GIVE THANKS

Answer to "Twist in the Tale" article on page 11

"Do you think you alone have a grandfather.

SOMETHING FOR YOU TO KNOW & THEN PASS IT ON TO YOUR FRIENDS

Ants Problem:

Ants hate cucumbers.

Keep the skin of cucumbers near the place or ant hole.

To get pure and clean ice :

Boil water first before freezing.

To make the mirror shine:

Clean with spirit

To remove chewing gum from clothes:

Keep the cloth in the freezer for an hour.

To whiten white clothes:

Soak white clothes in hot water with a slice of lemon for 10 minutes

To give shine to the hair :

Add one small teaspoon of vinegar to hair, then wash hair after 10 minutes

To get maximum juice out of lemons :

Soak lemons in hot water for one hour, and then extract juice from them.

To avoid smell of cabbage while cooking:

Keep a piece of bread on the cabbage in the vessel while cooking.

To avoid tears while cutting onions:

Chew gum or light a candle in the vicinity.

To remove ink from clothes :

Put toothpaste on the ink spots generously and let it dry completely, then wash.

To skin sweet potatoes quickly :

Soak in cold water immediately after boiling.

To get rid of mice or rats :

sprinkle black pepper in places where you find mice or rats.

They will flee.

SGS SABHA CHARITABLE TRUST

- U.Prabhakar Rao, Managing Trustee

The number of residents in the Old Age Home will go up to 12 by the end of August 2012, which is quite encouraging. Our efforts are still on to increase the number further.

In the place of Mr. S.A. Pai, who resigned on 31st March 2012, Mr. V. Muralidhara Rao was appointed as the Manager of the Old Age Home, from 1st May 2012. We believe that he is ideally suited for the post and wish him all success. Mr. V. Muralidhara Rao can be contacted on Cell No. 94440 82920.

Mr. K.R. Baliga and Mrs. Deepa Shenoy continue their good work of lecturing to the residents on religious matters. Bhajan classes are conducted by Mrs. Vijayalakshmi R. Pai. Dr. (Mrs.) Shantha Kamath has been advising the residents on health care

regularly. Our thanks to all of them for their excellent contribution.

We express our grateful thanks to the 199 Sponsors during the year 2011-12 who sponsored under the “Days expenses Scheme” by paying Rs. 1500/- each. We appeal to our members and well-wishers not only to continue their support to the activities of the Trust, but also to help in achieving the target of 365 Sponsors.

We repeat that the donations to the Trust are eligible for Income Tax concession under sec. 80G. Cheques drawn in favour of “SGS Sabha Charitable Trust” may kindly be sent to the Trust Office, Dr. K.P. Mahale Centre, New No. 17 (Old No.3), Ujjini Devi Street, Ayanavaram, Chennai – 600 023. Telephone: 2644 9585.



Despite our repeated requests we find that most of the members are yet to furnish their email addresses to the Sabha. Once again we appeal to you to send us your email Id.

WE MISS THEM

Since the publication of the last Newsletter No.39 in January 2012 the Sabha has come to know about the sad demise of the following members:

C.R. Sivanandan, Chennai	20-03-2012
R.Lakshmana Shenoy, Chennai	03-04-2012
Mrs. Nirmala V. Pai, Chennai	11-04-2012
Baburaya Shanbhogue, Chennai	15-04-2012
Mrs. Rama Ullal, Chennai	Date not known