

Discover the Endless Glories of Your Self



New Year's Message by Swami Jyotirmayananda

Your personality exists in the world of time and space, but your essential nature, the Self within you, is beyond this world-process. Therefore, deep within you there is a hunger for discovering your own Self—the real You, which remains unaffected by the world of time and space. This inner hunger is masked by ignorance and refracted into numerous desires.

You exist in the world of time in order to discover the fruit of immortality that transcends time. You are constantly endeavoring to reach out to infinity, even though your physical body is finite. All of your efforts and actions belong to the world of names and forms, while your goal lies in the Divine Self, wherein all illusions of the world-process are transcended.

How can this be possible? How can you hold immortality in hands that are perishable? How can you realize infinity in the world of finite objects? The secret to spiritual life lies in discovering the answers to these philosophical questions.

Through numerous embodiments you have wandered in this world-process, seeking peace, happiness and freedom. But as yet, you have not found fulfillment. If you continue pursuing the desires of your mind, you will not find what you're looking for, even in a million embodiments. The plain fact is that the world is a passing phase and not a reality. The truth of human existence is *Brahman*—the Absolute Self.

Yet, you do exist in this perishable world. So long as the intuitive knowledge of the Self does not dawn, you need to discipline your steps, integrate your personality, and harmonize your life in order to battle against the forces of darkness arising out of the unenlightened parts of your mind.

Just as a mountain climber struggles to reach the summit and behold the expansive view, so an aspirant struggles to climb the heights of wisdom in order to behold the expansion of the Self. The climber's struggles on the way do not create the expansive view, which is the ever-present reality. Similarly, all human efforts and activities do not create Liberation, or that which is the essential Reality in every human being. But in spite of the fact that the inner expansion of the Self is ever unmarred by the drifting clouds of illusion, one must strive to realize it. This striving is *sadhana*, or spiritual discipline.

Learn to be an aspirant—one who lives for attaining Self-realization. Be a hero who is ever engaged in vanquishing the forces of darkness in the battle of life, which continues to rage day by day, even in the depths of the heart. Live a life of constant spiritual discipline, and discover the endless glories of the Self.

Different mountain climbers climb to the same summit by adopting different routes. They encounter different obstacles and have different experiences. But once they reach the

top, they behold the same expansion of nature and experience the same delight of accomplishment. In the same way, aspirants, having lived through different conditions of life and having worked for different objectives in the world of time and space, ultimately reach the same goal—intuitional knowledge of the non-duality of the Self.

By good association and study of scriptures, an aspirant develops dispassion towards the objects of the world. Ponder over the great utterance of Lord Krishna: “*Anityam Asukham Lokam, Imam Prapya Bhajaswamam*”—“Having attained this fleeting world abounding with pain, turn your mind to me with a spirit of devotion and surrender.” Also, remember the Upanishadic statement: “*Yo Via Bhuma Tat Sukham, Nalpe Sukham Asti*”—“In that which is infinite lies bliss. There cannot be happiness in the finite.” And recall the glowing embers of dispassion proceeding from the lips of Lord Jesus, when he said: “Foxes have holes and birds have nests, but the son of man has no place to rest his head.” For a man in whom the fire of aspiration has been kindled, the world with all of its glorious objects and tantalizing pleasure becomes as insignificant as the stars at sunset.

Serve the Self in all. Guard against the illusion of entering into inertia in the name of *vairagya* (dispassion). As your mind becomes free from the burden of attachments, you will be able to love the Divine Self in all human beings. Therefore, your personality will become a channel of Divine activity that will flow like a sparkling stream of joy. Take delight in serving the sick and the afflicted in whatever manner possible. Be a zealous, boundless source of activities that promote understanding, happiness and harmony in the world. As your heart expands and your egoistic complexes dissolve, you will find yourself as

a member of the family of the universe and your actions will become an expression of love. Your actions will not create tension in your mind and a burden for your soul. They will be like the warm breeze awakening the buds to bloom in the quiet hours of the dawn.

Adopt a plan of Integral Yoga in your daily life. Study the Upanishads, the Gita and other Yoga scriptures. Also, listen to the teachings of your spiritual preceptor and learn the art of spiritual inquiry. This is Jnana Yoga—the path of wisdom. Along with efforts to sharpen your reason, you must also acquire an abundance of willpower by practice of concentration and meditation, as outlined in Raja Yoga. Nor should you ignore the emotional aspect of your being, for your feelings are cultured by Bhakti Yoga, the path of devotion. Discover the sweetness of Divine love, which is latent in every human being. Repeat the Divine Name with feeling and understanding. Surrender to the Divine Self and serve God in others. Thus, you will be practicing a blend of wisdom, meditation, and devotion in your daily life. By balancing your life day by day, you will ascend the heights of Yoga in a very short time. But, by unbalanced movement, your progress will be obstructed and greatly delayed.

Adapt and adjust to the varying conditions of life and to the different types of people that you must encounter in your daily life. Be cheerful towards those who stand above you on the loftier levels of evolution. Be friendly to those whose struggles and attainments are similar to yours. Be compassionate towards those who walk with feeble steps on the ladder of life and are inferior to you in their attainments. But be indifferent to those who, out of ignorance and mental perversions, have yielded to the demoniac qualities of violence, greed and falsehood.

With the art of Yoga, you can turn every day of your life into a day of festivity, a new day with a new vision! Let this new year be an unfolding of this spiritual understanding. You are not a slave to your circumstances; you are their master and their creator. You are not a prisoner in the world of time and space; you are the director and controller of this prison called the world-process.

Discover each day a hidden glory of your own innermost Self. Enjoy each day the breeze of increasing spiritual expansion. Swim each day in the stream of Divine love. Drink each day the nectar of meditation and *samadhi*. Feed each day on the words of wisdom. Roam each day in the garden of spiritual scriptures. Climb each day the heights of spiritual consciousness. You have before you the golden road of Yoga that leads to Liberation. Therefore, be a fully blossomed Yogi in this new year and rest blissfully in your own essential nature, wherein the storm of time is silenced before the Majesty of the Eternal Self.



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