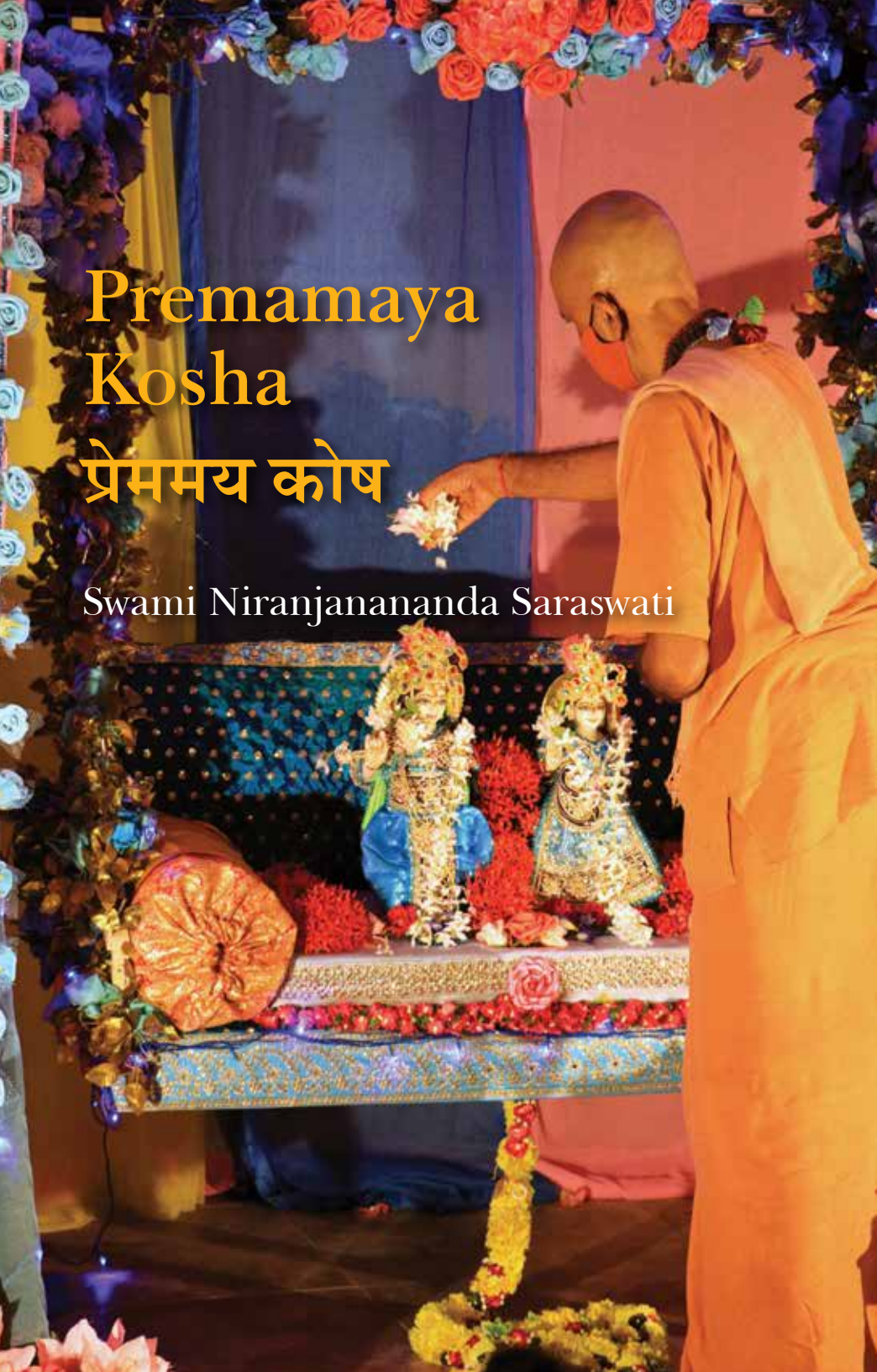
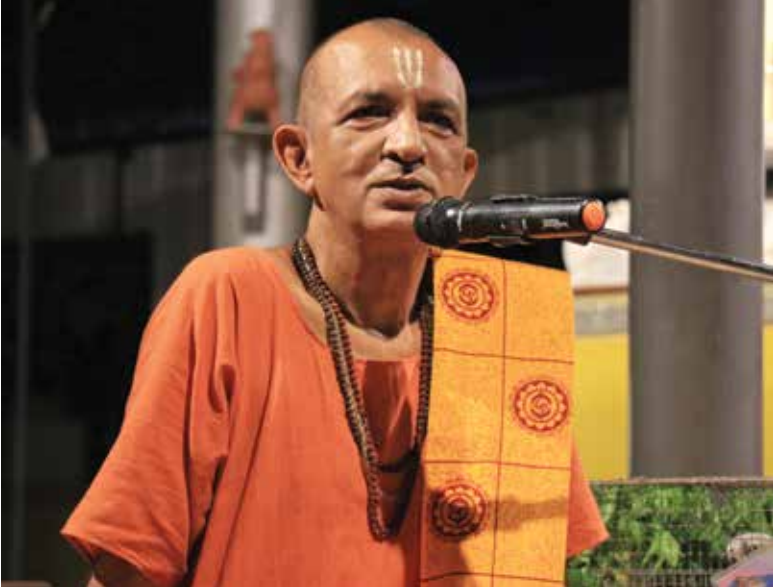


Premamaya Kosha प्रेममय कोष

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Premamaya Kosha



In this year's Krishna Aradhana, the theme is the word *prem*, which has been translated in English as the word love. This word draws a lot of attraction to it, people like it, yet they don't know the meaning of the word love or prem. Sri Krishna has been called *premaavatara*, an incarnation of love. What is the expression of love that we see in somebody who is the incarnation of it?

Our idea of love is mundane, material and gross, sensual and sensorial, intellectual and emotional, full of attachment and infatuation. It is filled with the purpose to please oneself and the thought of 'I am loved'. The whole understanding of love is totally self-orientated in a distorted manner, for the idea is to please oneself and to find safety and security in the thought that 'somebody loves me'. These thoughts are only intellectual from your perspective, understanding, expectations and samskaras. People have defined love in many different manners, yet those definitions have also been intellectual. Nobody has ever tried to look at the practicalities of love, the behaviours and actions of love which represent the actual projection of the purity one feels inside; and the projection of purity is the projection of love.

In yoga there is the concept of different bodies: annamaya kosha, pranamaya kosha, manomaya kosha, vijñanamaya kosha and anandamaya kosha. These koshas go within – from annamaya kosha you go to pranamaya kosha, a more subtle aspect of yourself, from there you go to manomaya kosha, an even more subtle aspect of yourself, to vijñanamaya kosha, another more subtle aspect of yourself, to anandamaya kosha, the subtlest of the koshas. You are going in; through the koshas it is a journey within.

Then there is an expressive dimension too, which has been defined as the *sundaram* dimension, where you walk in the body of love, the *premamaya kosha*. Sundaram represents that awareness, saturation and merger with the pure feeling called love. It is also an expression, for love is always an outgoing feeling, it is never a receiving feeling. The premamaya kosha is always giving out, it is radiating. Like the sun which is radiating light all the time, even at night, this love is also continuously radiating light in an outward projection. It is not a state, rather it is to be cultivated.

The premamaya kosha is a body by itself, it is not just an idea or ideological experience; it has a body. The body of love is identified with two legs, two arms and two eyes. From these two legs, two arms and through the two eyes love is



realized. When that love is expressed, it eventually becomes the final stage of bhakti, where love transcends the material and personal, and is connected to the higher self only.



Two legs

What are the two legs of this love? One leg is respect and honour, *maan-samman*, and the other leg is firmness, determination, intensity, *prabatta*. These two legs support the body of love or prem. When you respect and honour somebody, your sentiments are always soft towards that person. When you like somebody, your sentiments are always soft towards that person. When you dislike somebody, the sentiments suddenly become hard, and the good sentiment changes and converts itself into a bad sentiment. A good thought becomes a bad thought. A supportive thought becomes a critical thought. A good action becomes a bad action. Good behaviour becomes bad behaviour.

This change happens because you are not able to guide your mind to experience the best and most beautiful that is within. Respect and honour is one leg of prem, and intensity is the other. If you see this in human behaviour, and if you have the human-ness within you, not the demon-ness, then the response and behaviour is always different. If you see somebody who is elder to you, you will always bow your head, offer respect and honour. That is an indication that in front of

your elders, who have more experience, more understanding, exposure or knowledge, you let go of your arrogance, rigidity and ego. You become humble and you become a recipient, a receiver, not a giver.

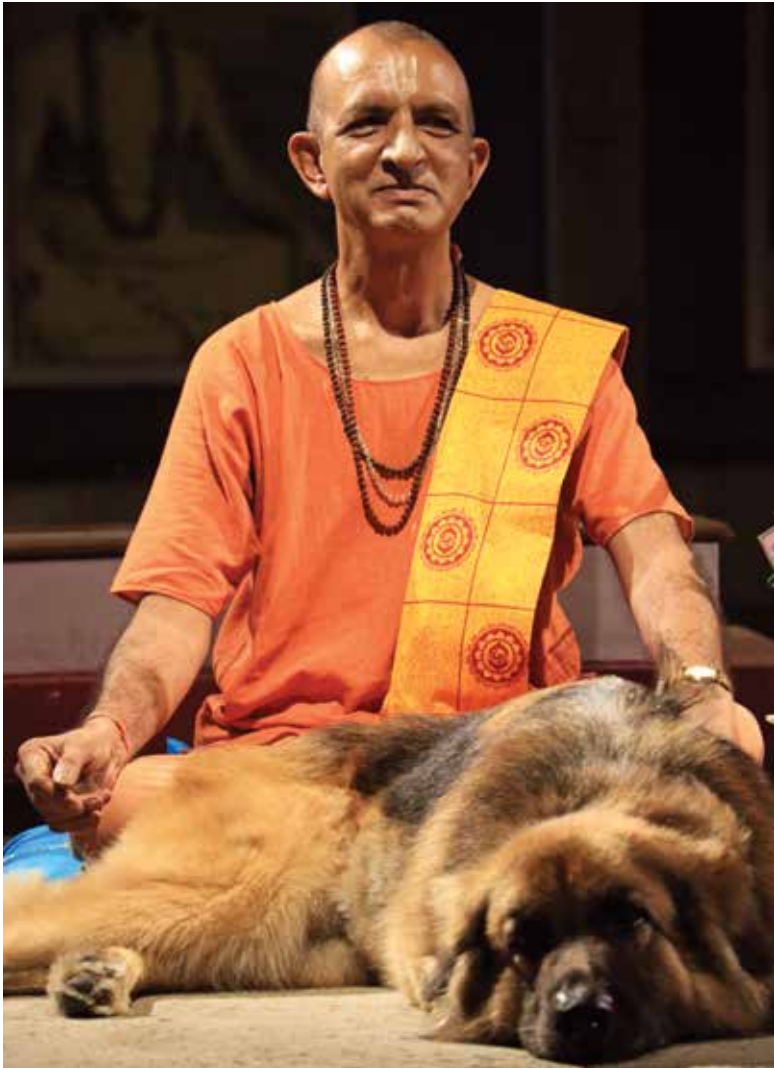
If there is respect for an elder, you bow your head in front of them. You are honouring them by lowering your ego, *ahamkara*. In this way, you are saying, 'I don't have any ego against you. I respect you. I put my head down in front of you'. It is a beautiful sentiment of lowering the ego in front of people whom you consider to be your elders, masters, gurus, parents. You respect them and that is the human nature going in the positive direction. You can also disrespect your parents, for the absence of love can also be there, if your mind goes in the negative direction.

It is the natural way to honour and respect somebody, and when it develops in intensity, *prabala*, the experience and the purity of respect and honour also increase. It brings a change in the human character of humility, gentleness, softness. That softness does not mean that you can be trampled upon, for what is soft can also become rigid. In a story, there is a snake who has been told not to bite, yet it has been given permission to hiss to defend itself. Softness should never be taken as weakness in people who are living this *yama* and *niyama* of respect and honour, and are cultivating intensity in that feeling.

Equal persons do not bow before each other, they share experiences of happiness and joy. They pat each other on the back and smile at each other. When you know that the other person has a positive feeling for you that is known as friendship. If you have a positive feeling for somebody, and that person



reciprocates with a positive feeling, then that is friendship. In this positive feeling you will always ensure that whatever you speak should be to please the other person. You will speak to your friend in a certain positive manner and shun from speaking what can hurt the sentiment of your friend.



Equal-ness brings compatible happiness, interaction and behaviour. Friends are compatible to each other and this positive feeling develops into affection.

A younger person, you pat on the head. You give a hug, a kiss on the cheek, on the forehead, as an expression of your love. This is only a physical act, as you reach out to a younger person. At that time, what you call love is nothing but sympathy, affection and support for the younger person. You become the protector and supporter of the younger person, and that too is a pure feeling.

These feelings of prem in front of elders, in front of equals and the younger is not understood, except by the use of one single word 'love'. The whole definition of love is distorted in the mind as it is material, physical, sensorial, sensual. However, these are the limbs of the premamaya kosha, the body of love. To be respectful you have to have control over your ego, to honour somebody, you have to become humble, to cultivate friendship and positivity, your thought and speech have to become positive and constructive. Anger and frustration should not reflect in your thought and speech. Your actions have to be always uplifting, not pulling somebody down, instead you are helping others to correct themselves and move on.

When respect and honour increases day by day it becomes the catalyst to release the pressure of prem inside. In a pressure cooker, the more the water heats up, the more active the whistle becomes. It starts with a short ssssssss, then over a period of time it becomes a piercing whistle. As the intensity of the water vapour increases, the whistle becomes louder. In the same manner, when the intensity of prem increases, correspondingly respect and honour increase. This is the first identification. Do you tell a person that you love him or her, or do you respect and honour the person with a positive feeling? If there is a negative feeling there is no respect and no honour. If there is a positive feeling, then there is respect and honour. This has been the emphasis given in the Upanishads and Vedas.

Priyam bruyaat – Speak the pleasant; for speech has to be good to express love. *Na bruyaat apriyam* – Do not speak the unpleasant. People find happiness in speaking the unpleasant and the pleasant is shunned. There is no capacity to see the goodness in the other person, only the bad is seen. This indicates that there is no scope for prem. If you cannot respect, honour and build up the intensity of the positive, then forget that you will ever know what real love is. Real love is not hugging, listening and following whims and mandates of the senses and gross mind. Real love is totally different, and you are just starting with the body parts.

The first in behaviour is speech which is mandatory, for through speech you can respect and honour somebody. However, people choose to dishonour others through speech. Behaviour is always self-pumped. If somebody says anything, anger expresses and there is no talk, but a puffy face, sleepless nights, negative thoughts. That is the state of your life and mind. How can you ever think of experiencing that prem, when you are so connected with negativity and shun positivity, the benevolent and auspicious? How can you consider yourself to be the right recipient of that experience of love?

Thought, behaviour and action, *manasa-vachah-karmanah*, are the three areas to look into according to Sri Krishna. *Priyam bruyaat* comes from Sri Krishna's teaching and Swami Sivanandaji used to say, "Be good, do good, speak good and don't speak the unpleasant, *apriyam na bruyaat*."

This does not only apply to speech, but also for *karmanah*, action, and *manasah*, thought – so don't do and think the wrong, the inappropriate, harmful. Push it aside. Then prem develops which becomes a natural expression of the lovely self. This lovely self is not a joke; it is the inner self which is lovely. You see the clothes on your body and not your body, you see the mask and not the face. When you unmask yourself you will see your real face. When you unclothe yourself you will see your real body. Otherwise it is only make-believe. Uncovering is letting go of that which holds you back, and



which is the negative. Cultivate respect, honour people and develop intensity for the positive. Then you will begin to understand the meaning and the experience of the word love which Sri Krishna represents.

Two arms

The body of love has two arms. One arm is *kartavya paraayanta*, or to be ever ready to do your duty and obligations towards another person, your own life, development, growth and evolution. To do the right thing and immerse yourself in doing the right is known as *kartavya paraayanta*, fulfilment of established obligations or duties.

The other arm is *nishtha*, commitment. Obligation and commitment go together. When they become effulgent, another door of love opens up, which brings the spirits closer, not your expectations. They bring the pranas closer, not your desires. Your understanding develops of how you can support the other person overcome the restrictions and limitations of *maya*, as *maya* is considered to be the biggest sin.

There is a saying:

Naasti maayaasamah paasho.

There is no bigger bondage than maya.

Maya takes you away from yourself. It makes you see yourself in a form that you are not. Maya makes you identify with yourself with a behaviour which you are not, with an idea which you are not. Maya always diverts the correctness of thoughts, speech and actions to the incorrect dimension. The correctness is known as *kartavya paraayanta*, to do the right action, to fulfil the obligations, to complete the duties with commitment and sincerity. This then opens another door of prem.

The eyes

Your eyes have two functions. One eye is *raga* or attraction, and one eye is *dwesha* or repulsion. The eyes decide what *raga* is and what *dwesha* is. You see a person, you say, “Oh I like that person.” Your eyes noticed somebody, it became *raga* and you began to like the person. You see a person and you feel funny, uncomfortable, disturbed. Your eyes have seen that person, and there is *dwesha* expressing repulsion. Attractions and repulsions are guided by the eyes. The eyes are physical, material objects, so the pull towards the material world is much stronger than towards the non-material. *Raga* and *dwesha* or the two eyes decide your attitude, behaviour, thoughts and performance.

You don't see anything beyond *raga* and *dwesha*, attachment and split or separation. Every person sees the world, friends and people with the eyes of *raga* and *dwesha*. These are the two eyes. You will always find something to like about a person and you will always find something to dislike about a person. If you find something to dislike in a person, you are seeing with the eyes of *dwesha*. If you see something to like about a person, you are seeing from the eyes of *raga*. Your whole perception is based on *raga* and *dwesha*, even love is *raga* and *dwesha*.

The left eye or *ida* is raga, it is what you take in. The right eye or *pingala* is dwesha, it is what you give out. Ida is taking in, pingala is giving out, raga is coming in, dwesha is being put out. Your whole life is guided by these two simple eyes. Even in old age you try to have good vision, with the idea to live without crutch or being dependent, however, raga and dwesha continue as long as the eyes are there.

The antidote for raga and dwesha is *vairagya*, non-attachment, and *viveka*, discrimination. The antidote of raga is *vairagya*, to divert what is incoming, so that you are not affected by it. The antidote for dwesha is *viveka*, applying your wisdom, your right perception. Therefore, if you are connected with *sat*, truth, with *sivam*, the auspicious, then *sundaram* or love is the outcome.



Your sadhana

These six components constitute the major body parts of premamaya kosha, which is the expressive kosha radiating outwards. Sri Krishna's life represents the fulfilment of these qualities, and his living in the premamaya kosha. Many of you live in your annamaya kosha, many in your manomaya

kosha, few live in anandamaya kosha and some try to live in the vijñanamaya kosha. Nobody despite desiring, wanting and attempting it has lived the premamaya kosha, except those luminous inspirers who become our heroes in the quest of this love, and Sri Krishna is the incarnation of this love.

The message of Krishna is that of prem. This love has to be discovered inside. It is not an intellectual process, rather it is a participative process. It is not something that you can understand intellectually, yet you can by participating and immersing yourself in it. The six components that allow the expression of prem are identified as the limbs of the premamaya kosha.

Respect and honour is one leg, and increasing intensity is the other leg. Similarly, fulfilment of an obligation or a duty as the primary focus, and committed to the accomplishment of that are the arms. The eyesight represent raga and dwesha. The ida eye is raga, and the pingala eye is dwesha. You look at a flower and you either like it or don't like it, it makes a difference to you or it doesn't. You look at a car or a person, and it makes a difference to you or it doesn't. Whatever impression is being derived by the eyes, raga and dwesha, is transformed by the application of vairagya to combat raga, and viveka to deal with dwesha. These six components

constitute the opening of prem in your life.

Let this Krishna Aradhana help you to think of these six components: cultivate honour and respect with intensity within yourself; develop commitment to the eternal obligation that you have towards life, evolution, peace and happiness; and overcome the duality of raga and dwesha with vairagya and viveka. When you make this your sadhana you will explore the realm of premamaya kosha.



Swami Niranjanananda was born in Rajnandgaon (Chhattisgarh) in 1960. Guided from birth by his guru, Swami Satyananda Saraswati, he came to live at the Bihar School of Yoga in Munger at the age of four where he received training in yogic and spiritual sciences through yoga nidra. In 1971 he was initiated into Dashnami sannyasa, and for twelve years he lived overseas, acquiring an understanding of different cultures and helping further his guru's mission to spread yoga 'from door to door and shore to shore'.



He returned to India in 1983 to guide the activities of Bihar School of Yoga, Sivananda Math and Yoga Research Foundation at Ganga Darshan. In 1990 he was initiated as a paramahansa sannyasin and in 1993 anointed spiritual preceptor in succession to Swami Satyananda Saraswati. He established Bihar Yoga Bharati, the first university of yoga, in 1994, Yoga Publications Trust in 2000, and a children's yoga movement, Bal Yoga Mitra Mandal, in 1995. He travelled extensively to guide seekers around the world until 2009, when he received the command to commence a new phase of sannyasa life.

In 2010, he established Sannyasa Peeth, to enable seekers to experience the spiritual and cultural traditions of India in their essence. The year marked his entry into a phase of higher sadhana and tirtha yatra.

In 2013, he conducted the World Yoga Convention in Munger to celebrate the golden jubilee of the Bihar School of Yoga, and launched a new era of yogic renaissance. In 2013 he also commenced the arduous panchagni sadhana. In 2014, he embarked on a Bharat Yatra, an all-India tour, transmitting the gift of yoga to all. Since then, Swami Niranjan has been working to develop the next stage of yogic training and teaching, and has initiated several programs to help people deepen their experience of yoga and imbibe the traditional wisdom. Simultaneously, he has revived various ancient knowledge systems and practices of India.

In 2017, he received the Padma Bhushan, the third highest civilian award given by the Government of India, for the outstanding work in the field of yoga.

Author of many classic books on yoga and other spiritual streams, Swami Niranjan is a magnetic source of wisdom on all aspects of yogic philosophy, practice and lifestyle. He ably combines tradition with modernity as he continues to work for his guru's mission.



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