

SATYAM TALES

ॐ Niranjan

Realizing godhead in guru



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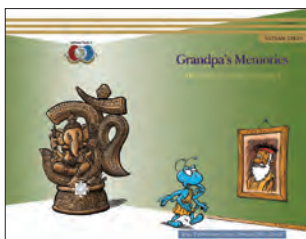
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ॐ Niranjan

I have what is perhaps the shortest name in the world: Om. That's the name my guru, Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati, gave me when me and my parents first came to India from our native land, Serbia. That was in the year 1997. I still remember some of the highlights from that visit, like the visit to Rikhia and the darshan of Sri Swami Satyananda, my guru's guru. We liked the atmosphere of the Munger and Rikhia ashrams so much that we ended up staying there for very many years.



Ever since I was christened with the shortest of names by my guru, I began wondering about its meaning and intent. I asked practically everyone I met to shed some light on the significance of the word ॐ, but they just smiled patronizingly and said sweet nothings about how I was asking questions too serious for my age. Perhaps they never heard Wordsworth's adage about the child being the father of man.

Some said ॐ was Pranava, some said it was like Tat, others said it was more like Sat. To me this was just substituting one definition for another. Finally, some well-intentioned swami told me that the only sure, foolproof means to knowledge and wisdom was satsang. That's where I would find my answer. From that day onwards I could be seen in every one of Swamiji's satsangs, perched on the lap of any front-row sannyasin willing to oblige.

Alas! that didn't help much. Most of the questions put to Swamiji in these satsangs were from people who were either too fixated on their personal body-mind-family-career problems or engaged in the pedantic dissection of abstruse philosophy. As such, the discourses and discussions were far removed from the matter that most concerned me.





Later that year I was attending the annual Sat Chandi Mahayajna at Rikhia. One day I happened to be sitting next to Swami Gorakhnath, a senior disciple of Sri Swamiji. As the various mantras, prefixed with the holy syllable ॐ, resonated all around us my curiosity was aroused once again. I turned towards Swami Gorakhnath and my gaze fell on his forearm. There, just above the wrist was tattooed in Devanagari: ॐ Satyam. Aha! That gave me the opening I was looking for.

“What’s this engraved on your arm, Swami Gorakhnath?” I asked innocently.

“Funny that you should ask, for there is a very interesting story behind this,” he said cryptically.

I was always up for a good story. And here was the added incentive of learning more about my name. As we got up to proceed for lunch, I begged him, “Won’t you tell me the tale over lunch, pleeeeeeaaase?”

“Okay,” he nodded, and when we were seated side by side and waiting to be served, he cleared his throat somewhat noisily and began to speak, “This incident happened in Australia, where Sri Swamiji had sent me in the seventies to teach yoga and develop the local ashram. Some of my

students had recently gotten tattooed, and when I asked them about it they told me about this elderly guy in Sydney and the wonderful tattoos he did. They cajoled me into visiting him the next time I was in the city. When I finally paid this fellow a visit, he asked me what kind of tattoo I wanted, and not knowing any better I asked him to engrave the mantra ॐ *Satyam*.”

“To always remind you of God and Guru?” I piped up.

“Yes,” he nodded, somewhat surprised at my attentiveness. “I wrote out the Devanagari characters for him and he started out on what was a seemingly easy job for him. Believe me, it was anything but easy. As soon as he started engraving the ॐ, his hand shook violently and he had to start again. This happened time and again. After many unsuccessful attempts, his hands were shaking badly and his face was perspiring profusely.

“He asked in a trembling voice, ‘Who are you and what have you asked me to tattoo? Each time I begin, I get a powerful jolt, as if the letters are sending out a surge of energy.’ His remarks surprised me, but I sought to calm him down by giving him a little background about the science of yoga and mantra. I told him I was a sannyasin and a teacher of yoga. Explaining what the words were, I pronounced them slowly for him.

“‘ॐ Satyam’ he repeated a few times, emphasizing the first syllable. With each repetition he calmed down a bit more, and soon he had returned to his usual jolly self. When he finally brought the needle over my skin his trembling had gone, and with great care and attention he tattooed the letters. He then asked me many questions about yoga, sannyasa, guru and the ashram lifestyle. When I finally got up to leave, he would not accept any payment. Later he visited the ashram and took to yoga like a fish takes to water.”

“Wow,” I said to myself, “If Swami Gorakhnath could experience such a surcharged response from a plain ॐ being written on his arm, what are the possibilities for me, whose very name is that? For all the pesky adults who pat or pull at

my cheeks thinking it to be a cute, loving gesture, this would be my fitting response. A jolt to make them bolt, ha!”

Juvenile fantasies apart, Swami Gorakhnath’s little anecdote left a deep impression on my mind and made my determination all the more resolute. I resolved to get my answer as soon as I returned to Munger.

Back in Munger I went straight to the Department of Yoga Philosophy of Bihar Yoga Bharati, the world’s first yoga university, and knocked at its door. A young swami opened the door and asked brusquely, “What do you want?” “An appointment with the head of the department,” I said rather boldly. “What for?” the youth countered. “To discuss the philosophical implications of ॐ,” I shot back.

I don’t know if it was my pluck or the HoD’s desire to humour me, but five minutes later I found myself sitting face-to-face with Swami Gyanbhikshu, the head of the philosophy department. Peering at me through his thick glasses, he said, “I can talk on ॐ for hours together, with references from the Vedas, the Upanishads and the *Gita*; but for a little boy like you I will stick to one little sutra of Sage Patanjali, the twenty-seventh sutra from ‘Samadhi Pada’. There he says: *Tasya vaachaka pranava*, which means ॐ denotes That, and therefore one can say . . .”

Three hours later I emerged from the office, my head reeling from the long-winded discussion on this one little sutra. The only clear lead I got was this: the little ॐ was a symbol for the Almighty Absolute. It reminded me of the story about the tiny ant who brought the mighty elephant to his knees. I walked with my head held two inches higher that day.

It was on account of this two-inch-higher-than-usual head that I managed to peek over Swami Krishnapriya’s shoulder while she was busy working on her computer. She was designing one of Swamiji’s new books and she had an interesting picture on her screen.

“What’s that Swami Krishnapriya?” I was intrigued by the interlacing lines and triangles in the figure. Somehow it seemed familiar.



“Oh! Is that you Om?” she asked as she swivelled around. “What a coincidence to have you walk in just as I was putting a picture next to Swamiji’s words on ॐ!”

“Swamiji’s words on ॐ?” I repeated with some excitement, “What is he saying?”

“He is speaking in the context of mantras and yantras. Let me read it aloud for you: ‘Many years ago I read that the vibration of the bija mantra of Devi, Hrim and of the mantra ॐ of the Vedas are the same. At that time I did not understand, as after all, they are two different sounds and are pronounced differently. Years later, during my global travels, I saw an instrument that created pictures based on the vibrations of audible sound. I started chanting the mantra ॐ before the instrument. The picture that emerged after some time was that of the Sri Yantra, and the bija mantra of the Sri Yantra is Hrim!’”

“Isn’t that the image of a Sri Yantra you have on your screen?” I exclaimed as recognition finally dawned. No wonder the image looked familiar. From then on I developed a closer connection with all the Sri Yantras abounding in the ashram, from the little locket around my neck to the huge one behind the kitchen langar. Somehow they felt like a mirror image of myself.

By now I had realized that the intellectual, philosophical approach to the subject of ॐ was not my cup of tea. I wanted something that would straightaway appeal to my heart. And when it came to matters of the heart, who better to approach than Swami Dharmashakti, Sri Swamiji’s first disciple and Swamiji’s mother whom we all fondly called Ammaji.

One sunny winter morning, I found Ammaji sitting on the lawn outside Kutir and decided to try my luck. I went



up and whispered my request in her ear. She smiled and directed me to Swamiji, who had just seated himself on the swing nearby. “By the way,” she added, “he also happens to have an ॐ inscribed on his left arm.”

That was a good om-en and it gave me the opening I was looking for. Picking up my courage, I ventured to ask, “Swamiji, can you tell me the story behind the tattoo of ॐ that you have on your arm?”

I was expecting a tale as exotic as Swami Gorakhnath’s, if not more. Swamiji’s prosaic response brought me back to earth. “Oh that! there’s nothing really special about it,” he said with a smile, “As a young boy I once heard my guru extol the virtues of the mantra ॐ. ‘Take the mantra ॐ everywhere, anywhere,’ he said, ‘Chant it always, for each time you use the mantra it will still and quieten your mind. With ॐ you can do anything!’ I was so inspired that I found a sharp needle then and there and tattooed the symbol on my arm myself.”

“Ouch!” I exclaimed, “that must have hurt.” I could never attempt anything like that.

The more I pondered over Swamiji’s remarks, the more I wanted to understand this mysterious symbol. If it could have

inspired a self-inflicted tatoo on my guru's arm, the least I could do was gain some theoretical knowledge about it.

"Can you please explain the actual meaning, the real truth behind this symbol you tattooed on your arm and which happens to be the name you've given me?" I asked him point-blank.

Swamiji looked me in the eye. I was half-afraid that this might turn out to be a repeat of the ordeal with Swami Gyanbhikshu. I needn't have worried. Swamiji had *Bam Lahari*, the collection of Sri Swamiji's poems by his side. He casually picked it up and leafing through it said, "I'll answer with a poem that expresses Sri Swamiji's innermost sentiments on this subject." This was something I had noticed about him. He would always put Sri Swamiji before himself.

Swamiji found the page he was looking for and began translating the Hindi poem for me:

The sacred mantra ॐ

The confluence of the sounds 'A', 'U' and 'M'

The secret behind the creator's creation, this play of the three gunas

The subtle thread with which this vast universe is woven

The symbol of the three devas, the threefold division of time,

The three great powers and the three planes of existence

The wondrous amalgam of earth, water, fire, air and ether

The eternal flow of birth, life and death

What to speak of unity or duality,

form or formlessness, belief or disbelief

When it is the sole support of the Absolute Principle

here, there, everywhere - 'A', 'U' and 'M'

The all-encompassing, pure radiance of Om

within which I was watching

the finite dissolve in the infinite

the worlds enter in the light

time sacrifice itself in eternity.

My mind expanded in ecstasy and suddenly I began to say

and kept on saying

Omityekaksharam Brahman . . . Omityekaksharam Brahman . . .

"ॐ, This single syllable is verily Brahman"

With that he closed his eyes and whispered, “*Omityekaksharam Brahman . . . the Taittiriya Upanishad puts it even more succinctly: Omīti Brahman – ‘ॐ is Brahman’.*”

A moment later he opened his eyes and, looking at his watch, he said, “I’ve many other matters to take care of at the moment. If there is anything to ask about what I just said, you’d better ask Sri Swamiji himself.”

“Yeah right!” I said to myself, “And the chances of my getting anywhere near Sri Swamiji to ask this question are less than zilch.” Nonetheless this was Swamiji’s final word on the subject. There was really nothing I could do but bide my time.

My patience paid off sooner than expected. Later that year during the Sat Chandi Mahayajna, a tiny window of opportunity opened for me and I grabbed it with both



hands. I had caught Sri Swamiji in a rare moment of solitude during the busy program and immediately blurted out my long-standing question to him.

My question took him by surprise. He began scratching his head. Not because he didn’t know what to say, rather he was wondering what not to say. Ah! the downside of om-niscience . . .

He finally began by quoting a beautiful mantra from the *Mundaka Upanishad*:

*Pranavo dhanuh sharo hyaatmaabrahma tallakshyamuchyate
Apramatten veddhavyam sharavat tanmayo bhavet*



Let Om be your bow, your atman the arrow, and Brahman the target. He succeeds who possesses a one-pointed mind. The arrow becomes fixed in its mark and he is merged in Brahman.

Seeing my somewhat uncomprehending look and realizing he had other things to attend to, he adopted a similar strategy as Swami Niranjan's. He invoked his own guru's decided opinion on this matter. "My guru, Swami Sivananda," he began to say, as his mind went down memory lane, "loved to sing, chant, write and even roar the mantra ॐ. In fact he wrote a beautiful song, 'Sacred ॐ' which you can find in *Siddha Prarthana*, the ashram's bhajan book. I can still hear his powerful words resonate in the depths of my soul . . ."

And he slowly began to hum:

ॐ is the word of power
ॐ is the sacred monosyllable
ॐ is the mystic letter
ॐ is the immortal akshara
In ॐ the world rests
In ॐ we live and move
In ॐ we go to rest
In ॐ we find our quest
Sing ॐ rhythmically
Chant ॐ loudly
Roar ॐ mentally
Draw strength from ॐ
Get inspiration from ॐ
Derive energy from ॐ
Imbibe bliss from ॐ
Glory to ॐ
Victory to ॐ
Hosanna to ॐ
Hail to ॐ
Adorations to ॐ
Salutations to ॐ
Prostrations to ॐ
Devotion to ॐ
Rely on ॐ
Reflect on ॐ
Concentrate on ॐ
Meditate on ॐ
ॐ! ॐ!! ॐ!!!

The last three ॐs brought me out of the silent reverie I had fallen into. It seemed as if Sri Swamiji was addressing me directly. He looked straight into my eyes and said, “Let this be your lesson for today. Persevere and you shall see the light. When in doubt, consult Swami Sivananda.”

I took Sri Swamiji’s words to heart and began singing this song of ॐ daily. I had really imbibed the metaphor of the bow, arrow and target as well. In my imagination, I would hold an ॐ-shaped bow in my hand, load the arrow

i.e. myself upon the bow and launch it straight at the target, who was none other than Swami Sivananda. After all, wasn't Swami Sivananda a perfect embodiment of the Absolute Brahman? At least that's what I understood from Swami Vigyanachaitanya when I asked him to explain the meaning of the Sivananda Gayatri, a mantra that Swami Satyananda had created in honour of his guru: *Om tatpurushaaya vidmahe Sivanandaya dheemahi tanno brahma prachodayat.*

I must have been shooting in the right direction, for I eventually hit bull's eye. That night I had been really fervent in singing the ॐ song and earnest in my prayers to Swami Sivananda. I didn't realize when the mala on which I was chanting ॐ slipped from my fingers and I dozed off into dreamland. That's where I encountered Swami Sivananda.

He was clad in a warm overcoat, which seemed perfectly reasonable as it was a chilly December night. He had a funny headgear which reminded me of Santa Claus. I stretched my hand forward expectantly. He pulled out a big bar of chocolate from his bag of goodies and placed it on my outstretched hand. With an affectionate pat on my head, he came straight to the point, "O ji, you are like the deer searching for musk all over when it is right beside you!"



"I'm sorry I don't quite follow you, Great grampa," I mumbled in between bites of chocolate.

"To discover the true nature of ॐ, you don't have to look beyond my spiritual grandson, Niranjan. He is the pure, untainted embodiment of all that ॐ represents."

"Swamiji is the one I asked in the first place. He directed me to his guru who guided me to you. Now you

are sending me back to Swamiji. This infinite loop seems quite loopy to me. Aren't you supposed to be the know-all grandfather figure of our tradition?" I asked with some exasperation.

"Yes, but isn't the child deemed to be the father of man?" he countered. "Sometimes it is the little one who teaches his elders, like Skanda did to his father, Lord Shiva."

"Doesn't Lord Shiva know everything under the sun? What could be the subject that Lord Shiva had to learn from his little son?" I asked incredulously.

Pat came the reply, "The mystery of ॐ."

And then I heard the following story from Swami Sivananda in my dream: "Once, the devas along with Brahma and Vishnu came to Mount Kailash to have darshan of Lord Shiva. While returning they had darshan of Lord Skanda, and offered their humble obeisance to him too. But Brahma, obsessed by a sense of his rank and importance, declined to do so and ignored Lord Skanda. Noticing and resenting this attitude of Brahma, Skanda called him to his hall and asked him to take a seat along with other devas. When they were all seated, Skanda put a series of queries to Brahma. Brahma answered them. Finally Skanda asked Brahma whether he could explain the real significance of ॐ. Brahma was unable to do this satisfactorily.

"Thus proving the ignorance of Brahma, and with the intention of punishing him for his pride, Lord Skanda ordered him to be imprisoned. The work of creation from that time onwards was taken over by himself. The news of Brahma's imprisonment reached Lord Shiva, when the devas interceded on Brahma's behalf and requested him to release Brahma. Lord Shiva proceeded with the other devas to the abode of Lord Skanda and asked him to release Brahma. Lord Skanda at first refused to do so on the ground that a deva who did not know the significance of the Pranava was not fit to function as the Creator of the universe. However, in obedience to the words of his father, Skanda released Brahma from prison.



“Then Shiva playfully challenged Skanda to explain the meaning of the Pranava himself. Skanda accepted the challenge thrown to him and treating his father as a disciple expatiated on the subject. Shiva was delighted with the thoroughness of the exposition and for the first time he himself realized the immensity of the significance as expounded by his philosopher son. That is how Skanda got the name of Swaminatha, the guru of Shiva himself. He has another name, Subrahmanya which gives us a clue to his real identity. Subrahmanya means one who knows Brahman well; and Brahman alone can know Brahman. Therefore Lord Subrahmanya is Brahman Himself, and hence perfectly capable of expostulating the mysteries of ॐ.”

“Now that’s one more god I can invoke for enlightening me about the mysteries of my own name,” I mumbled to myself in my dream.



“O ji!” exclaimed Swami Sivananda, as if reading my dream-thoughts, “Enlightenment is your birthright. In order to remove the darkness, all you need is a tiny flame. And how to create that flame? The *Shvetashvatara Upanishad* says:

Svadehamaranim kritvaa pranavam chottaraaaranim

Dhyaannirmathanaabhyaasaad devam pashyennigoodhavat

After making one’s body the lower piece of wood, and ॐ the upper piece, by the practice of meditation one should realize the hidden God just as one obtains a flame by rubbing the two pieces of wood.

“Let’s see if you can ignite the spiritual flame of wisdom within and realize the ॐ hidden in my grandson, Niranjana.” With that cryptic remark, Swami Sivananda was gone in a trice. A second later I woke up from a cold draught blowing through my open window. ‘I’m sure I bolted it before going to bed last night. Wonder how it flew open,’ I marvelled. ‘And then there was this strange dream. I feel like a football being tossed between three players. Now I’m back where I started, at the feet of Swami Niranjana. Wonder if I’ll get kicked again.’

In any case, I began to see Swamiji in a new light from now on. Keeping the *Shvetashvatara Upanishad* mantra always at the back of my mind as a signpost, I began to keenly observe Swamiji and his interplay with fire and light. Soon I began to notice some very interesting things.



One thing I noticed was how often the symbol of ॐ would magically manifest amongst the blazing flames whenever Swamiji performed havan. It seemed as if the fire-god, Agni, was working overtime in order to prove Swami Sivananda right. Of course, at that time I hadn't realized the intimate bond between Swamiji and Agni (see Satyam Tale 11: *The Yogi and the Maya* – Ed).

Another day, I was in the third floor library with my mother when I noticed a small crowd gathered around the Kutir lawn. "What's happening there?" I wondered and jumped four steps at a time to find out.



A strange sight greeted me as I elbowed my way through the crowd of onlookers. Swamiji was calmly seated with eyes closed. His upper body was bare and a lady was chanting mantras and pouring water and other unguents down his head and torso!

I slid up to Swami Prembhav who happened to be standing nearby. I felt a certain kinship with her ever since Swamiji initiated us into poorna sannyasa the same day. How my initiation into poorna sannyasa came about is an interesting story in its own right, but I'll come to that in a minute.



“Pssst, won’t Swamiji catch a cold if this continues any longer? What does she think she’s doing to poor Swamiji?” I whispered to Swami Prembhav.

“Shhhh . . . quiet! She’s performing abhisheka of Swamiji.”

“But isn’t that something you do to a Shivalingam, the symbol of the highest Absolute?” I persisted.

“Yes, and this is precisely what this ritual signifies. She is treating Him as the highest Absolute.”

Swami Sivananda’s words flashed through my mind once again, “Realize the ॐ hidden in my grandson, Niranjana!” I was beginning to grasp the import of those words.

Coming back to the episode of my initiation into poorna sannyasa; it all started when I confided my small-sized-name anxiety to Swami Suryaprakash one day. “Yes, small size can be a source of anxiety to many people,” he concurred, and then added, “Why don’t you just ask Swamiji for the three stripes?”

“Three stripes?”

“Yes, initiation into poorna sannyasa. Perhaps he’ll give you a bigger name then and your anxiety will be over. Look at me, everyone used to call me Suraj and



now I am Swami Suryapakash. Maybe Swamiji will turn you into an Omprakash or Omkarananda or better still, Omkareshwarananda.”

My eyes lit up at the sound of that grandiose-sounding name. Yes, I had found a true well-wisher in the guise of Surya, I mean Swami Suryapakash.

A few days later, I got the opportunity I was looking for. Swamiji was sitting on his swing in the Kutir lawn. He had a kid on each side: Anurag to his left and Atmakalyani to his right. And Swamiji had put three stripes on both of them!

I felt a pang of boyish envy. I approached Swamiji then and there and asked, “Can you triple-stripe me as well?”

Swamiji looked at me with a mischievous smile, “Yes, definitely. But in due course of time.”

A few weeks later, I understood what mischief Swamiji had been planning that day. At a program in Jyoti Mandir he called me and announced to all present that he would be ‘triple-striping’ me. My joy knew no bounds. I rushed up to where he was seated and proudly presented my forehead. Swamiji dipped his fingers into what looked like a reddish



coloured paste. ‘Hmmm,’ I thought, ‘maybe this is a special initiation. Instead of being triple-striped with white ash, I’m getting a vermillion upgrade.’

Swamiji’s fingers moved over my forehead in an unusual way, only reinforcing my belief in the holiness of my initiation. When he was done, he put a garland around my neck and made me turn around to face the audience, who giggled and clapped wildly. I smiled too, not knowing the real reason. It was only later when I looked at myself





in a mirror that I saw the red three-pronged trishul on my forehead! I could now understand how Sage Narada must've felt when he saw the reflection of his monkey-like face . . .

Jokes apart, Swamiji stayed true to his word, and later that year on the auspicious occasion of Guru Poornima, he initiated me into the sacred sannyasa tradition. It was a poignant moment indeed for me and my parents. Also I had a new name now. Guess what? Swami Om. So much for paying heed to Swami Suryaprabh's brainwave.

Years rolled by. Having spent an idyllic decade in the ashram, I had to step out to pursue my higher education. The next time I returned, Swamiji had embarked on the next phase of his life, his sannyasa mission. He was now engaged in the arduous panchagni sadhana, which he had graciously allowed us to witness in the Akhara area of the ashram.

The first thing I noticed about Swamiji's panchagni vedi were the tall spears. Turning to Swami Prembhav, I asked, "What are they for?"

"Protection. Sri Swamiji used a *trishul*, the weapon of Lord Shiva, during his panchagni. It's only appropriate



that Swamiji is using the *vel*, the famous spear of his son, Kartikeya,” she replied.

The mention of Kartikeya (another of Skanda’s many names) instantly reminded me of Swami Sivananda’s story about Skanda and Shiva in the dream long ago. Later as I was doing parikrama of the panchagni vedi, apart from the pictures of Sri Swamiji, Hanuman and other deities, I saw a beautiful bronze-coloured statue directly in front of Swamiji. Even though I had never seen that figure before, I instinctively knew its identity.

“Isn’t that a statue of Skanda in front of Swamiji?” I asked Swami Prembhav later to confirm my gut-feel.

“Yes,” she nodded and then added with a smile,





“Did you know that another name of Skanda is Gangeya, the son of Ganga? It is only fitting that Swamiji, our very own Gangaputra, is there together with Gangeya as he performs his formidable panchagni sadhana on the banks of the Ganga. It appears as if Swamiji’s very body has become an altar for the Absolute through this rigorous sadhana. Truly a temple of ॐ.”

Later as I was leaving Akhara, I bumped into Swami Ratnashakti. After exchanging pleasantries, I recounted Swami Prembhav’s remarks about Gangeya and Gangaputra. “Isn’t the juxtaposition between the two Ganga offsprings totally fitting? One, the subduer of asuras and demons, the other the subduer of the senses and the mind . . .”

Swami Ratnashakti didn’t let me finish. Hearing my remarks she got all excited, “Did you hear about the wondrous experience Swamiji had after visiting a Skanda temple in South India?” Seeing my blank look, she continued, “This happened on one of his recent pilgrimages down south. First he visited the Meenakshi temple in Madurai and then went on to visit a famous Skanda shrine in Palani Hills. It is believed that Skanda often visits there to

spend the night. There, Swamiji performed his anushtana right beside Skanda's bedchamber, and he had a vision of himself within a Sri Yantra, which was slowly taking shape around him. Not only did he have that vision, all those who accompanied Swamiji had it . . ." and her voice trailed off as the memory brought forth an overwhelming rush of devotional fervour.

I was also overwhelmed by a memory, of Swami Krishnapriya speaking aloud Swamiji's own words ". . . I started chanting the mantra ॐ before the instrument, and, the picture that emerged after some time was that of the Sri Yantra . . ."

On my way back from Akhara I stopped over at Jyoti Mandir to pay my respects to the Akhanda Jyoti. As I stepped inside, I noticed a new painting of the three gurus on the wall. I walked towards it to take a closer look. In the dim light of Jyoti Mandir, I noticed another swami standing there and praying. This is what I heard him say:



*If you want to convince yourself
of the existence of Brahman
All you need to do
is think of Satyam
If you want to ask something
good and auspicious from Brahman
All you need to do
is think of Sivam
And if all you want is play
with the beautiful, all-attractive Brahman
All you need to do
is think of Niranjan*

I spent the rest of the day reflecting and contemplating on all that I had seen and heard. Many things that had hitherto been jumbled started becoming crystal clear. I decided to write down all my experiences from the last few years. By the time I finished, it was almost sunset and it was time for the evening sadhana. As I approached Satyam Vatika, the venue for the evening program, I could hear the strains of a soulful kirtan. Suddenly something clicked. It was as if the last missing piece had fit into the jigsaw puzzle. The day couldn't have ended in a better way and I started to hum along . . .

ॐ Niranjan, ॐ Niranjan
ॐ Niranjan Anandam
Brahma Niranjan, Vishnu Niranjan
Shiva Niranjan Anandam



SATYAM TALES 12





Satyam Tales

Commenced on the occasion of World Yoga Convention & BSY Golden Jubilee, 2013

ॐ *Niranjan* is the twelfth in the series of *Satyam Tales* depicting the life and teachings of our guru, Sri Swami Satyananda Saraswati. Through the medium of these simple narratives, we hear the voice of Sri Swamiji inspiring all, irrespective of age.

This is the story of a young boy named Om and his unrelenting quest to unravel the true purpose and meaning of his (rather terse) name. His journey takes him through many interesting encounters and events, including trysts with his guru, grand-guru and great-grand-guru, until he finally beholds the underlying divinity and luminosity of the guru tattwa.

This story is a delightful read for children, adults and old alike. It is an invaluable message for those engaged in the world and for those seeking the spirit. This journey is your journey, these challenges are your challenges, and this victory is your victory. It is a story that will touch your heart, give you joy, hope, conviction and, above all, faith. Yes, you too can realize the godliness inherent in your own guru.

—Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

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Please note:

- This collection of *Satyam Tales* is dedicated to our masters, Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati and Sri Swami Satyananda Saraswati, and is the vehicle to bring their spiritual and yogic teachings in an understandable and applicable form into the lives of individuals throughout the world.
- *Satyam Tales* will be exclusively published by Yoga Publications Trust to ensure the accuracy and correctness of the teachings and the context in which they are being presented.
- *Satyam Tales* is a loving offering to all the children and the future generations of the world to remind them of their true nature and inspire them to explore and enhance their own potential.
- We invite all aspirants to share these tales with your group and if you have some tales of your own, we request you to contribute as well. You can also publish these tales in your own language, fulfilling the conditions of YPT, for which you may contact:

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