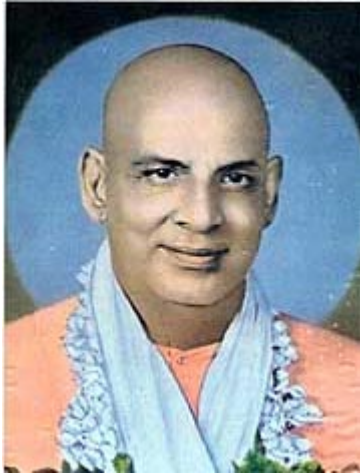


Sure Ways to Guru Kripa

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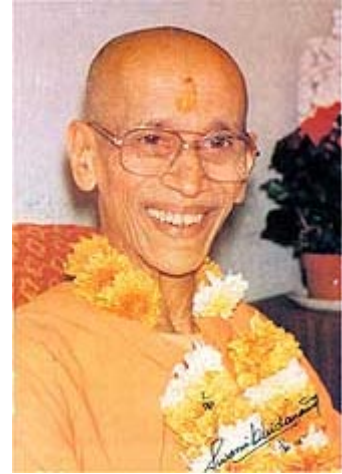
Sri Swami Chidananda



**Sri Swami Sivananda
Founder of
The Divine Life Society**



**SERVE, LOVE, GIVE,
PURIFY, MEDITATE,
REALIZE
So Says
Sri Swami Sivananda**



Sri Swami Chidananda

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SURE WAYS TO GURU KRIPA

HOW TO RECEIVE GURU'S GRACE

We have been told by our scriptures that guru kripa is a wonderful, mysterious factor that will enable the aspirants to seek and to attain the summum bonum of life, Self-realisation, darshan of God, or moksha. Whether the disciple does sadhana or not, whether one is deserving or undeserving, guru kripa sets aside all normal laws that operate in the spiritual plane and takes one to transcendental bliss. If we are to believe the scriptures, we should say that there is nothing except guru kripa needed for us to attain perfection in life.

If it is also true that the Guru is an infinite ocean of mercy, that his kripa ever showers upon all seekers whether they are worthy or unworthy, whether they are qualified or not, then by this time we should all be apta-kamas, full of Bliss. Is that so? No. We find very much to our vexation that we are caught up; ignorance is there; illusion is there; we are deceived at every turn by our own lower self.

Wherein lies the defect? If both the above statements are true and yet disciples are still very much earthbound, something else must be wrong. What is that something else? We don't have the temerity to say that the scriptures are untrue. At the same time, we do not assert that the Guru is not compassionate, that the Guru does not shower his kripa upon us.

If we reflect upon this, some factors come up before us which are worthy of serious consideration. Guru kripa is undeniably a divine force that can turn even a stone into the infinite satchidananda, let alone a conscious being. There is absolutely not the least bit of exaggeration in the statement and the fact that the Guru is always gracious. But then, guru kripa has not only to be bestowed, not only to be given, but it has also to be received. In receiving it, we immortalise ourselves, divinise ourselves.

Unlimited charity may be bestowed by a generous-hearted donor who calls upon all who are in need to come and take. But not all the wealth of the world will be of any avail to an indigent one if he will not avail himself of this great opportunity and become a receiver. And therefore it is that the great Lord Jesus said: "Seek and it shall be found; knock and it shall open unto you; ask and it shall be given." It is not as though there is any dearth of divine munificence, divine grace or guru kripa. Light is not lacking, but then there is a Law that we have to ask, we have to seek and we have to knock, and having done it we must be ready to receive. If this is present, then guru kripa works all wonders; it will flow into us and raise us to the highest realm of immortality, eternal light and infinite bliss.

But then, how can we receive it? How should we conduct ourselves if we are to be ready to receive this grace? By discipleship. For, the question of Guru and guru kripa arises only for the disciple. For those who are not of the category named disciple, it is said that mercy, compassion, grace and ashirvad will be given, but not guru kripa. When I say guru kripa, it is something special, something mysterious, something that bestows not anything merely of this earth, but gives the highest thing which human life is here for. A devotee may get the blessings of a saint, the grace of a

saint. He may also be blessed and partake of the power of his compassion; but, for the attainment of the gift of guru kripa, we have first to be disciples.

How is it that one may be a disciple? It is not the Guru that accepts the disciple, but the disciple has to first accept the Guru. The disciple first of all has to render himself a sishya. Then he becomes deserving of and a rightful claimant to guru kripa. It is immaterial whether the Guru says "Yes, you are my sishya" or not.

Inasmuch as guru kripa takes us to the highest state, discipleship is qualifying ourselves to attain that highest state or the realisation of ourselves as satchidananda. Therefore, first of all, we have to feel that our present state as jiva—spirit enmeshed in a very agonising cage of flesh and bone—is something which is not part of our real nature, is something undesirable, something which we have to get rid of so that then we shall have peace and happiness.

Let us reflect and analyse: how many of us have got this feeling? How many sincerely wish to break out of this cage? If we have this feeling, then we are trying to grow into discipleship. Then we can approach the Freed One, for the Guru is the Freed One and one capable of freeing also. Then we can approach this Freed One and pray to him: "Oh, free us from this body." This prayer may not be expressed or articulated; but it must be recited from the innermost core of our being every moment of our life. Then alone can we expect guru kripa. If this pain and agony are not there, it is worthwhile trying to generate them. But such is the covering veil of dark maya that we are perfectly satisfied with our position.

To feel the necessity of mukti, Freedom, Divine Consciousness, of the higher Spiritual Life, we should resort to satsang, to study of scriptures; and we should paint vividly before our mental eye the wretchedness of human life on earth. These things will generate mumukshutva (desire for liberation). Mumukshutva is the first step if we have even to think of guru kripa.

Then we have to serve the Guru. Service is that mysterious something which pulls down the barrier that stands between us and the influence of guru kripa. Ego is the greatest barrier. Our old self-conceit and preconceived notions form a formidable second barrier. For all of this, service is the effective barrier-breaker.

What is the service of the Guru? Service of the Guru is to try our level best to carry out his upadesh, carry out the teachings of the Guru. Upon his sublime instructions we have to mould our life. We should also try to mould ourselves into that pattern of which he himself is a visible ideal. The secret of carrying out the instructions of the Guru to our humble best is a willing obedience in spirit. That is the most important thing. Readiness to bow completely down to the earth. Accept him as the leader and obey him. This obedience should be assiduously cultivated, for every aspect of our old nature, of our lower nature, our mental part, our indriyas, antahkarana, tries to see that we are prevented from developing this obedience in spirit; every time we move towards this attitude of obedience, the prompting will come from our old habit, from our preconceived notions: "Let us go the way in which we have been accustomed." This instinct of ages has to be overcome and broken down.

There must be joy in obedience to the Guru; and there should be a real craving in the spirit that “I should obey.” To be a disciple you should obey even in dream; the idea of doing anything which is contrary to the spirit of the Guru’s instructions should never arise in our consciousness. Day and night our sadhana should be to cultivate this attitude to perfection. If this is done, we are sufficiently on the way to qualify ourselves to receive guru kripa. This is the external part of the sadhana.

Inwardly we have also to break down the old set of ideas which somehow or other has crept into us regarding the Guru, his grace and its functions. It is a hard task, but it has to be done. Because, to the disciple, the nature of the Guru is not human. We should be completely blind to the human side of the Guru, and we should be conscious only of the divinity that he is. Then alone will we be able to partake of this kripa which will transform us from the lower human into the transcendental divine. Our relationship with the Guru is purely divine, purely spiritual, and as long as we have not completely rubbed out the last vestige of human relationship with the Guru, we shall not be able to enter into the divine spiritual relationship with the Guru.

Being our Guru we expect that he should relieve us of small troubles, bodily ills, financial difficulties, domestic problems, little paltry matters of this earthly life. We will get all that if we pray to the Guru, but that is all that we will get. That mysterious lofty thing called guru kripa will not flow into us. Therefore, first of all we should try to efface all human relationships with the Guru. For that, subjectively we have to work out an inner transformation; until that is done, his divine nature will not become fully revealed to us. As long as we consider ourselves to be human beings, earthly beings, with all the wants, limitations and weaknesses of earthly beings, we cannot fully enter into the awareness of the Guru in his absolute, divine essence. Therefore, our sadhana should be to generate divine consciousness and shed our human consciousness. If we begin to live here as divine beings with a divine destiny, then gradually the guru kripa and the divine aspect of the Guru will begin to manifest, and we shall begin to partake of the guru kripa.

We have to make the start. From the very beginning to the very climax, all has to be got from the divine source. Until we make ourselves fit and generate the divine consciousness that we are not human beings, but we are souls in bondage—who only need a little transforming touch of guru kripa—we will not be able to fully make use of the Guru as the divine being.

To illustrate this point: A prince, who has lost his heritage and does not know that he is a prince, happens, in his wanderings, to stand before his father’s palace, being cowed down in the consciousness of a beggar. What is the maximum he will ask? He will ask: “Give me shelter for the night; give me food for the day.” And that is what he will get. Supposing this very prince is made to realise: you are the heir to the kingdom. Then he will demand the whole kingdom. He will not demand food and shelter only.

Similarly, we have first of all to develop in us the consciousness that we are immortal beings, we are in essence satchidananda. Then we can demand that satchidananda consciousness from the Guru and the Guru will be able to give.

Finally, we have to take into consideration one more factor. Even if someone were to tell the prince that he is a prince, and he is to go to his father and demand the heritage, perhaps he is a minor.

The king may say: "All right, give him a palace, and he will become entitled to his heritage, the kingdom, when he attains majority." Even so, there may be certain inner qualifications which are necessary for the full and effective reception of divine grace; until they are attained by the disciple, he will have to wait. Therefore, even after having seemingly attained all the qualifications of the ideal disciple, we have to wait in humility and in patience. We cannot arrogate to ourselves a perfection which is only visible to the discerning vision of a divine sight. Patience and humility in the spiritual realm may have to extend over a period of decades. We have to wait like a dog at the doorstep of the Guru for a whole lifetime if need be. There is no loss here, for the goal is immortal life, freedom.

If we have become willing servants and willing, obedient disciples, then it is the natural law that guru kripa will flow into us unasked. But, let us not commit the mistake of dictating to the Guru how his kripa should flow into us. For we have within ourselves desires, our own ideas of what is good and bad, what is pleasant and unpleasant, desirable and undesirable; and we want guru kripa to conveniently adjust and adapt itself to our needs and fancies. Guru kripa may come in an unpleasant form. It may come in the form of a series of disappointments. We may think that the Guru has not bestowed his kripa upon us; but that disappointment itself will be his kripa. Many things may be seemingly good and pleasant, but it may be hurtful to our spirit, and that the Guru alone can perceive and judge. As a fond, careful mother, he may deny us that desire. But it will be the greatest manifestation of guru kripa, meant to remove all the obstacles and dangers that are in our path, and to take us nearer and nearer to the consciousness of satchidananda. We are not fit to judge whether we are ready to receive guru kripa or not and what form it should take.

The best thing is to humbly leave everything to the Guru: "I do not know whether I am a disciple or not. Therefore, O Ocean of Mercy and Compassion, pray make me a proper disciple. Generate in me that mumukshutva that makes me a disciple, and give me the spirit of willing obedience. Help me in trying to follow thy instructions. Help me in trying to mould myself upon the pattern set up by thee." This must be our constant prayer. And by this alone shall we be able to draw the kripa of our Guru and make our life fruitful. And the perfect way of praying is trying our best to be a real disciple.

GURU AND DISCIPLE

For the sake of the Goal, a disciple must be willing to give up everything petty, and most important of all, be willing to give oneself up, to renounce one's little self, to renounce the very reality of one's temporary, earthly being. "Whoever clings to his life shall lose it, and whoever loses his life shall save it." "Kill this little 'I'. Die to live. Lead the divine life."

Therefore our ancients have said: "This can be attained through discipleship. Go to a Guru, sit at his feet and ask for his knowledge." The Guru says: "Yes, I am here to remove the ignorance that is your bondage and give you knowledge."

Thus the essence of the Guru is to remove the ignorance that is the cause of bondage, sorrow and suffering. And the essence of the disciple is a keen eagerness, a great desire to be free from ignorance—the essential nature of which is ego—and attain illumination. Unless there is this willingness, this deep eagerness to attain illumination, then the disciple is no disciple. A hundred

Gurus cannot help unless the disciple has a great desire for liberation and is seeking to get rid of that which stands in the way.

GURU BHAKTI AND GURU SEVA

Guru bhakti and guru seva are important factors in spiritual life. Guru bhakti is devotion to the Guru. It helps to free the disciple from earthly attachments to other worldly things and beings. Guru seva or service of the Guru when properly done is effective in removing selfishness, laziness and cravings for comfort in spiritual sadhakas. True guru bhakti is in obeying and following the upadesha and instructions of your Guru. Real guru seva is to live your life and conduct yourself in such a manner that your life and personal vyavahara bring a good name to the Guru. It raises the Guru's reputation to higher heights and makes your Guru enshrined forever in the memory of all men. The best guru dakshina that can be offered to any Guru is a life lived in accordance with the Guru's teachings. A tree is known by its fruits. A flower is known through its fragrance. A country is known by its citizens. A father is known by the nature and behaviour of his son. A teacher is known by his students. This is the popular belief in human society. Hence, the devotees and disciples of any holy person must try their utmost best to make themselves the embodiment of that holy person's teachings and reflect guru upadesha in their own day-to-day life.

THE GREATEST GURU DAKSHINA

Today, Thursday, is the day of contemplating the Guru. Let us consider the question: What is the best reverence, what is the best worship, what is the best devotion, guru bhakti, and what is the best service, guru seva, that we can offer the Guru?

The best guru bhakti is to love all, to be kind and compassionate towards all and never hurt any living creature—to try as much as possible to benefit life around us, to be good, do good, and to serve, so that out of us only good comes, only help comes, only service comes, only usefulness. All that is positive, creative, constructive, auspicious, good, beautiful—that only should come to all life around us, all God's creation, through our thoughts, words and actions. Anything that is negative, anything that is destructive, harmful or injurious should never come.

Thus, there is no greater guru bhakti, there is no greater guru seva, there is no greater worship and adoration of the Guru than to become an embodiment of kindness, compassion and doing good to others. This is the greatest guru dakshina (gift to the Guru) also. This is the hallmark of discipleship.

What is the greatest worship of the Guru, the greatest reverence we can offer, the greatest bhakti and seva? Truthfulness is the greatest guru dakshina, the greatest guru bhakti, the greatest guru seva. This is the second great way of worshipping and adoring the Guru. There is no greater way.

All that contradicts truth contradicts guru bhakti, contradicts your reverence to the Guru. Reverence becomes a parody, an anomaly; it turns into an empty nothingness if we do not live to uphold that which the great Gurus of all time stood for, that which they proclaimed. Truthfulness,

therefore, in all things, integrity, therefore, in all things is the highest guru bhakti, the highest guru dakshina, the highest guru seva.

What is the greatest guru seva, guru bhakti and dakshina? Control the self, conquer the mind and its desires and be established in concentration and inner meditation. There is no guru seva, no guru bhakti, no guru dakshina higher than this. This is the highest way of paying reverence to the Guru. Be a person of self-control. To be a person of self-control, who has mastered his mind, its desires, vagaries and fantasies, to be established in self-control, overcoming the mind and successfully centering it upon God—that is the greatest guru bhakti and dakshina. That is the greatest guru seva and it is true reverence to the Guru who is Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesvara.

Lord Siva has a trident. It is a weapon of destruction. He holds it and he wields it. Lord Vishnu has a discus. It is also a weapon of destruction. He holds it and wields it. Brahma has no weapon of destruction or harm. He is an embodiment of ahimsa, non-injury. He gives life, he creates life. He holds a kamandalu in one hand, a japa mala in another, the Veda in another, and he gives fearlessness with the other hand.

Therefore, Brahma is the creator of life and the embodiment of ahimsa. Lord Vishnu is Satyanarayana, truthfulness, and Lord Siva is ever self-absorbed, perfectly self-controlled, with mind and senses withdrawn and his entire interior plunged into a state of deep, deep meditation. These three—ahimsa, satya, brahmacharya—constitute the essential part of guru tattva, and to reflect that in our own personality, in our own life, character and conduct, is to shine like the full moon, absorbing the light that shines in the Guru, in the guru tattva and embodying it in ourselves, reflecting it in all its fullness, glory and immaculate grandness and greatness.

That is discipleship. That is the greatest guru seva; that is the greatest guru bhakti; that is the greatest guru aradhana (worship); that is the greatest way we can pay our guru dakshina. To become an embodiment of compassion, kindness, truthfulness, perfect self-control and contemplation is the essence of discipleship. It is the essence of guru bhakti and seva.

May we contemplate these facts, these truths of our own individual personal spiritual life, and may we realise their truth and become blessed!

THE TRUE SPIRIT OF DISCIPLESHIP

Loving adorations to revered and beloved Holy Master Guru Maharaj Swami Sivanandaji in whose spiritual presence we are at this moment, and whose spiritual presence surrounds us from without as multifarious scopes for our spiritual evolution in our chosen field of spiritual sadhana! Whether it is selfless service, devotion and prayer, concentration and meditation, inner discipline in the form of japa and kirtan, or enquiry, discrimination, analysis and investigation through a keen, subtle intellect, sharpened by study and by listening to the same teachings, his spiritual presence draws us from all sides towards our highest blessedness, our greatest good, the supreme and successful fulfilment of our earth life.

That presence also prompts us from within to a life of goodness, prompts us, urges us, inspires us towards a life of truthfulness, purity of conduct and character, and of compassion and

kindness. And, by the power of his own lofty, inspiring example as well as his dynamic, awakening teachings, to be saintly, to be a good Samaritan, to be holy in our thought, word and deed.

Thus his spiritual presence is not confined only to this sacred Samadhi Hall. After this morning's spiritual fellowship, as you return to your respective rooms, his presence walks beside you. As you enter your room, you enter into his presence. His presence is also there as the thoughts over which you are reflecting. His presence is not confined to this 60 minutes from 5 a.m. to 6 a.m. It pervades this entire Ashram and prevails at all times, from morning till night and during the night as well.

If you are conscious and aware of this presence, his presence is a hundredfold more; you feel it a hundredfold more. If you are either in a state of forgetfulness or a state of distracted attention, with your thoughts elsewhere, then his presence does not lessen one bit, but you deprive yourself of his presence to that extent. You deprive yourself of his uplifting, inspiring spiritual support, of his elevating influence, even as one can deprive oneself of fresh air. If one tightly closes all the doors and windows of his room, the air will soon become stale. Not that there is not enough fresh air and light. It is there in plenty, but we deprive ourselves of it if we foolishly bar its entry by not understanding what we are doing.

So, whether it is done deliberately, or whether it is done unknowingly, the result is the same. We cut ourselves off from that which is very important, very valuable, very desirable and very necessary. Therefore, to cultivate conscious awareness of the wealth that we possess and conscious awareness of the need to utilise it moment by moment in all of life constitutes one of the important ingredients of discipleship. If this awareness of the immediate presence of the source of your inspiration is not consciously, diligently, carefully, patiently, earnestly, sincerely cultivated, then no harvest will come.

It is not sufficient for a farmer to just sow the seeds, important as that is. He must follow it up with great labour, unlimited toil, day after day until he reaps the harvest. It requires ceaseless vigilance to protect that which he has sown.

One of the essential ingredients of a true Buddhist, for example, is a conscious awareness that the great Enlightened One is not a was personality of 2500 years ago, but He is very much an is power an is principle, an is presence—an is factor and not a was personality. If this is lost, the Buddhism of the Buddhist lost.

The Christianity of a true, devout Christian is similarly such a living awareness of the here and now presence of the great Master: "When I rest at night, He is there beside me, watching me. When I wake up in the morning, He is there beside me. When I go about my daily business of life. He is by my side." It is this awareness that makes one a real follower of the great Master.

For then, in this watchful presence and as true followers of an ideal teacher, we will at all times, upon each step of our day-to-day life, before we act, feel: "What will he think? How would he who is beside me want me to act at this moment? How would he wish me by my action to bear witness to my discipleship, to my loyalty to his teachings, to his perfection which I keep before me

as my ideal?" For the disciple follows the ideal placed before him by the Guru in and through his own human personality.

The essence of discipleship, the essence of being a true follower of any great teacher, is, therefore, the awareness of the presence of that teacher—both as an ideal as well as a teaching, both as a light upon the path as well as the path. For the teacher's upadesa, his spiritual instructions, his wisdom teachings, shed light upon the path. And the teacher's life, by embodying all that is lofty and sublime, all that is noble and spiritual, becomes the way: "I should live even as my teacher lived. I should walk and talk even as he taught by the way he walked and talked."

Great teachers never belong to the past. They belong to the present as well as to the future. They are ever present. The Guru is never absent. He is never remote. He is always immediate, both in space as well as in time. He is even more immediate in Consciousness that does not relate either to space or to time. He is always there. You are always in It, and It is always within you. It is something that does not need the support of space or time.

Therefore, cultivate the consciousness of the permanent and perennial presence of the Guru: "He pervades all my life. He prevails throughout my being and throughout the living of my life. He always prevails. He is with me morning, afternoon, evening and night. He is with me wherever I go, not merely when I go to his temple or his Samadhi. I am myself a living temple of his presence, and in and through me he continues to live and to shine. He draws me in the right direction from without, and he urges me in the right direction from within."

This, indeed, is the key to true discipleship and to a successful spiritual life. This is the way to obtain the highest and the maximum benefit from that being we call the spiritual master or the Guru. This is the inner spiritual truth about the subtle and unparalleled relationship of a sincere seeking soul and the Guru that is sent in order to put the individual soul into contact with the great, eternal, infinite and all-perfect Universal Soul that is at once our origin, our destination and our destiny as well.

This is the spiritual truth of the inner field of one's spiritual evolution unto Divine perfection. It is the "Guru factor" that is crucial for bridging the gap between the individual soul that is wandering in this phenomenal existence and the Universal Soul that is one's eternal abode, one's true eternal ground, one's real natural place of being, one's true home.

The Guru is, therefore, a visible manifestation of the love and compassion of the Universal Soul. And, the true spirit of discipleship is the manifestation of the grace and benedictions of the Universal Soul. When these two are present, a miracle happens—the miracle of spiritual transformation and a spiritual rebirth.

May you realise the loving compassion of God that has come to prevail in your life. May you realise the grace and the blessings of God that throbs within you vibrantly as your true spirit of discipleship. Realise both of them and become truly blessed!

THE GURU IS HIS TEACHINGS

By the light of the sun, the whole world awakens. By the light of the sun, darkness is banished, slumber gives place to wakefulness and sloth gives place to activity. By the light of the sun, all beings in this world see things, perceive things clearly. In darkness, one stumbles and falls, loses one's way and is ever in danger of injury. In the light one is able to proceed, move towards one's goal; one is safe from danger. All progress, all activity is temporarily suspended in darkness.

Thus the sun is the awakener; the sun is the enlightener; the sun is the marga darsaka (one who shows the path). It is the sun that guarantees smooth, unhampered progress towards each one's destination. When the sun is not there, one is, as it were, blind, even though having eyes.

In the life of a sincere seeking soul, in the life of a jijnasu, a mumukshu, a sadhaka, a spiritual aspirant, the Guru is, as it were, the sun. It is the Guru that awakens us from our slumber of ignorance. It is the Guru who, by his light, banishes the darkness of ignorance and wrong notions that the jivatma has about life, and brings in the light of right reasoning, right perception and right thought. It is the Guru that also makes us see the way, through his own lofty, sublime personal example, through his own dynamic philosophy, through his own teachings and personal instructions.

It is the Guru that points out the path and makes us see the path clearly. He points out the pitfalls and dangers upon the path, makes us alert, vigilant, jagrit. And, even as the sun initiates activity, so the Guru inspires us to arise, awake, seek knowledge, attain illumination and become forever blessed. All this and more the Guru does.

And the effulgence of the Guru, the radiance of the Guru, the light of the Guru, is his teachings, jnana-upadesa. It is his message, his sandesa, his instruction, his adesa. These constitute the real Guru and these constitute real guru kripa.

What is Guru's grace? It is not some mysterious something that comes out of him, as Gurudev used to say, like water out of his kamandalu. His kripa, his anugraha (grace) is in the form of his sandesa, upadesa and adesa. They constitute the manifestation of his grace. His teachings, his admonitions, his instructions to us and his positive, imperative directives are the dynamic expression of his grace.

“Sleep no more; wake up; sit in asana; do japa. Meditate on the Supreme Being. Read one chapter of the Gita. Have sattvic diet. Be simple in life; reduce your wants. Control anger through kshama (forgiveness). Observe mauna for some time every day. Speak the truth at all costs. Observe brahmacharya. Do charity every day according to your ability. Introspect; find out your defects and remove them. Draw inspiration from elevating, inspiring svadhyaya; daily svadhyaya will increase your knowledge and wisdom; your mind will become transformed and your heart purified, elevated and inspired. Read the lives of saints. Thus progress day by day.”

In this way, the Guru gives practical suggestions and warns that these are all important spiritual canons and must be observed rigidly. You should not give any leniency to the mind. And if you do something wrong, punish yourself, atmadanda. Great ones have progressed through this

method only. These positive and imperative commandments, adesa, directives, to spiritual aspirants, sincere seekers, disciples, devotees, constitute anugraha. They constitute guru kripa. They constitute the light in our life, the light that illumines our path and which shows clearly the goal that we have to attain.

Thus the Guru never passes away; the Guru is never absent. He is immortal and deathless and has come to teach us that we are immortal and deathless. As long as the sun and the moon and the stars continue to shine in the sky above us, the Guru is present in the lives of all beings in the form of his resplendent teachings. Guru jnana-upadesa, the wisdom teachings of the Guru, are our wealth and treasure. They represent for us visible kripa. They are for us, and they constitute, the ever-present light that shines and illumines our life and the path before us.

Understand this clearly and walk in the light. Understand this clearly and know that the Guru is where there is reverence for his teachings, an eagerness to fulfil his teachings and a keen desire to follow the path pointed out by him. Where there is an earnest, ardent and fervent wish to move along that path, to practise his instructions, there the Guru is fully present and guru kripa is fully present. The anugraha of the Guru enriches such an aspirant.

Jagat Guru Lord Krishna is not present before us now. We cannot sit before Him and ask Him questions, put our problems before Him; we cannot write Him a letter and get His instructions in reply; we cannot telephone Him. He is not here. But as long as the sun, moon and stars shine in the sky, as long as the Gita is still a living treasure for humanity, who can say that Krishna does not live? Who can say that Krishna kripa, Krishna's anugraha is not there? Who can say that? Because He says that I am present in the Gita; My light is in the Gita; Gita is My very heart.

There are millions of Buddhists all over the world. Are they able to meet Buddha, ask Him questions, get replies, telephone Him? But yet, how many inspired souls there are walking the noble Eightfold Path and attaining enlightenment, Buddhahood! They do not walk in darkness who have made Him their light, the sun of their life.

Because they have the right perception, millions upon millions are benefited by the teachings of the great ones. We have their grace, their presence, their strength and force and power and light in our lives. Their words are words of power. Their invisible presence is a force. Jivanmuktas never die—brahmavit brahmaiva bhavati (The knower of Brahman verily becomes Brahman). He becomes that which he has sought, the one supreme non-dual existence, ekameva'dvitiyam brahma. That the brahma-jnani becomes, and, therefore, he pervades, he is ever present, sarvam khalvidam brahma.

Put these truths together. The brahma-jnani is filled with Brahman, for prajnanam brahma—jnana itself is Brahman. Buddhi (knowledge) itself is Brahman. Prajna (awareness) itself is Brahman. And the enlightened one becomes prajna. He becomes Brahman, and Brahman IS, not was. Brahman is here, now. Brahman alone is; all this is filled with Brahman—brahmaiva kevalam, sarvam brahmamayam.

God has given us intelligence and discrimination—viveka, vichara. Think, ponder, reflect deeply. See the truth clearly before you; live in the light of the truth and forever become blessed.

Thus one should live a dynamic life guided by the light of the ever-present Guru's teachings. He dwells in, he works through, and in the spirit he is dynamically present in, his Guru jnana-upadesa. That is the real Guru. Otherwise, even if he is alive in flesh and blood before us, if one doesn't have the reverence to follow his teachings, he is as good as not existing for you. But, even if he does not exist, if you make his teachings the light and guide in your life, then he exists for you.

What is the sun if not its light? The sun is no sun if there is no light. The sun is the sun because it radiates perennial light, an inexhaustible, unbroken supply of light. Even so, the Guru is his jnana-upadesa.

Let us, therefore, rejoice that we have this treasure, we have this kripa. We are walking in the light of lofty, luminous, illuminating and enlightening teachings. Therefore, let us move with determination, enthusiasm, firm confidence and conviction that we shall attain and achieve in this very body, in this very life. For the force of the Guru, the power of the Guru infills us. The one thing needful is right perception, right understanding and right exertion, purushartha. Then everything becomes achieved. In time, everything becomes achieved.

THE GURU LIVES WITHIN YOU

Worshipful homage unto the eternal, beginningless and endless Cosmic Being, the Eternal Reality, nitya-satta, that is the source, support and goal ultimate of all existence, that is the all-pervading, indwelling Reality in the midst of the ever-changing and vanishing names and forms, one without a second, the Absolute, the ever present, the infinite. May His divine grace speed you towards the great goal of illumination, liberation and divine perfection!

Loving adorations to our revered and beloved Master, Gurudev, in whose invisible presence we are gathered together here at this moment, who, nevertheless, lives in each and every one of you as a vision, as an ideal and as a goal. His living wisdom teachings are the source of your inspiration. They are the force and power that urges you onward in a self-chosen direction towards an accepted goal and an adopted way of life.

Thus, he lives in you as the urge and aspiration to divine life. He lives in you as an aspiration to attain divine perfection. He lives in each one of you as a great longing and yearning to transcend the limitations of time and space and enter into that pure realm of eternity and infinity which is your natural, inalienable state, into your true, everlasting, unchanging, imperishable, immortal spiritual identity.

That is your abode. It is a state of consciousness, not a geographical location. It is a state of perennial, eternal experience, not any place to attain beyond the clouds. It is actually the substratum of your present state of exteriorised, objectified consciousness. It is the objectless centre of all things. It is your present state—the basis, the substratum upon which these ever-changing states of waking, dreaming and sleeping fitfully go on rotating, keep on coming and going.

Realise yourself as that which is the unchanging, the ever stable, the support of these three states, an unaffected, detached witness, a centre of illumined awareness, a centre of pure, distilled

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quintessence of unalloyed bliss, a centre of profound, imponderable peace that passeth understanding.

That is your inalienable state. Realise this and be established in the pure experience that “I am the Atman beyond name and form, transcending time and space, devoid of any limiting adjuncts. I am Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute.” Realise this and be free!

May the benedictions of beloved and adorable Holy Master and the supreme grace of the Divine enable you to reach this experience here and now. That should be your one aspiration, your one determination, your one longing, your one aim, and the one objective with which you live and breathe and act. Then alone you are fulfilling your life’s divine mission. God bless you all!