

Pujya Swamiji's visit to Muscat 25th Feb to 2nd March, 2009

Pujya Swamiji's visit to Muscat from the 25th of Feb to the 2nd of March made a great impact among the Indian community living in Oman in general and in the heart of devotees who attended in large numbers the discourses of Pujya Swamiji at the Sri Krishna Temple Hall, Darsait, Muscat, for more than one reason.

The most significant part of the visit was the high level meeting of Pujya Swamiji with His Excellency Sheikh Abdullah bin Mohammed al Salmi, the Minister of Awqaf and Religious Affairs, Sultanate of Oman, and the friendly discussion thereof. This is considered a great honour for the community and a reward for the peaceful co-existence with the Omani brothers. Subsequently, speaking to a reporter during an interview to a weekly newspaper, Pujya Swamiji described their meeting as the beginning of a dialogue that he was looking for and also praised Oman for the religious freedom.

The local news paper carried a brief report on the meeting the next day including a picture showing Pujya Swamiji with the Minister. In this part of the world, such occasion is very rare and carries a lot of



importance for the Indian community living in harmony in the Sultanate of Oman. We are immensely grateful to the Hon'ble Minister and Pujya Swamiji for giving us such an opportunity to rejoice our life in Oman.

The talk-series of Pujya Swamiji was inaugurated on the 25th of February in the presence of Mr.& Mrs. Kanak G Khimji and Mr.& Mrs. Kiran Asher.

The programme started with a melodious prayer song by Mrs. Geeta Sundaresan, a renowned music teacher. Mrs. Kalpana Khimji formally inaugurated the programme by lighting the lamp.



emphasized that it should be understood properly, thoroughly and intimately.

Pujya Swamiji chose 11 verses from the whole of Gita in different order to suit the unfoldment of its vision and termed it as a Bouque of Gita. Explaining the meaning of Bhagavad Gita, he said "the Gita indeed is the Gitam of Bhagavan, who has the unlimited sakthi for creation, sustenance and

Mr. Kiran Asher, in his address thanked Pujya Swamiji for his sixth visit to Oman and highlighted the importance of listening to Pujya Swamiji. He said, "It is not the presence of someone that brings meaning to life, but it is the way someone touches your heart that gives life a beautiful meaning. Pujya Swamiji has touched our heart."

Mr. Asher also thanked the Omani brothers from all walks of life and their beloved leader of the country, His Majesty, for their consideration because of which they were able to maintain their culture in Oman and listen to Pujya Swamiji.

Pujya Swamiji began the talk in his typical style, saying "We are not tired of certain things, like looking at one's face in the mirror". The Gita is a mirror in front of us, revealing our beauty against all our self damaging notions, and convincingly makes you see that it is you." He praised the Gita with quotations from the Sastra and

resolution of the jagat and enjoyed the six-fold virtues, without any limit. We also enjoy these six-fold virtues, but in a limited way. This is how Lord Krishna is presented by Sri Veda Vyasa in the Mahabarata. Arjuna's conflict between affection and duty made him paralyzed in the battlefield and finally surrender to Lord Krishna, who converted this topical issue into a fundamental problem of human being and began his teaching.

Elaborating the fundamental problem, Swamiji said: "As a self-conscious being, one finds himself or herself a wanting person, always wanting, except in moments of happiness. In moment of joy, all conditions resolve and one becomes happy. Such happy moments are windows to see yourself, revealing the possibility of one being different from the wrong notions one has about oneself. Pujya Swamiji described the buddhi as the greatest wealth for a human being. That is why in Gayatri mantra, one asks only for a mind with a capacity to make right

decision, and not money, education, power, kingdom and so on. Life is a series of decisions and you are what your decisions are, knowingly or unknowingly. Naha Diyaha Prachodayad – Not only you pray for you alone, but for the whole family. All around you have to be happy for one to be happy; the community, society, the country and the humanity in general. Pujya Swamiji stressed the importance of proper thinking to be at the right time and right place for achieving success. He said our Rishis were just marvelous. They did know exactly what is to be prayed for.

“Self-consciousness is uninhibited in a human being and no other living being has this uninhibited consciousness, if the behavior indicates anything. While all other living beings have self-identity to perpetuate one’s species, human being is peculiar in that it is capable of self-judgment, leading to complexes. The judgment is not based on enquiry or pramana and as one grows one discovers only an ego, being identified with body, mind and environment. The judgment has personal characteristics – some are peculiar and some are common said. That human being has complex is common and what makes the complex is peculiar to each individual. Only the common characteristics of human judgment are taken up for the discussion and not the peculiar characteristics. Any way one looks at oneself one is wanting. Being wanting and at the same time being happy – these two things do not go together”.

Though one is wanting, still one is happy in spite of himself occasionally. That proves the possibility that one need not fulfill all the desires or fix up in every sphere of one’s life in order to be happy. In spite of all

limitations, one discovers oneself to be happy. In moment of happiness, you don’t remember yourself, the self that you identify with like ‘I am so and so’. That wanting person is gone for the time being and only the happy person rules the heart. The world is the same, society is the same, the body is the same; still you are able to be happy being yourself. Gita tells it is a privilege to have desires and ambitions and Lord Krishna tells “I am manifest in the form of desires in human mind” and that is a very big statement. There is nothing wrong to have desires, but with certain clauses.

“When it comes to seeking money, one has to ask the question whether really one is seeking money or one is seeking something through money? If money is security, then one is seeking security, buying power or freedom. Money gives certain economic elbow room no doubt, but one wants to be happy and secured at the end. Security is not outside. What is outside is not secure. When one is conscious of himself or herself as a person, the body is insecure bound by time, subject to illness etc. The body is subject to aging. Whether one grows or not, one is aging! Naturally I will feel insecure and that insecurity is centered on “I”. That means I self-judge that I am insecure. This judgment is a problem and needs to be examined if it is really true. When I forget my judgment, I am secure and then I can be happy. Happiness I seek is centered on myself, not dependent upon any situations, so that I go about fulfilling my desires. Desires are vibudhis, privilege. I re-organize my inner situation. I re-engineer myself and put things in their own places and I begin to enjoy what is given to me”

The body is given, the mind is given, the capacity to think, learning, remembering, recollecting, doing and achieving and the contemporary society is also a privilege given to me—given to the person who is conscious of and who has all the complexes. When one forgets his notions, he is ok. We want to forget. Forgetting seems to be the answer to the problem. If you want to solve the problem, when you are aware of yourself, you should be the happiest, most secured, then you have made it. The more you are aware of yourself, the more you are secure and happy. Then you are the person who can contribute to the society. You are the person who is sought after by everybody. Therefore you have to discern the real thing you are looking for in life. You are looking for a secure person that you are. You are looking for a happy person in all situations.

There is nothing wrong in the pursuit of Artha (security) and Kama(desires); but they don't solve the human problem. In these pursuits, one becomes matured. When you are mature, you don't give a value more than what money has or anything else has. Money can buy you a book, but not make you understand anything. Therefore money is not everything. You are the person who has to manage the money. Money should not manage you. Unless you are happy being yourself you cannot manage money, property and home. You need to look at yourself in a way that allows you to enjoy being yourself. Only our Sastra has that vision. Our Sastra does not say one is a sinner. It says you are the very security. There is nothing more secured than yourself. You provide security to everything else; you are essentially secure. That is what you are experiencing whenever you are happy.

Pujya Swamiji then took up the topic of Moksha, as freedom from insecurity. He said "Freedom is not salvation. We don't have an equivalent word to salvation because salvation implies condemnation, which is not in our culture. You need to own up yourself. You have to look at yourself as the most acceptable, lacking nothing and wanting nothing. Everything is an addition, a luxury. Buddhi is a luxury, to do, is a privilege, to interact with people is a privilege, to relate with people is a privilege, and the whole thing is a privilege. The one who is conscious of that is person who is adequate.

What a vision! It is matter to be understood, not a matter to be believed. What I do now is teaching; I am not giving some belief lectures. If it is a belief system, then just one page is enough. We have 17 chapters of teaching. Arjuna asking questions and there is more teaching to make you understand you are free from what you don't want to be. You are the most secured. You are the meaning of adequacy. You have to look at yourself in such a light that you are the meaning of comfort. It is not make-belief thinking nor it is positive or negative thinking. You need to accept. If somebody were to tell you that you are not wonderful, you know you are wonderful. You are totally acceptable. You are as good as you accept yourself and that's what counts in life. The goal of a self-conscious being is to enjoy being oneself, without a murmur. That is what the Gita teaches you. That is the purushartha that every person should accomplish. This is called moksha, freedom. You are free from your sense of insecurity. When the notion of becoming a meaningless person or useless person or inadequate person is forgotten, one is happy. This is

why in sleep you forget yourself; you are happy. The more you understand, the more acceptable you are. There is a complete shift.

One should have clarity with reference to what you seek in life. Once you have the clarity of what you want, then your life gains a direction, a meaning without changing anything. You continue to be what you are doing, continue to pursue what you are pursuing and at the same time, the big picture is very clear to you. All other pictures subserve the main picture. The whole life is a journey towards the big picture. That becomes yoga. Marriage becomes yoga, parentage becomes yoga, and everything you do is converted into yoga. It is purely attitudinal; the attitude shift takes place. Those who don't have clarity of what one is about are buffeted from one place to another like a reed floating on the ocean. Neither is it allowed to reach the shore nor to reach the middle of the ocean. What is to be achieved is only one thing, that is understanding the truth of oneself, the world and the God. Because the whole is Iswara and that wholeness is you. The whole cannot be separate from you. Therefore if you miss the security, you become insecure.

Pujya Swamiji explained the words Ksetram and Ksetrajna. He said, "I" and "Idam" i.e. you and everything else. One is knower and the other is known. The knower "I" is only one and the "known" is many. The word "I" can be used in one place only and not to mean many people. The meaning of "I" is only you. Everything is not "I". That is the truth. Any object of experience is Ksetram including our body. When I see you, I see your body only. You also see your body. But the knower in me and in you is one. The

body is called sareeram, subject to disintegration, and to be known as ksetram. The one who is conscious of the body, knows the body is Ksetrajna, which is indeed Atma, represented by the word "I". There is no second "I".

Explaining the "I" further, Pujya Swamiji said: "the "I" is avinasi, not subject to death. You are the direct witness and then you witness everything else. You are consciousness and in every piece of knowledge there is consciousness involved. It does not come into being. It shines by itself and everything is revealed by the consciousness. The erroneous notion that "I am subject to time" is a point of view from the body stand point. Everything is in consciousness and no object is outside consciousness including space. Nothing can destroy Atma – it is Sat, Chit and Ananda. We experience that in moment of joy".

From the third day onwards Swamiji introduced guided meditation at the end of the day's session and termed it as "Take Home Material". Each meditation session was marvelous and it was a silent journey onto oneself. No words can truly describe the effect of wholeness witnessed by the entire audience together.

On the fourth day, Pujya Swamiji introduced the Sthithaprajna, a person of ascertained knowledge. He started with a short definition, "For whom the knowledge is unshaken, not wobbling, free from doubt, much less vague." This is a symbol word coined by Arjuna. Only when Dharma is there, there will be Ananda; Dharma precedes Ananda. One is being happy in oneself by oneself and that person grows out of all

desires; that means I am tapping a source in myself to be happy. In spite of unfulfilled desires, one can be happy and experience happiness all the times. Experience does not reveal anything at all and understanding the experience as my nature is what the Vedanta talks about. The wholeness cannot be away from you and you cannot be away from the wholeness either.

PujyaSwamiji said, “desires are of two types: non-binding desires and binding desires. Non-binding desires are privileges in themselves. Fancies come and go and you don’t back them up. Once you back them up, they become desires. One can convert every desire into a non-binding desire by understanding that desire fulfillment is not happiness. When one listens to music, one is happy without fulfilling any desire. To be yourself, what desire you have to fulfill? For sugar crystal to be sweet, what desire it has got to fulfill? When the binding desires disappear, one understands fullness and is comfortable with oneself.

A power point presentation of AIM for Seva activities was shown to the audience on one of the days. Pujya Swamiji quoted a sentence from Sama veda to stress the importance of dhanam. “Dhanena adhanam Thara”. The incapacity to give is crossed over by giving. There is no other way” he said and added, “The more you are a grown up person, the more you are a contributor to the society. Less grown means, you are a consumer and insecure. As a human being one has to grow from being a consumer to a contributor. Our culture has made everybody a contributor while most of the other cultures have made everyone a consumer, a better consume at that. Therefore, by giving you care”.

Coming to the creation of this Jagat, Swamiji said “We are not totally away from Bagavan. If we are totally away, we can never understand anything at all. Everyone experiences the status of Bagavan occasionally, like with reference to a struggling ant on water, one has the choice to rescue it, or to leave it to its prarabda, or to destroy it. The ant is at our mercy. Sometime we are at its mercy too; like when it enters your ear!! Swamiji then raised the question “Who has created this world?” We find everything is given. Body is given to me, and I am not the author or owner of the body. Parentage is given, childhood is given. Plant itself is given. Within this Jagat, nobody is isolated from this samasti.

Everything is intelligently put together. The creation, presupposes knowledge with skill. We are all held by the laws of motions. The whole universe is in motion. If any planet moves a little slower, it will fall into sun and it is over! All are programmed by whom? Iswara. It is unintelligent on the part of the intelligent being to conclude that there is no such intelligent being. Two things are required for the creation: one is nimita or intelligent and the other upadana or material cause. Everything is reducible to its substratum – all the way upto Iswara, from shirt to fabric, from yarn to cell; then to particle. Then there is nothing external in fact and everything is internal, in the sense of mere cognition, resolving ultimately into consciousness itself.

That is the truth, too profound to see it immediately. With example it is possible; like the dream stage. There is no corridor between dream and sleep. In dream your knowledge is your world. You are Iswara to

your own dream world. Similarly the entire Jagat is Iswara's creation. It's all the way Iswara alone and that is why we say there is only God; not just one God. Your body belongs to the total. All that is there is Iswara's knowledge. What a vision! Truth is Atma. He is the material and He is the knowledge. Lord Krishna says, 'this Prakrti is blessed by me'; like the fabric lends its reality to the shirt.

On the last day, Pujya Swamiji summarized the whole topic to show how the Consciousness is not an object. The object and the subject are one and the same. You are both self-revealing and you reveal every object. It is the content of the very meaning of the word "I". If someone is hurt emotionally, in the unconscious there is always a counterpart to take care of one's emotion, if it is too much to handle. Through prayer, mediation and support system, it can be managed objectively. So objectivity is the clue. Life is full of pleasant and unpleasant situations. Pleasant keeps us going and we selectively remember the unpleasant situations. One is always successful and one needs to recognize one has been successful. Failures, we want to forget, but only end up remembering more. One is successful when talking, walking, digesting and doing what one does – all are indication of success, though one does not claim to be so. You take it for granted and that is the problem really. Don't take small little things for granted in life; then you are successful. Every other plus is an addition indeed.

Finally Pujya Swamiji touched upon the two orders of life style: a life of karma yoga and

a life of sannyasa. He said, 'Arjuna was committed to the spiritual pursuit. One can be anybody but still can be a sannyasi in mind. Arjuna wanted sreyas. The pursuit of knowledge is the same for a karma yogi and a sannyasi. It is the knowledge that makes the difference between a wanting person and free from being a wanting person. That person gets the samatwam, both in success and in unsuccessful situations. The result is different, but the attitude is same, and that person is a karma yogi in the day to day world.

The year 2009 is also significant for the Muscat devotees, as it completes 20 years of Swamiji's first visit in 1989. The current visit was found to be most beneficial, perhaps because of preparedness of the people. Apart from the daily talks, Pujya Swamiji also addressed children group, Veda chanting group, teachers group and also addressed the Gita Home Study students exclusively. Those who regularly study the Gita were immensely blessed by the close proximity of Pujya Swamiji and the interaction thereafter.

On the last day Mr.Kanak Khimji offered dinner to the volunteers, students, and other interested people numbering over 90 persons. In spite of the hectic schedule, Pujya Swamiji was able to meet everyone who wanted to personally meet him and talk to. We are ever grateful to the Khimji family for the hospitability extended to Pujya Swamiji.

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