

From: Lall Ram

Dear Seekers,
Namaste,

I share with you some Preliminary notions on Meditation.

"You must have a mental image of God or Brahman (concrete or abstract) before you begin to meditate." (Ibid., p 105)

Generally, a distinction of objects of meditation is made between Saguna (with gunas or qualities), Nirguna (without gunas or qualities). (Ibid., p. 135).

For example, meditation Vishnu, Krishna , Rama, Durga. Shiva are Saguna, and meditation on Aum, Soham, Sivoham, and the Maha Vakyas are Nirguna.

"A Bhakta practices Saguna Dhyana...

A Hatha Yogi meditates on the Chakras...

A Jnana Yogi meditates on his own self...

A Raja Yogi meditates on the special Purusha who is not affected by afflictions and desires." (Ibid., p. 129).

Swami Vivekananda wrote that "Men at the first stage of spiritual development have to make use of something external, and when the inner self becomes purified they turn to more abstract conceptions." (Complete works, Volume 3, Advaita Ashram, p. 362)

He also wrote: "The meditative state of mind is declared by the Yogis to be the highest state in which the mind exists.

When the mind is studying the external object, it gets identified with it" (Complete Works, Volume 4).

We should underscore the idea of oneness, identity or sameness. The Yoga of the Gita brings the two (Saguna and Nirguna) modes into focus when Krishna says that a true yogi sees him (or Atma) in every being, and every being in him or (Atma). (Gita 6.29-35)

One is free to choose among the manifestations of God during meditation—Rama, Krishna etc. (BS III 3. 59, p/ 502)

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa attained grace through puja, when the desire arose in him for a vision of Mother Kali. He walked and talked with Kali. Swami Vivekananda was shocked when the saint told him that, and the saint even gave him an experience of Samadhi by a mere touch.

Sri Ramakrishna had desire to see other forms as well. He narrated how he once took Bala Rama for a swim with him, and had to rescue him from drowning.

One does meditation a lot during puja.

In puja, Lord Ganesh is worshipped first, and the Dhyanam focuses on the parts of his body.

Then Kalsa puja is taken up with the Dhyana mantra describing the deity that the various parts of the Kalsa represent. Each deity that is worshipped in a puja has one or more Dhyana mantra.

There are Dhyanamams for sacred books as well. In the book Devi Mahatmyam (or Chandi), the Goddesses are adorned with beautiful Dhyanamams.

The Gita (Gita XIII.14) explains that every limb of Krishna is all potent, and therefore, worthy of meditating on. (see also comments on BS III.3.64) The Brahma Sutra commentary by Sankaracharya says that concentration and meditation are the same. (BS IV.1.8). Shankara advocated meditating on the Goddess Tripurasundarii forms with the appropriate Chakras, as well as the following Dhyanam:

"Whatever action it is of mine, may be taken (as intended) for Thy worship: (my) prattle, as muttering (Thy) prayer; the manifold forms of my manual work, as the Mudraa-s (gestures) employed in (Thy) worship; (my) loitering, as going round (Thee) clockwise; my taking nourishment, as offering oblations (to Thee); (my) lying down, as prostrating (before Thee); and (my) attending to all other comforts, as dedicating my entire self (to Thee). (Sundaraya-Laharii, Theosophical Publishing House, 1992, pp. 105-6)

What is the purpose of meditation?

Gita XI 47 and 48 says what the purpose is not. Basically, one cannot get a cosmic vision of the lord without his grace. "The highest goal of realization is profound Silence or Supreme Peace, wherein all thoughts cease and you become identical with the supreme self." (Shivananda, p. 317) The cosmic vision was available only to Arjuna, Sanjaya and Devaki (Ibid., p. 342), Particular (non cosmic) vision of God is all over in the literature. **"A Bhakta who meditates on the form of Lord Krishna will see Krishna and Krishna only everywhere when he is established in Samadhi."** (ibid., p. 348)

