

Baba Muktananda's

39th Mahasamadhi Anniversary

Jai Gurudev!

Dear Friends:

I hope you are all well and happy. On October 20th, the full moon day, we will commemorate the 39th year since Baba Muktananda took mahasamadhi. On this day we remember our beloved Gurudev with great love. At the same time we should also reflect on his teachings, particularly seeing what is going on in the world with the Covid virus. The experience has been a frightful one for many. With so many people dying, both young and old,



it has forced people to contemplate the mystery of life and death. It has made us ponder, “What is death?”

For the ordinary person, death is an unknown mystery, which brings fear and uncertainty. But for the yogi, death is nothing to fear, for they have experienced death while still alive. A few years before Baba left his body, he was interviewed by a documentary film maker on this very topic. Baba told the interviewer about his experience with death when he had a massive heart attack. He told the filmmaker how he had left his body and traveled to another realm (the world of the Siddhas or perfected masters), where he met his Guru, Bhagavan Nityananda. He remained there talking with his Guru for two hours, until finally his Guru told him, “Go, everything is alright.” At the time there were eleven specialists caring for Baba, all of whom thought he was surely dead. So they were amazed when he suddenly opened his eyes, and smiling told them to go and have their lunch, that everything was OK.

Baba then told the interviewer how yogis actually experience their own death through the practice of meditation. He said that when the yogi constantly meditates, and finally passes the third body, he enters the fourth body called turiya, the super causal body. It is in this body that the yogi travels to other realms, and sees many things there. Baba said that when he entered the fourth body, one of the places he went to was the realm of death, where he saw his ancestors, and people that he had known, but had since died. Baba said that from this, it is certain that death exists, and that there is life after death. Death is like the deep sleep state. The only difference is that after sleep the person wakes up, while after death the person does not wake up. However, after death the person will be re-born, and one day he will die. But this pertains only to the physical body, not the Self. Because the Self never dies. The Self is ancient, and always remains the same. Death cannot reach it.

Death is actually like changing one's clothing Baba told the interviewer. One day one wears a set of clothing, and another set the next day. These clothes are not who we are. We know this instinctively by the very way we refer to them. We say these are “my clothes”, “my pants”, “my shoes”. “This is my hat,” Baba told him, “but I am not the hat. In the same way, we say that this is my body, not that

I am these legs, or I am these arms, or I am this head.” Death is like that, today you have this body, and tomorrow you’ll have a different body. So one should not fear death. Only those who do not know themselves will experience fear. That is why one should meditate.

Baba then told the interviewer that someone had asked him whether he preferred to die sooner rather than later. Laughing, Baba told the person that he would rather go sooner rather than later. “That way I will get a new body,” Baba told him. “As you can see this one is now old. So, like a person whose clothes have become old and ragged, they acquire new ones.”

Every so often the planets come together to form certain malefic configurations which cause great suffering in the world. In the current pandemic, as well as others, including great wars, we see many people dying. This includes people of all ages: children, youth, adults, and the aged. But one should not be afraid. The date and time of one’s birth and death is actually determined by one’s destiny (karma). We take birth in this world in order to accomplish some purpose, and leave when this task is completed. In his book, *I Have Become Alive*, Baba writes:

“Human life is sublime. It is mysterious and worth knowing. It is the blossoming flower of happiness, the flame of God. But only to a person who really lives does life reveal its mystery. Life is great only for a person who is truly alive. What does it mean to be truly alive? To be truly alive means to know your own Self, to know the consciousness that pervades everywhere in the universe and lives within the human heart. A person who does not recognize his own Self, a person who identifies with his body, a person who thinks that only worldly life is real and that God does not exist — such a person is not really living.”

Therefore, let us live truly while we are here, and when we leave, let us leave with joy and dignity, having attained the Self. May Baba continue to bless you all.

Sadgurunath Maharaj Ki Jai!

With great respect and love,

Swami Prakashananda