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Sri Gurubhyo Namaha.

After the phenomenon called Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati came another one - Sri Abhinava Vidya Teertha [1954-1989] the 35th Jagadguru. Srinivasa was born on Nov 13, 1917. He was initiated into Sanyasa by Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati in 1931. He was Jagadguru for 35 years.

He was chosen and specifically trained to take over Peetadhipatyam from Sri Mahaswami. He is majorly responsible for the way Sringeri currently is. He built various buildings for devotees, Gajashala, Gooshala etc.

Acharya on conversions:
Once a person approached Sri Acharya that some other religions are trying to convert Hindus and requested Sri AVT to do prevent these conversions.

AVT replied - what do u mean by religion? Religion i.e. mata is related to 'mati' or intellect.
Caste is called 'jAti' which is related to janana or birth.
Ex- breed of a cow. we cannot change its qualities to resemble another breed by changing its name.

Hinduism is actually Sanatana Vaidika Dharma. Whose beginning is not known hence Sanatana. Most other religions have been startd by a person and has a date. Our Sanatana dharma hasn't been started by a person nor does it have a date.
How to change one's mata?

By advising an atheist, his mata can be changed to theist but jAti can never be changed. We think 'He was H, but now Xian'. In reality that is not possible.

A person who leaves his own dharma is called 'brhashta'.

Usually this is done for 4 diff reasons:
a. our dharma imposes some restrictions on food, liquor etc. some ppl get converted to enjoy these which are prohibited.
b. rules of marriage r strict. same gotra ppl, marrying elder lady etc r prohibited.

some get converted to circumvent these.
c. everyone in Sanatana Dharma has to do Karma like sandhya, yagnas etc. Ppl who do not want to perfrom Karmas get

converted to escape these.

d. in old days a brastha would be kept out until he repented. but if a religion says - u dont have to repent just say forgive then a brashta would naturally chose the easier way out.
This trend of converting from Hindus has been from time immemorial.

We've emerged victorious everytime. All v need to do is educate our ppl abt greatness of Sanatana Dharma.
This'll reduce conversions.

Such was Acharya's clarity of though regarding conversions. Relevant esp now given everything that is happening abt Gharwapasi.

Conversation between Acharya and a padre. Maybe we can make use of some arguments that Acharya proposed here when we encounter them.

Once a Xian Father came to see AVT. He wanted to build a church to convert.

Sri AVT: Why do u want to build a church?
XF: to preach.
AVT: preach what?
XF: abt xianity.
AVT: before others teach Me.
XF: ask me sir

AVT: when did ur religion start?
XF:abt 1973 yrs ago.
AVT: were ppl living before that?
XF: of course.
AVT: u say only those who follow ur religion will go to heaven. So what abt billions who lived BEFORE ur religion? did they go to hell?
XF: yes.

AVT: Is it logical? A govt doesnt impose such rule. it'll not penalize ppl who were before it formed a law. isnt it ridiculous? How could those ppl know abt some religion which wud be formed in future, ahead of time? Would God punish them for this?

XF: you are probably correct. they may have gone to heaven.
AVT: Now if they all went to heaven, how true is ur claim that only those who follow ur religion will go to heaven? U only agreed that ppl who didn't follow ur religion before it was created went to heaven.

Now will this not hold true even now for ppl who dont follow ur religion? meaning - by framing ur religion, have u not done injustice to those who are now going to hell??
XF: Sir, plz dont ask such questions. it is confusing.

AVT: Ok. leave it. Tell Me reason for various miseries in this universe.
XF: God.
AVT: So he made 1 person beggar and 1 millionaire so God likes one person and dislikes the other?
XF: How can we know that? it is all His wish.

AVT: if everything is His wish, why didnt he give happiness to all? why make some miserable?
XF: i dont know.
AVT: there seems no logic in ur reasoning.

AVT: sme ppl die as infants. sme die as old. when infants die where do they go? heaven or hell?
XF: certainly to heaven.
AVT: Oh! In that case our parents did injustice to us. They shud've killed us as infants so that we all wud go to heaven. right?

XF: Sir i cannot answer these questions. they are confusing me.
AVT: Ok. leave it. U said every1 goes to hell or heaven. When?
XF: Whenever He decides.
AVT: God must be crazy. He decides their fate whenever He wants.
XF: no no. there is certain way.
AVT: Which is?

XF: well.. sir..
AVT: Let Me explain what ur religion says. Correct me if needed.
XF: fine sir.
AVT: In our world if a man commits a crime, he's arrested and put in jail. Judge decides for what amt of time he has to be in it. after which he is released.

If the judge asks him to wait years and years until everyone commits a crime before passing his judgement, is there a way out for the prisoner??
XF: no.. yes but that what our bible says. sir now i don't know what is right

Sri AVT then consoled him saying - ur religion is greatest for u so is ours for us. it's incorrect to preach and convert. Our Sanatana Dharma is also eternal. Every creature earns merit based on its action.

Our shastras teach us viveka and vichara w/ faith. other religions rely only on faith. it is imp for religion to have both - faith AND rationality. Having only one is counterproductive.
Such was the tarkam [logic] prowess of the Jagadguru.

A relatively unknown thing is that like His Guru Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswami, Sri Abhinava Vidya Tirtha Mahaswami was also a Jivanmukta!

For seven nights starting from the day of him taking Sanyasa, Shiva Himself appeared in Sri AVT's dream-like state and taught him some esoteric Yogic practices. He recounts how Shiva looks in the book "Yoga, Enlightenment and Perfection of Swami Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahaswami".

Two days before taking sanyasa, he had thought, “Dreams are not under My control. Mistakes committed in them do not result in sin. Nevertheless, My renunciation should be so sincere and firm that after being initiated into sanyasa,

I should not see Myself in any dream as clad in white as 1 am now. I love chanting the Gayatri- mantra. Yet, as Gayatri-japa is disallowed for paramahamsa- samnyasins, I should not engage in it even in My dreams from the day after tomorrow.”

That was his nistha towards anything he did.

Sri AVT then goes on to describe his first encounter with Shiva Himself -

"As I saw Him then, the Lord had one face and two arms. He was extremely fair and radiant. His hair was matted and was tawny in hue. On beholding Him, I was so struck with awe that I stood unmoving. He smilingly looked at Me and raised His right hand in a gesture of blessing.

I felt a great power entering into Me. Automatically, I began to chant the Pranava mentally. He gestured to Me to sit down. A seat of deer skin with an ochre cloth spread on it appeared where I was standing.

I did namaskara and, in obedience to Him, sat down, even though He was standing. He came near Me. A big tiger skin appeared on the ground and He sat on it."

Then over the next 7 nights thru dreams, Shiva taught the Mahaswami hundreds of Yogic practices many of them not found in any book.

The Acharya told about His Jivanmukta state only in 1989 just a month or so before he left his body. Recounting from that here.

In 1935, or about 4 years after his initiation into Sanyasa, Acharya had become Jivanmukta, just like his Guru Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswami.

On one sulka-dasami day, Acharya was about to leave to Kalabhairava Sannidhi for his meditation, he went to take blessings of His Guru.

Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswami placed His hands on the head of Acharya and chanted the Panchakshari thrice.

Acharya felt he had to do Panchakshari Japam that day and left along with his shishya. Sri Mahaswami then clapped and called back the sevak and let only Acharya go towards Kalabhairava temple for his meditation. He recalled this as such -

"My mental chanting of the Pahcaksari-mantra (om namah sivaya) came to a stop and My mind thoroughly locked on to the divine form in the heart. Suddenly, the foim became extraordinarily vivid. No effort to concentrate was needed any more.

I could then literally experience the immediate presence of Siva. The affection and smile that I beheld in the Lord’s Tsana-mukha (upward face) in particular still enthral Me. The Lord appeared to be emerging from within and expanding. A deep long sound of Om was audible.

I then definitely beheld Siva in front of and facing Me. Oh, what a glorious sight that was! Then Siva blessed Me by placing His hand on My head. Having done so, He disappeared. How compassionate He is to grace in such abundance one so insignificant and lacking in devotion as I!"

Thus was Sri Sri Sri Abhinava Vidya Tirtha Mahaswami become a Jivanmukta. But that was a secret He held from the world until the time of His Videha Mukti. Sri Abhinava Vidya Tirtha gave Uttara Adhikaram to Sri Bharati Tirtha in 1974. Sri AVT attained videha mukti in 1989

After which our current Jagadguru, Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswami became the 36th Peetadhipati of Sringeri

In 1912, Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswami was installed as Jagadguru directly.

Our Acharya said that THE most important task as Jagadguru of Sringeri is to appoint His successor. In that task Sri Mahaswami, Sri AVT have been very successful and they passed their test with flying colors.

And given how the 37th Acharya Sri Sri Sri Vidhusekhara Bharati Maahaswami has been blessing us all it is evident that Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswami has also passed in His test.

Very rare are such institutions which survived thru ages with ever increasing splendor and such great Guruparampara. It is indeed at Sringeri that our present Jagadurus, the 36th & 37th in the unbroken lineage, adorn the throne as living symbols and guide all spiritual seekers

Sri Saradambikaye Namaha. Sri Gurubhyo Namaha.

Sometime later on, I plan on delving into detail on the teachings of the Acharyas. But that is for a different time.
Any and all mistakes in my commentary are entirely mine. What I did was just a drop in ocean.

With this I conclude my series on Sringeri. Hari OM.