

Chandi Path, Beginning Worship (pps 14-28), Class Transcript
Broadcast live from Devi Mandir by Swami Satyananda Saraswati
Class Duration: 36 min

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Discourse

Om Sam Saraswati Namah. Namaste.

The first thing that we do every time we sit down to worship, no matter whose worship we are performing, we say, “Thank you. Thank you for the privilege of worshipping. Thank you for your presence that I can sit before you and offer you for my devotion. I bow to you.”

So we make Devata Pranam. Let’s all turn to page 14. And Ganesh won the boon that he would be the first one to be recognized, the first one acknowledged, the first one to be worshipped in every ceremony.

Swamiji recites pages 14-28 in Sanksrit.

Let’s go back and translate a little bit. And remember, every time we sit down, the first thing we want to say is “Om Thanks for the privilege.”

We bow to the Respected Great Lord of Wisdom.

We bow to Laksmi and Narayana, the Goal of all Existence and the Perceiver of all.

We bow to Uma and Mahesvara, She who protects existence and the Great Consciousness or the Seer of all.

We bow to Vani and Hiranyagarbha, who create the cosmic existence. Saraswati is Vani and Hiranyagarbha is Brahma.

We bow to Saci and Purandara, Indra and his wife, who preside over all that is divine. Saci of purity made manifest. Indra, who rules all the indriyas, all the senses.

We bow to the Mothers and Fathers.

We bow to chosen deity of worship.

We bow family deity of worship.

We bow to village deity of worship.

We bow to particular household deity of worship.

We bow to the established deity of worship.

We bow to all the Gods.

We bow all the Knowers of Divinity

And even the rest of us who are trying to know divinity, we bow to you all. Thanks for being here with us.

I would like to describe Her form. Bearing in her ten hands the sword of worship, the discus of revolving time (It takes patience. You are not going to get it instantly), the club of articulation (we need those mantras), the bow of determination (Without the sankalpa, without the goal, without a definition of the objective of our life, it cannot be accomplished), the iron bar of restraint, the pike of attention, the sling, the head of egotism, and the conch vibrations. She has three eyes and display ornaments on all Her limbs. Shining like a blue gem, She has ten faces and feet. (So She has three eyes on each face and she has ten faces...that makes her a great seer, capable of seeing of a lot. 33 eyes!) I worship that Great Remover of Darkness whom the lotus-born Creative Capacity praised in order to slay Too Much and Too Little, when the Supreme Consciousness was in sleep. Now, this is the meditation of the Mahakali, Das Mahavidya. She has ten heads, she sees in ten directions, she has ten arms, she has five organs of action and five organs of knowledge. She has 10 feet because she dances like crazy and everything we that perceive is the dance of nature upon the stage of consciousness. Kali standing on the chest of Siva.

In the middle caritra (chapters 2-4), we get Mahalaksmi. She with beautiful face, the Destroyer of the Great Ego, is seated upon the lotus of peace. In Her hands, She holds the rosary of alphabets (She is always doing japa), the battle axe of good actions (She has nothing but good karma), the club of the articulation (She hits those asuras over their heads with her mantras), the arrow of speech, the thunderbolt of illumination, the lotus of peace, the bow of determination, the water pot of purification, the staff of discipline, the sword of worship, the shield of faith, the conch of vibrations, the bell of continuous tone, the wine cup of joy, the pike of concentration, the net of unity, and the discus of revolving time named Excellent Intuitive Vision. I worship that Great Goddess of True Wealth.

Laksmi, She is the laksha. She is the goal of the objective and She is the definition. She is also the goddess of wealth, the true wealth. She has 18 arms. She is the Mahisasuramardini. She is the slayer, the mardini of the great maha isha, the ruler of asuras, duality, the slayer of the Great Ruler of Duality. We call him the Great Ego. That is the form of 18-armed Mahalaksmi and She is a very handy lady to have around the house!

Bearing in Her lotus hands the bell of continuous tone, the pike of concentration, the plow sowing the seeds of the Way of Truth to Wisdom (She cultivates dharma), the conch of vibrations, the pestle of refinement, the discus of revolving time, the bow of determination, and the arrow of speech, whose radiance is like the moon in autumn, whose appearance is most beautiful, who is manifested from the body of She Who is Rays of Light, and is the support of the three worlds, that Great Goddess of All-Pervading Knowledge, who destroyed Self-Conceit and other thoughts, I worship Mahasaraswati.

That Chandi, who slays the negativities of Too Much and Too Little and other Thoughts; Who is the Destroyer of the Great Ego, and the Vanquisher of Sinful Eyes, Passion and Anger, and the Seed of Desire; the Energy that tears asunder Self-Conceit and Self-Deprecation, the Grantor of the highest attainment of perfection: may that Goddess who is represented by ninety million divine images or more, Supreme Lord of the Universe, remain close and protect me.

Om The Divine Fire is the Light, and the Light is the Divine Fire; I am One with God! The Light of Wisdom is the Light, and the Light is the Light of Wisdom; I am One with God! The Divine Fire is the offering, and the Light is the Offering; I am one with God! The Light of Wisdom is the Offering, and the Light is the Light of Wisdom; I am One with God!

Om The Divine Fire is the Light, the Light of Wisdom is the Light, the Light of Devotion is the Light as well. The Light of the Highest Bliss, Oh Goddess, is in the Light that we offer, the Light that we request you to accept. With the offering of Light, Om aim hrim klim camundayai vice. Everybody offer your light.

Now offer your incense. Om Spirit of the Forest, from you is produced the most excellent of scents. The scent most pleasing to all the Gods, that scent we request you to accept. With the offering of fragrant scent, Om aim hrim klim camundayai vice.

Om Earth is a reservoir of nectar, that is what we are doing here. We came here to live in a reservoir of nectar. All vegetation is a reservoir of nectar, the divine atmosphere is a reservoir of nectar, and also above. May all perceptions shine forth with the sweet taste of nectar for us.

Om The Divine Fire (Light of Purity) is the shining God, the Wind is the shining God, the Sun (Light of Wisdom) is the shining God, the Moon (the Lord of Devotion) is the shining God, the Protectors of the Wealth are the shining Gods, the Relievers of Sufferings are the shining Gods, the Sons of the Light are the shining Gods; the Emancipated seers (Maruts) are the shining Gods, the Universal Shining Gods are the shining Gods, the Guru of the Gods is the shining God, the Ruler of the Gods is the shining God, the Lord of Waters is the shining God. So may we also become shining and radiant like the shining Gods.

Om the Infinite Beyond Conception, the gross body, the subtle body and the causal body; we meditate upon that Light of Wisdom that is the Supreme Wealth of the Gods. May it grant to us increase in our meditations.

Om the gross body.

Om the subtle body.

Om the causal body.

Om the great body of existence.

Om the body of knowledge.

Om the body of light.

Om the body of truth.

Seven levels of consciousness, we bow to you on every level.

Om We meditate on that Light of Wisdom that is the Supreme Wealth of the Gods. May it grant to us increase in our meditations.

Om May the divine waters, luminous with the nectar of immortality of Supreme Divinity, fill the earth, the atmosphere, and the heavens. All is full of nectar, every perception.

Oh my Rosary, The Great Measurement of Consciousness, containing all energy within as your intrinsic nature, give to me the attainment of your Perfection, fulfilling the four objectives of life. Hey, Rosary, live in my consciousness so I only think about you and the mantra, that goes with every movement of every bead. And now fulfill the four objectives of my manifesting in this creation: Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha. Dharma, let me achieve the highest ideal of perfection. Artha, let me acquire all the resources necessary, the optimum amount of resources necessary to achieve that ideal. Kama, let me be free of every other desire other than being one with you and Moksha, let me achieve self realization, let me achieve perfect liberation.

Om Rosary, please remove all obstacles. I hold you in my right hand. At the time of recitation, be pleased with me. Allow me to attain the Highest Perfection. Please allow me to attain the highest perfection. I do not want to pay attention to anything or anyone else, just you.

Om Rosary of rudraksha seeds, my Lord, and you are a divine being to me. Give to me excellent attainment. Give to me, give to me. Illuminate the meanings of all mantras. Illuminate! Illuminate! Fashion me with all excellent attainments! Fashion me! I am One with God!

And let's offer our flowers.

With these scented flowers, Om we bow to the Lord of Wisdom, Lord of the Multitudes.

With these scented flowers, Om we bow to the Sun, the Light of Wisdom, along with the nine planets.

With these scented flowers, Om we bow to Siva, the Consciousness of Infinite Goodness, along with the five primary deities (Siva, Sakti, Vishnu, Ganesha, and Surya). Remember that the Sanatan Dharma is divided into five basic sects whose primary deities are Siva, Sakti, Vishnu, Ganesha, Surya and the Navagraha. And in the Devi Mandir in the cosmic puja, they are all united in one system of worship.

With these scented flowers, Om we bow to Indra, the Ruler of the Pure, along with the Ten Protectors of the ten directions.

With these scented flowers, Om we bow to Vishnu, the Fish, along with the ten incarnations that He assumed. Remember He was Matsya avatar, then He was Kurma Devata and then He was Varaha and then He was Narsimha, then He was Vaman, Parshurama, Ram, Krishna, Buddha and Shree Maa in the form of Kalki.

With these scented flowers, Om we bow to the Lord of All Created Beings.

With these scented flowers, Om we bow to the Perfect Perception of Consciousness.

With these scented flowers, Om we bow to All the Gods.

With these scented flowers, Om we bow to All the Goddesses.

With these scented flowers, Om we bow to the Guru.

With these scented flowers, Om we bow to All Knowers of Wisdom.

And to those who are on the path striving to know wisdom, thanks for your association.

And now you can tie a string around your middle finger or around your wrist or take just take up your water pot and pour some water into your hand and say Om Brahma is in the shining light (or kusa grass), in the shining light resides Janardana, the Lord of Beings, that is Vishnu. The Supreme all-pervading Consciousness, Vishnu, resides in the shining light. Oh Repository of the shining light, we bow down to you, the seat of kusa grass. Take some sips of water.

Om We bow to the one of beautiful hair, Keshava. Remember also “ka” means the cause and also Brahma; “ei” means Vishnu; and “isha” means Siva. Keshava, the one with beautiful hair, is also the manifestation of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva.

Om We bow to the one who is always sweet like honey, Madhava.

Om We bow to He who is one-pointed light. He is Govinda. Remember “go” means light and it also means cow. So He is Gopal, he protects cows but actually He is Gopal as He protects the light because the cow is the symbol of light, the wealth of the vedic rishis. Gauri is not She who is a cow (most of the time). Most of the time, Gauri is She who is radiant light and so Govinda is not He who is one pointed cow. Holy Cow! He is Govinda. He is one pointed light.

Om Consciousness, om Consciousness, om Consciousness. May my lips only speak words of Consciousness. May it come from my heart with sincerity and dedication of pure Consciousness. Om That Consciousness of the highest station, who always sees the Light of Wisdom, give us Divine Eyes.

Om That twice-born teacher who is always thirsty for accepting the nectar of devotion, Oh Consciousness, you are in that highest station.

Om the Impure and the Pure reside within all objects. Who remembers the lotus-eyed Consciousness is conveyed to radiant beauty. Forget about the purity and forget about impurity, just remember God and it is all pure. Don't judge. Just fall in love with God. She will take of the rest.

Om All the Welfare of all Welfare, the highest blessing of Purity and Illumination, with the offering of respect we bow down to the Supreme Consciousness who is the actual performer of all action.

Om these are the mantras of the Light of Wisdom, the Creative Capacity is the Seer, Nature is the meter, the divine flow of waters is the deity, being applied in washing the hands and rinsing the mouth. And now I wash out my foul mouth and I wash my hands and now everything is pure and clean including my lips and my mouth. May they only speak purity and clarity.

Now take some water or sandal paste or some sindoor if you like and draw an equilateral triangle underneath your asana. Just pull back your asana and draw that triangle with a bindu in the center and take one flower and say Om Introducing the mantras of the Purification of the seat that is the asana. The Seer is He whose back is Straight (That is what we say in the military “Attention!” Everybody makes their back straight.) The meter is of very beautiful form, the tortoise, one of Vishnu's incarnations, who supports the earth is the deity. (Maybe he can support my weight too). These mantras are applied to make the seat free from obstructions.

With these scented flowers, Om hrim we bow to the Primal Energy situated in this lotus seat. Take that flower and put it right in the bindu in the center of the equilateral triangle. Close your asana again and now you can touch both sides of the asana.

Om Earth! You support the realms of the Goddess. You are supported by the Supreme Consciousness. Also bear me eternally and make pure this seat.

Om I bow to the Guru. She is sitting next to me.
Om I bow to the Guru's Guru. She is just little bit above Her.
Om I bow to the Guru's Guru's Guru.
Om I bow to the Supreme Guru's Guru.
Om I bow to the Lord of Wisdom.
I bow to the Infinite One.
Om aim hrim klim camundayai vice. Om Wisdom, Maya, Transformation and we will go deeper and deeper into this mantra throughout the class.
Om I bow to Siva. Om I bow to the Consciousness of Infinite Goodness.

Clap your hands three times and snap your fingers in the ten directions (North, South, East, West, Northeast, Southwest, Northwest, Southeast, above, and below) repeating Om aim hrim klim camundayai vice.

This often called the Kushandika. The introductory, preparatory mantras whenever we sit down before we even describe what we are going do or who we are or where we are or why we are doing this. We are going to say, "Hey, thanks for even listening to my rambling mouth."

Namaste.

Question & Answer Session

What is the obstruction in the seat?

Swamiji: Oh, did you ever hear the story of the princess and the pea? Ah, what are the obstructions in the seat? You can have so many obstructions. If you wear socks and you have one wrinkle in your sock, you won't notice it when you sit down but after a while it will start to rub. If you have one fold in your asana, all your attention can go to that one fold. If there is one pebble in a wrong place, you are going to squirm and squiggle until you find the place where it does not create an obstruction. There are many obstructions in the seat and we wish to remove them all. Maybe the seat is too cold, maybe it is too hot. It could be anything, any kind of obstruction in the seat. We propose to eradicate all obstructions by praying to the asana, "Be propitious to us, support us, let us sit here with our back straight in a state of attention so long as I worship, you sit there too."

Does it matter how we hold the mala when we are reciting mantras? In the beginning, when you are starting the sacred fire, you hold the mala in mudra when reciting Om mam male mahamaye. Other times you just hold the mala in your hands.

Swamiji: The most important thing is that you hold the mala. Afterwards, we can debate the right way or the wrong way to hold the mala. But the first step is to hold the mala, at least get it into your hand. There are various forms of holding the mala. Often, we hold the mala over the four fingers and pull it towards us with the thumb. Now, some people say to hold it between the thumb and pointing fingers and pull it with the pointing finger. It does not matter how you hold the mala. When you make an offering at the fire with your right hand, you hold the mala in your left hand. You count the mantras with your left hand and make the offerings with your right hand. When you are just doing japa, you hold the mala in your right

hand and you can pull it by any system, which your guru teaches you, or pull it the way I showed you. Anyway you like, but pull the beads! A mala is very nice to look at around your neck but it is even nicer to see it in your hand.

What is does it mean that nature is the meter?

Swamiji: Nature is the meter means the rhythms of nature are going to guide this mantra, this recitation. We are in flow with the rhythms of nature and that's what it proposes. It is a form of kakup, a free verse, a blank verse so that it has no specific meter. It is set to the rhythm of nature and actually, it is a viniyoga.

Are there any methods for moving to the seven levels of consciousness.

Swamiji: Yes there is. It is called directed attention. You direct your attention to the physical perception looking outside and then close your eyes and direct your attention to the perception inside, the subtle body, and then you move from annamaya kosa, the world of tangible matter which is empirically perceivable, to the pranamaya kosa, the world of breath. Breath is a little bit more subtle than the body and from the world of breath, the world of air, the world of wind, pranamaya, you move to manomaya, the world of concepts. And now you are moving from the gross body into the subtle body by means of the breath. Take all those concepts in the manomaya kosa and dissolve them into light. Make that light the light of wisdom. All the thoughts merge into the light of wisdom and that becomes the vijñanamaya kosa. Take that light of wisdom, that illumination, that radiance and dissolve it into sat-chit-ananda. That becomes the anandamaya kosa, true existence, infinite consciousness, and pure bliss. Take that bliss consciousness from the anandmaya kosa and put it into the light of wisdom and all you can see is the bliss of radiant wisdom. Take that light of wisdom, the bliss of radiant wisdom, and illuminate all your thoughts and come into the manomaya kosa. Take all those beautiful thoughts and put them into the your breath, put them into your lungs, and breathe them out. And from pranamaya kosa, you enter into the annamaya kosa.

Om Sam Saraswati Namah. Namaste.

Further Information

36 classes were held in 2008 to discuss the Chandi Path. Please visit us on the World Wide Web at <http://www.shreemaa.org/> for the other classes and for more information. The Chandi Path text used in this class can be found at the online bookstore.