



# Arsha Vidya Newsletter

Rs. 15/-



## श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता जयन्ती

ॐ पार्थाय प्रतिबोधितां भगवता नारायणेन स्वयं  
व्यासेन ग्रथितां पुराण-मुनिना मध्ये महा-भारतम्।  
अद्वैतामृत-वर्षिणीं भगवतीं अष्टादशाध्यायिनीं  
अम्ब त्वामनुसंधामि भगवद्गीते भव-द्वेषिणीम् ॥१॥

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## ॥ गुरु-वन्दनम् ॥

ॐ नमः प्रणवार्थाय शुद्धज्ञानैकमूर्तये।  
निर्मलाय प्रशान्ताय दक्षिणामूर्तये नमः॥

व्यासाय विष्णुरूपाय व्यासरूपाय विष्णवे।  
नमो वै ब्रह्मनिधये वासिष्ठाय नमो नमः॥

शङ्करं शङ्कराचार्यं केशवं बादरायणम्।  
सूत्र-भाष्य-कृतौ वन्दे भगवन्तौ पुनः पुनः॥

सदा स्मेरवक्त्रं कृपापूर्णनित्रं स्थिरं दीनमित्रं जनप्रीतिपात्रम्।  
सुविज्ञातशास्त्रं कषायाक्तवस्त्रं दयानन्दरूपं मदाचार्यमीडे॥

सदाशिव-समारम्भां शङ्कराचार्य-मध्यमाम्।  
अस्मदाचार्यं पर्यन्तां वन्दे गुरु-परम्पराम्॥

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*Arsha Vidya  
Newsletter*

In fearless voice may  
we proclaim

The Rishi's message  
from all house-tops

And bring the men  
of different claim

To a fold of Love  
where oneness lasts!



## Muṇḍakopaniṣad Mantrā 6



*(Continued from last issue)*

The example also answers a doubt: Does Brahman, the cause of jagat stand separate from it, like the spider that converts the threads into a web, is separate from the web? Brahman does not stand separate from the jagat like the spider from the web. Brahman is non-separate from the jagat, like the earth is not separate from the trees and plants that have come out of it.

One more objection can be raised here. Brahman is consciousness. From that Brahman how can an inert jagat manifest? The jagat, being inert, is entirely different from Brahman. From clay we do not produce a human being. Between the cause and the effect there is an identity, so that the qualities of the cause are found in the effect. Out of cotton fabric, we cannot produce silken cloth. So, Brahman cannot be the cause for vilakṣaṇa jagat, a world full of features that are opposite to Brahman. The third example answers this objection.

Yathā sataḥ puruṣāt keśa lomāni : just as the hair on the head and the body comes out from a living person, keśa is the hair on your head. The hair that is all over the body is called loma. We can include nails also in this category. They are all inert. Keśa is inert in the sense that you can cut it without experiencing pain. That is why a haircut is possible. If a haircut hurts, nobody will have a haircut. It will become hair-surgery! The specialist will be called a hair-surgeon! Keśa is inert because there is no sensation there. What about the sensation that is there when somebody pulls your hair? That is because the scalp is sentient. The hair on your head is inert, but you are a conscious being. You cannot say, 'I am inert'. Something that is inert will not give an answer. A rock will not respond to my words. Just as the inert hair comes out from a conscious being, similarly the inert world comes out from Brahman. In fact, hair and nails grow, so they do have life.

There is no rule that an inert thing cannot come out of conscious entity. We see this in the example of inert tissue growing in the form of hair and nails in a conscious being. There is also no rule that the cause should inhere in the effect.

The earth is inert and the plants and trees that comes out are sentient. Therefore, there is nothing to contradict the fact that all that is here is one caitanyaṁ brahma. Really speaking, there is no division of sentient and insentient. Brahman is cetana and nothing is separate from it. Therefore, there is nothing that is inert. If you shift your vision, then all that is here is one caitanyaṁ brahma. Really speaking, there is no division of sentient and insentient. Brahman is cetana and nothing is separate from it. Therefore, there is nothing that is inert. If you shift your vision, then all that is here is one caitanyaṁ brahma. There is no object that you can think of, that is outside caitanya, consciousness. The whole object is pervaded and sustained by that caitanya alone. When the names and forms resolve, they do not go away anywhere, but just resolve into consciousness alone. Therefore, the creation is from the caitanya, the sustenance is by the caitanya and also the resolution is into the caitanya. All that is here is therefore one caitanya. This being the truth, the whole magic is, 'as though' coming, 'as though' being, and 'as though' going.

The more appropriate example for creation is our dream. In the jyotir brahmaṇa of the Brhadāraṇyakopaniṣad<sup>1</sup>, it is said, "Aaaall that is here is jyoti". Jyoti means light. That is a very beautiful word. It is the light because of which everything comes to light. For visual perception, light is inevitable. In light alone an object comes to light. Similarly, in the presence of the jyoti alone, everything comes to light—a sound comes to light, a form comes to light, a colour comes to light, and the entire jagat comes to light. That light is not a physical light. In fact it is the only light; everything else is lighted. It is the caitanya, consciousness.

In the dream, that jyoti is in the form of the dreamer as well as the dream world—dream-time, dream-space, dream-stars and so on. In the dream, everything that you see is non-separate from you, the dreamer. That dreamer is non-separate from the caitanya. In the dreamer there is no waker or sleeper. The waker, the dreamer and the sleeper mutually negate one another. The connecting factor between them is only caitanya. When I say, 'I dreamt', 'I have woken up', 'I slept', the connecting factor is 'I'. The 'I' is joined with all of them. Similarly, when I see it as the garland and say, "This is not a snake, this is a garland", the snake is gone and 'this' joins the garland. In fact 'this' does not join anything; 'this' remains always. 'This' did not shift, but remains invariable.

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<sup>1</sup> योऽयं विज्ञानमयः प्राणेषु हृदि अन्तर्ज्योतिः पुरुषः ॥ स हि स्वप्नो भूत्वा इमं लोकम् अतिक्रामति । ब्रह्दारण्यकोपनिषत् ४।३।७

Similarly, when the dream is gone what is retained is 'I', the jyoti, which joins the waker. 'I' is always the same, invariable caitanya called sāksin. The waker, dreamer and sleeper are one invariable caitanya. The waking and dream worlds also are the same invariable caitanya. The entire dream jagat is the manifestation of caitanya. In dream, you see a mountain and a mountaineer. We say that mountaineer is sentient and the mountain is insentient. But both are one caitanya alone in dream. So 'sentient, insentient' are purely two points of view. If you look at it as jyoti, there is nothing sentient or insentient in this world. All that is there is only caigtanyam brahma that appears in the form of various things in this jagat. So, we have the three examples, meant for easy understanding<sup>2</sup> of the fact that there is one Brahman alone which is the cause of everything. This Braman is both maker and matgerial, and there is no cetana-acetana division.

Tathākṣarāt sambhavati iha viśvam : Similarly, the world comes into being from akṣara. Iha means here, where we are, so that verse is talking about creation. Viśva means anything that is understood through bvarious cognitions. When you see a flower, there is cognition of flower. That is called pratyaya. There are different types of pratyayas reporting to you an attribute, or a species or an action of a given object, or the connection of an object with something else. This is all the jagat consists of. This jagat, which is understood by various cognitions, is called Viśva. It comes from akṣara, like the dream world comes from you. For creation of the dream world you are endowed with the necessary powers. Similarly, for the creation of entire jagat, Brahman as Īśvara is endowed with all the powers necessary. When we analyse the jagat, we find that it is mithyā. There is no such thing as jagat, really speaking. To create a mithyā jagat, Īśvara requires a power, and that power is mithyā māyā. The word mithyā must be understood properly. It is purely a word revealing your understanding of the reality of an object. The jagat is to be understood as mithyā. 'Truth' also is a word revealing your undeerstanding of reality. Mithyā māyā and its effect, the mithyā jagat, are sustained by satyam brahma. Brahman is the only reality that gives satya, existence, to everything.

Brahman is the provideer of existence to everything, including ignorance. When you say that a flower 'is', that 'is-ness' always is. That never goes. That is why you cannot destroy it. If you destroy the flower, the flower is gone, but the petal 'is'. If that is also destroyed, the destroyed petal 'is'. Suppose everything disappears and you do not see any form. Then the absence of form 'is'. The

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<sup>2</sup> अनेकभट्टन्तोपादानं तु सुखार्थभप्रबोधनार्थम्। मुण्डक श्राष्यम्।

'is-ness' is never negated. That 'is-ness' is Brahman. That is the reality of everything. Therefore, knowing that Brahman as oneself without any attribute, everything is as well known. So, śaunaka's question is answered in this way.

When the Śruti says everything is Brahman, it is not pantheism. In pantheism the cause has undergone change to become the world. It is not so here. Brahman is vivartta upādāna and also nimitta kāraṇa, therefore there is no pantheism here. If at all there is change, it is attributed to māyā, which has no reality apart from Brahman. So, māyā being there in between Brahman and everything else, it does not become pantheism. When satya and mithyā are not understood, it all ends up in confusion.

The words, 'cause' and 'effect' are only from a point of view. You say that this is the effect and that is the cause. In fact, the effect itself is the cause, being non-separate from the cause. Then again, which is cause and which is effect? When the pot is broken, it becomes clay. That means clay came from pot! The concept of cause and effect is purely a point of view. Our understanding that the cause came first and the effect came later is only a point of view. From the standpoint of Brahman, there is nothing that comes later, because Brahman itself is the effect. If at all the concept of 'cause' and 'effect' is talked about, it is from the standpoint of the unmanifest and manifest conditions.

The unmanifest becomes manifest—that is called creation. Creation itself is not a proper word for us, because the word 'creation' is relevant only when something did not exist before, and later came into being. But it is not like that. That which is in an unmanifest, undifferentiated form, comes to be differentiated. One is in a subtle form, the other is a gross form. In a differentiated form it is called creation. In an undifferentiated form it is called dissolution. This creation is cyclic. The creation becomes unmanifest because it was manifest before. Unless it was manifest before, it cannot become unmanifest. We cannot talk about any sequence here.

*To be continued...*

## Śrī Rudram

नमः॑ ककु॒भाय॑ निषङ्गि॑णे॑ स्तेनानां॑ पतये॑ नमः॑ ॥ २ ॥  
namaḥ॑ kakubhāya॑ niṣaṅgiṇe॑ stenānāṃ॑ pataye॑ namaḥ॑ ॥ 2 ॥

Namaḥ kakubhāya—kaku sthānaṃ bhāti yasmāt, because of whom the status of all the devatās exist. The one because of whom the devatās shine is called kakubha. All devatās except Śiva are called kaḥ— sūrya agni vāyu and so on. Ātmā is also called kaḥ. He is in the form of all these devatās. Unto him my salutation.

Niṣaṅgiṇe<sup>1</sup> namaḥ—Salutation to the one who has the sword, khadga, to protect every one. He can chastise as well as protect with it as karma phala dātā.

Stenānāṃ pataye namaḥ—Stena is a gupta-cora, thief under cover. He is the Lord of all the gupta-coras. When these thieves turn into devotees, he becomes their protector. It is not that he protects the thieves. Only when he becomes the Lord for them, he becomes a sahamāna and a protector.

नमो॑ निषङ्गि॑ण इषुधि॑मते॑ तस्करा॑णां पतये॑ नमः॑ ॥ ३ ॥  
namo॑ niṣaṅgiṇā॑ iṣudhimate॑ taskarāṇāṃ॑ pataye॑ namaḥ॑ ॥ 3 ॥  
namaḥ – salutation; niṣaṅgiṇe – to theone who has arrows ready to be set on the bow; iṣudhimate – who has a quiver (full of arrows); taskarāṇām – of the dacoits; pataye – to the Lord; namaḥ – salutation.

Salutation to the one who has arrows ready to be set on the bow, who has a quiver (full of arrows) and who is the Lord of all dacoits.

Namo niṣaṅgiṇe<sup>2</sup> - Salutation to the one who has arrows ready to be set on the bow. Iṣudhimate namaḥ – Salutation to the one who has a quiver full of arrows. The Lord protects his devotees answering their prayers and chastises where he has to.

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<sup>1</sup> niṣaṅgiṇe khadgavate

<sup>2</sup> dhanuṣi sandhātum haste dhruvo bāṇaḥ niṣaṅgaḥ tadyuktāya





Taskarāṇām pataye namaḥ – Salutation to the one who is the Lord of dacoits. For dacoits he becomes a chastiser. If they give up their wrong deeds and surrender to him, the Lord becomes their sahamāna and protector.

नमो वञ्चते परिवञ्चते स्तायूनां पतये नमः ॥ ४ ॥

nāmo vañcate pariṁvañcate stāyūnām pataye namaḥ ॥ 4 ॥

namaḥ – salutation; vañcate – to the one who is an occasional cheater; parivañcate – who cheats all the time; stāyūnām – of those who steal remaining close by; pataye – to the Lord; namaḥ salutation.

Salutation to the one who is an occasional cheater, who cheats all the time and who is the Lord of those who steal remaining close by.

The Lord is parivañcat, being a māyāvī he is as though full of deceit. He appears to have cheated you and everybody else, because he has as though robbed away the kingdom of the self, ātmasāmrājya. In whatever way you look at him, he comes out as a great robber—robber of your happiness, peace, purity and so on. But he cannot deny you all these even if he wants to, because he is all these; he is you. He blesses the devotee with opportunities for knowledge to own the kingdom.

He is the Lord of stāyūs, another type of cheats. Earlier the Lord was said to be the protector of an ordinary cheat. Now he is described as the Lord of professional cheats. There are people who seem to be working for you with loyalty. Later you find that they have built up a business of their own at your cost. They are stāyūs, great cheats. The Lord becomes the protector of even these people when they fall at his feet. He is in the form of the cheat; he punishes the cheat and also protects the cheat. There are some more types of thieves said in the following mantras.

## "Tattva-agrahanam"



"*Tattva-agrahanam, nidra*, that means that everyone is in *nidra*, even when one is awake." It was with this statement that Pujya Swamiji began a recent class teaching Mandukya Upanishad to over 100 students in Anaikatti, which included the three-year residential students and many visitors.

Pujya Swamiji continued, "This *tattva-agrahanam*, non-recognition of what is truth, what is truth is non-dual, non-recognition of the non-dual, is *nidra*. Wrong-recognition,

that there is duality, that there is subject-object, that is what we call *svapnam*. Waking also is *svapnam* - that is called *anyathagrahanam*."

The constraints of discussing *advaita* using language, which by default is based in *dvaita*, are circumvented, seemingly without effort, by the *Sastra* and the *guru*. How this is achieved is a wonder in itself. It should be stated and in fact cannot be overstated that the ability of *Sastra* to achieve this is

dependent upon the *guru* to pass the teaching onto the *sisya*. For without the teacher, the *Sastra* can only be understood through the lens of the reader; and it is that reader, that knower, as he or she takes himself or herself to be, that is the very one that has to be negated, leaving the truth, the self-effulgent *atma*.

Mandukya Upanishad begins by saying that *Om* is all this, “*om ityeta sarvaam idam*”. In the very next *mantra*, it is stated that *Brahman* is all this. *Sruti*'s vision is *advaita*, therefore the possibility of having two of “all this” is untenable. *Bhashyakara* explains that *om* is necessarily a name for *Brahman*. Therefore, whether *om* or *Brahman* is used, the meaning is the same. The Upanishad then gives the equation between *atma* and *Brahman*, paving the way for the *vichara* that will lead to the knowledge that there is nothing but *atma*, *Brahman* – that is *advaita*.

Using the *avastha-traya-prakriya* to unfold the equation, Mandukya Upanishad divides the *atma* into four quarters. The waking, dream, and sleep states each comprise one quarter. They are sustained by the fourth quarter, *turiya*. The experiencer in each of the three states are referred to as, *Visva*, *Taijasa* and *Prajna* respectively with their objects of experience being *sthula*, *sukshma* and *ananda*. It is important to note that the Upanishad includes in its discussion of each state from both the individual standpoint and the total standpoint – that is the connection between *jiva* and *Iswara* is made in each state. One cannot discuss the individual without discussing the total –

indeed, there is no individual without the total.

To be one of Pujya Swamiji's students with reference to this particular connection, the connection between *jiva* and *Iswara*, is the difference between glossing over something that is generally not understood – the order that is *Iswara* - and having the vision of Vedanta be taught in a way that one cannot fail to understand. Pujya Swamiji explains that *Iswara*, being all knowledge, manifests as one grand order. Within that one order many smaller orders are found. They can be grouped into three main categories. Those that are centred on the body, *adhyatmika*, include the sense organs; for instance eyes see, ears hear, etc. At the level of *srishti*, *adhibhautika*, are colour, forms, sounds, etc. Thirdly, orders which connect *adhyatmika* and *adhibhautika*, called *adhidaivika*. It includes *karma* and the resulting *punya/papa*.

It is because of the order that is *Iswara* that scientists are able to draw conclusions in various fields of study. For instance, measurement of gravity is dependent amongst other things upon the density of a given planet, the speed at which the planet moves and the altitude at which the measurement takes place. It is not that before Isaac Newton started to ask questions about why the apple “fell down” and landed on his head instead of “falling up”, that there was no gravity! In fact it was also grace, *Iswara*'s order, that gave Newton a mind capable of questioning why things fall down and not up.

Without understanding that cause and effect is nothing more than the order of Iswara, one cannot arrive at *advaita*. For instance, if the behaviour of any given person is taken to be initiated by the “individual”, without taking into account the given background of that person, there is *dvaita*. Why? Because that person is being looked upon as separate from the whole.

How, then is it said that even in waking, one is asleep? Having completed the *vichara* to establish that the waker is the only complete person – that is the only one who recognizes that he or she is the same as the dreamer and the sleeper that are experienced – the *Sruti* and accompanying *kârikâs* negate what the waker takes himself or herself to be, that is limited by the body and mind. It is in this context that Pujya Swamiji started the class with the statement, “*tattva-agrahana-nidra*, that means that everyone is in *nidra*, even when one is awake. This *tattva-agrahana*, non-recognition of what is truth, what is truth is non-dual, non-recognition of the non-dual, is *nidra*. Wrong recognition, that there is duality, that there is subject object, that is what we call *svapna*. Waking also is *svapna* - that is called *anyatha-grahaṇa*”

Merely not knowing the world for what it is, *tattva-agrahanam*, is *nidra*. In sleep, one is unaware of the truth of oneself. The mind being inactive, there is no question of mistaking what is for anything else. However, the ignorance of oneself, which gives rise to the possibility of erroneously superimposing something else onto *atma*, is present. It is this ignorance about oneself

that is the cause of the subjective superimpositions made upon oneself in the waking and dream state. Thus everyone is living in *nidra* who is not awake to the truth of him or herself.

In the waking state there is *karyakarana-bandha*, meaning that the waking state is bound by having both the status of result and cause. That is, there is an *adhiçmāhāna*, the *atma*, which not being understood or known for what it is, which is erroneously taken for other than itself. One is aware of one’s own existence, but because there is *avidyā* regarding the truth of that self-effulgence, it is taken to be limited by the body and mind. In dream also *karyakarana-bandha* is there. The difference being that what is experienced is not initiated by the sense organs, as is generally the case in the waking state. The dream experience is based solely on *vrittis* arising from memories of the waking state and *vasanas*. During dream, not being aware that one is dreaming, the projected world based on memories and *vasanas* that is experienced is taken to be real. So too, the waker taking the waking world to be real, as *anyatha-grahanam*, is living in *svapna*.

The value of the Sanskrit classes that take place alongside the Vedanta classes has really come to the fore in the study of Mandukya Upanishad. Having an understanding of some of the subtleties of *kârakas* brought in by the use of various *vibhaktis*, brings a greater depth to one’s understanding of the discussions of *Bhashyakara*. Further, as one becomes more familiar with the vocabulary, with Pujya

Swamiji's guidance, one is able to discern the difference in writing styles of various authors.

In Pujya Swamiji's afternoon Bhagavad Gita class, we have just made the shift from *tvam-pada vichara* to *tat-pada vichara* by entering the Seventh Chapter. Chapter Six which marked the end of *tvam-pada vichara*, gave timeless instructions to help one gain a certain mastery over the mind. The instructions, Pujya Swamiji pointed out, are equally pertinent for meditation upon *saguGā Brahman* or contemplation on *nirguGā Brahman*.

Bhagavan K[ishna's emphasis on the importance of *vairagya* and *abhyasa*, was complemented by Pujya Swamiji's discussion on the importance of intention with regard to distraction of the mind. One may go about one's life moving from one thing to the next without recognizing that the driving-force behind the actions is *raga-dweshas*. On the other hand, one may spend the day moving from one thing to the next with the intention to spend time focused on each successive occupation that one is involved with. Pujya Swamiji gave the analogy of the desire to cultivate a piece of land. If the *tatparya* is to grow a lawn, what is not grass is to be weeded out. On

the other hand, if the *tatparya* is to cultivate the very plant that was weeded out from the lawn, it is the grass that needs to be weeded out. One must have a clear intention in order to recognize what is distraction. This is where *japa* is so useful. By repetition of a particular mantra, each one a complete thought in itself, one is able to recognize when the mind moves away. In time one comes to recognize certain patterns, or ways in which the mind gets distracted, and even as it starts to move away it can be brought it back. Eventually one is able to sit for a period of time with the mind absorbed in the task it has been given.

In evening satsangs Pujya Swamiji is taking Vivekacudamani – not just selected verses, but in its entirety. Pujya Swamiji has pointed out that in Vivekacudamani there is a lot of repetition of various themes in verses. While one may notice this in one's own reading of the verses, to listen to Pujya Swamiji unfold the verses one discovers that each verse brings subtle shades that increase one's own *vichara* in this most blessed of all pursuits, with the most exalted of teachers.

*Report by Julie Carpenter*

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## Leadership

Pujya Swamiji conducted a camp at Rishikesh, for senior executives from the industry, in October 2012. The following is the summary of the camp.

Every one is a leader, starting from one's own family. So he/she should grow into a person who can be looked up to. There is a verse in the Bhagavad Gītā -

yadyadācarati śreṣṭhaḥ  
tattadevetaro janāḥ |  
sa yat pramāṇam kurute  
lokastadanuvartate ||

Whatever is the conduct followed by a significant member of the society viz. a leader, is followed by the masses. People walk on the path shown by him.

Krishna is presented by Vyāsa as Bhagavān. Bhagavān is the supreme leader possessing the qualities of unlimited over lordship, dharma, fame, wealth, knowledge and dispassion. To realize one is a śreṣṭha and living up to it is the key. One becomes a śreṣṭha (leader) based on the choices one makes in life. The choices that we make depend on the clarity that we have. And the more one knows the lesser are the choices. In the Bhagavad Gītā Krishna says – vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ ekeha kuru nandana – which means in the world of

innumerable possibilities focus your intellect to make the right choices. Freedom to make a choice implies right knowledge and it better be right. But more often than not it is subject to error. Choices depend on free will. Free will makes one self conscious and self judgmental. Self judgment reduces self acceptance. Here the universal mistake is self non acceptability and self acceptability is the only goal of a self conscious being. This is the teaching of the Gītā.

Towards this end of self acceptability, the Gītā talks about 2 kinds of life styles – karma yoga and jñāna yoga. This leads us to the 4 pursuits - dharma, artha, kāma or mokṣa. Pursuit of dharma is universal and common to the other three. It is an end in itself unlike other cultures. The question of Arjuna in the 3rd chapter of the Gītā is how to balance the pursuit of mokṣa (self adequacy) with the other 3 pursuits.

Most of our problems are due to inappropriate attitude. Attitude towards children, power, money, spouse etc demands certain understanding. Attitudes can be changed. Just like the attitude transforms when a groom in the marriage realizes that the girl he is about to be married is actually his long lost sister! Attitudes are mostly picked up by cultural osmosis.

Every individual is endowed with icchā śakti (power to desire), kriyā śakti (power to act) and jñāna śakti (power to know). Desire (rāga) is a manifestation of icchā śakti. It can be to possess, own, experience and retain. Life is a pursuit of rāga and dveṣa (two fold kāma). One's emotional life also governed by these two. So they become the yard sticks for measuring my happiness. The capacity to manage these two is success. As the Gītā says – indriyasyendriyārthe rāgadveṣau vyavasthitau – potential for like and dislike exists in each sense object. Samattvaṁ yoga ucyate – equanimity (evenness of mind) is yoga. Samattvaṁ is defined as nityaṁ samacittatvam iṣṭāniṣṭhopapatthiṣu – maintaining equanimity in the wake of both desired and undesired results. Every action (karma) is a series of actions. Rāga and dveṣa are a manifestation of icchā śakti. A sameness of response to both is what constitutes a successful life. Because if success warrants fulfilling all desires, it will be eternally elusive. But if one is committed to equanimity then ambition need not be curtailed. Ambition inevitably brings in the possibility of greed and greed is fulfilling legitimate ambition but by adhārmic methods.

This raises the question of what is dharma and how to interpret it in different situations. Krishna says yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam. Kauśalam is not skill in action but commitment to dharma and the ability to interpret dharma. A human being becomes an adult by routine. Only to grow up i.e. become mature, one needs to work consciously. And conforming to dharma alone is growth. Dharma is the basis for

deciding from the matrix of available choices. But sometimes Dharma needs to be interpreted depending on the situation as in the difference between sāmānya (universal) and viśeṣa (specific to a situation) dharma. The proper interpretation of dharma is kuśalatā.

This understanding of dharma is based on certain background topics. And these bring about an attitudinal change. Human freedom is not doing what you feel like but not doing what one feels like doing. In karmaṇyevādhikāraṣte Bhagavān says the choice is only in the performance of action but not over the results. If we had control over the results then no one would have to face failure. Unpredictability is the nature of the future. Every action has 4 kinds of results – get more than what is expected, less than what is expected, equal to what it expected and completely different from what is expected. The results of action depend on the laws governing action. They laws influence the results either in my favor or against. One assumes one is a failure only when one assumes responsibility for the results of action. The result of action is Īśvara's domain. There is no necessity to load ourselves with more than what is necessary. And the key to my happiness is in my response.

Dharma is a manifestation. One can get hurt by words, looks, actions, conduct etc. Even robbing is derivative of Ahimsa. For a Hindu it is not God's dharma. Dharma itself is God. This knowledge is important because we have to manage people. And that is not possible without managing likes and dislikes. And that needs an

understanding of Īśvara. Karma yoga is not possible without Īśvara. Dharma is Īśvara. And conscience is Dharma.

**Īśvara** – Anything intelligently put together is sṛṣṭhi. Like even the human body, the components, their location, functions etc. And for every object intelligently put together there is a maker. The whole gamut of objects intelligently put together is what we call jagat. There is nothing one can boast about of having created. Even great discoveries like gravitation, Raman's effect etc. When a name is added to a discovery we honor ourselves by attaching the name! Any discovery is of an existing fact. Everything is given. If this is recognized, then the question as to who the sṛṣṭhi kartā is, is inevitable. This is what we call Īśvara. Any creation has an intelligent cause and a material cause. Like a pot, bread, golden chain etc. In general they are different. But with regard to the creation both are the same. This is where religions differ. One says material came out of nothing. If another says creation came out of something then the question as to who created the material arises.

This Īśvara is also imagined by people variously like he is located somewhere, is formless but is all pervasive etc. And questions like where is he located, if he is in heaven – who created heaven, whether he created it while staying in hell etc arise. Hence for us, space is Īśvara, time is Īśvara, Sun is Īśvara and so on. And Bhagavan is also not a matter for belief. A belief is a faith one has before knowledge and subject to verification and correction. One needs to

be objective and that is possible only after all that is there is taken into account. The honest answer should be in keeping with the realities of what he has created. The reality is, the world is just word and meaning like shirt and fabric i.e. there is no independent existence for shirt. In other words it is all knowledge and that is what Īśvara is. All things known and unknown is Īśvara. Hence Īśvara is to be understood and not to be believed. Appreciating Īśvara is only in terms of knowing and then having a proper attitude. Just like a dancer worshipping the stage before a performance. The law of karma, action and its results, means and ends are all Īśvara.

Dharma is order (Īśvara) and it is valuable only when one can live a life conforming to dharma. One has to live life in harmony with the whole that is Īśvara. When one does the right thing it brings satisfaction because there is harmony with the whole. This absence of alienation is what we are all seeking because each one of us wants to be connected. Also when one conforms to dharma there is no fear of failure because everything, including failure, is in order. Hence every karma phalam like ambition etc is prasāda. And the attitude is one of prasāda. It is purely a change in attitude. This is where the leadership should set an example by having that attitude and also making others see it that way. It is an advantage to be born in this culture as one grows with that attitude. Mother and father are associates of Īśvara and not sinners. Rāga-dveṣas don't determine my happiness. One should be an actor and not a reactor. This is one part of karma yoga.



**Prasāda buddhi:** This is more than glad acceptance of karma phala. Rāga and dveṣa become one's glories. The key to one's growth is not doing all that one feels like doing. Every organism has the instinct to survive. And so we need common norms for interaction. This is what is called dharma. The basic dharma that every living organism seeks is - I do not want to get hurt – ahimsā paramo dharmah. The human being is different in the sense that he also knows that others also don't want to get hurt. So I have a choice to restrain myself. No human being can plead ignorance to this knowledge. This is common sense. If one is not conforming to dharma then it is like a drunken driver on the wheels of a Ferrari whose brakes are not functioning! Conformance to dharma is the brake.

**Contribution:** Every one is a consumer beginning from childhood. But one needs to learn to be a contributor. For the child to be made to feel like a contributor takes a lot out of the parents like showing love, care etc. This self image is created by the parents looking into the eyes of the child and applauding. For this one needs inner leisure. And this desire to contribute is what carries into adult life. If one needs to be a contributor one needs to be conscious of it and seek help. One needs to consume less and contribute more. To live an intelligent life is to seek help when one needs it. This helplessness keeps piling up in a human being from childhood. Prayer is seeking help. One can pray for a person, cause or for oneself. Prayer is recognition of the numerous hidden variables. One's bigness

comes out when one contributes. And this needs inner leisure.

**Inner leisure:** Everyone has a sacred space inside. Tension builds up in the day to day interaction with the competitive world. Any competition involves rules and people don't follow rules. This tension keeps building up. This is where the space inside helps one relax. The attitude to be maintained is I am not responsible for the results of actions. Hence I am not responsible for my failures too. I just do what I need to do. Ambitions, desires etc are the results of icchā śakti. I am an actor all the way. Action is what I consciously do and there is no room for reaction. Reaction is mechanical. Anger, explosion, depression etc are reactions. We must have a space which doesn't allow me to express my reaction. Anything can be connected to anything else. The mind seems to run without a reason but it has its own. One needs to be aware of that. Chanting helps one get a hold of the mind. In chanting one is sure about the next occupation. The choices are reduced. The mind still can wander all over but I program myself by the power of auto suggestion – yato yato niścarati – as and when the mind moves away (bring it back). This is a spiritual gym. Because of the commitment, the mind moving away is brought back. In meditation I unload the external world, objectify my body, breathing, sense of touch and my mind. Then chanting is the means of access to the sacred space. From where all action takes place, all creativity is possible, decisions are uninhibited by one's fears and anxieties. Chant leads to that depth. The depth and chant are together. More I am familiar with

this depth the more likely I will command this inner leisure. Later I can contemplate on the meaning of this mantra. This leads to an understanding of the larger vision of Īśvara, of being pervaded by Īśvara and the laws.

**Practical steps towards achieving one's goal** – A person works on different things to achieve certain goals. In the process there are certain important factors to be taken care of like

1. Communication – example of stones in Thanjavur temple. Short term goal, long term goal, the method to achieve them, how they are the beneficiaries in the process which can involve sharing the profit etc. Communication is never accomplished through the house magazine alone. Others value what you value and so make it known, share attitudes, plan well, be thorough, communication in such a way that the last person feels he is the beneficiary, make clear it is for profit.
2. Participation – making every participant of the team feel significant.
3. Doing the painful/difficult things first
4. Doing what is to be done at a given time and place - svakarma which is nothing but svadharma.
5. Avoiding procrastination and making the postponement deliberate for valid reasons
6. Making sure others do not procrastinate

**Attitude** – Attitude towards anything including one's own body has to be in keeping with reality. We assume our body

belongs to us alone but one's body can be claimed by one's mother, father, wife, children, employer, state (when there is a war), vultures, fire, water, earth, amoeba etc. Each one of them has their own right upon the body. So one only is the custodian of this body and qualified to manage alone. That is why suicide is a crime as it causes so much sadness to many people. This body is only given to me temporarily and I am no more than a managing trustee. That I don't own anything makes me neither abuse nor disuse the body i.e. gives me the right attitude towards the body. One looks at the body as Bhagavān just like time, wealth, house etc. That is why the country even survived the economic meltdown. Indian attitude towards money is not to be a spend thrift. Nothing is seen as insentient. There is an attitude of reverence. This attitude expresses itself because of free will. But this free will is always under pressure until one learns to like what one does. What one has got to do is not open for any option anyway. Free will expresses itself freely when one reaches out to do something that one need not do. This is called pūrta karma. Here and in prayer, the free will is total. Prayer is karma and it is part of a plan. Every karma has a result and it is centered on free will.

**Break the monotony by living in the present** – Maintain an attitude that keeps you alive to whatever one faces without a sense of monotony is what everyone should aspire for. Monotony can be in work, facts one faces or in the way one looks at things, staple food etc. To break this, one needs certain freshness and this can happen only if one takes it one day at a time. The pile

up of internal garbage collected over years is inevitable. And so it is useful to make use of the tropical advantage i.e. make full use of the day. Each day is a new day. One can start the day with a backlog or afresh. In a backlog, old problems are carried forward. But it is possible to make it fresh. We generally take ourselves for granted. When you wake up just check up where you are and grant yourself a luxurious day. This way one doesn't get overwhelmed, lives within the threshold and there is no chance of break down. Waking and sleep gives a great clue to life. The pileup should not really let one sleep but one falls asleep and that is a wonder. Sleep is laya. Sleep is given for rejuvenation and one is not supposed to let it pileup. Start a new day afresh. Freshness is spontaneity and monotony is a killer.

**Happiness and its connection to giving, compassion etc** – Love and care are nothing but oneself. No one can say I have never experienced happiness. Neither can one say I don't want to be happy. Everyone wants and struggles to be happy. This happiness doesn't seem to be abiding experience. It seems to be few and far in between. Hence my commitment is to happiness and what it takes to be happy doesn't seem to be clear. Nothing around us like sun, moon, stars, etc are happiness. There is no object or place called happiness. Neither is there a time when one is happy. Though there is a 'happy hour'! One person said that there is happiness in the time one fulfils a desire and the next one arises. But that is not true. Happiness may not have anything to do with desire too. When one laughs no desire is fulfilled but still one becomes

happy. Even a joke is not required. Nothing can have 'happy' as an adjective. If happiness is the mind then there should be no mind when one is sad. Vedānta says 'I am happiness'. But everyone wants to be happy. One is not consoled when one is happy nor is one congratulated for being unhappy! Happiness is my nature. Hence I am estranged from being happy because of my own errors. When the wanting person is resolved, happiness shines through and the mind has no role in it. The ānanda of the fusion of the seeker and the sought like what is experienced when one closes one's eyes after going all the way to Badrinath and standing in front of the deity is happiness. That oneness is the real me non-different from happiness. The meaning of the word I is one limitless, timeless consciousness. This wholeness is in spite of all my limitations. If wholeness is my nature, my relating to everyone else becomes love, compassion, sympathy, care, giving etc. Any act of caring becomes a means to becoming big. Giving is the bridge to wholeness and bigness. Give until it hurts. Then giving does not hurt anymore.

**Qualities of a leader** – As a leader one should not be rude, harsh, authoritative, angry or scared. One needs to cultivate compassion i.e. deliberately force oneself to be compassionate. There is no other way other than faking and making it. One becomes compassionate by acting compassionately. The emotions which are a dynamic expression of one's love, compassion, sympathy etc., are to be cultivated deliberately by acting them out. The desire to prove is the problem and becoming aware of our true strength is the solution.

**Processing anger** – Emotions like anger do not require to be controlled but need to be processed. There is a cause for anger which is generally pointed out as external. The external cause is usually only a triggering point while it is really one's background. Background means one's ego and the subconscious. The cause cannot be in the conscious because one does not consciously get angry. Also if it were in the conscious it can be avoided. Anything that questions one's integrity, ability, skill etc can invoke anger. It is enough if we recognize that the cause of anger. Tradition says unfulfilled desire causes anger. Modern psychology recognizes the cause of anger is pain. The processing of anger implies 2 steps - one is dama and the other is śama. Dama is a certain control over external expression like violence towards oneself, properties, persons etc. This victimization should be avoided. Best method would be to convert one's home into a support system. The pact with fellow family members could be that no one victimizes anyone else. Like saying that I am angry and I will talk later. Others can also be empowered to point it out. This will really enrich a person's life at home as that is where there is communication. There is no expression of anger in terms of words, looks or action. The processing to overcome suppression is śama. This is done by screaming or writing it out and then destroying it. This writing can continue until it is processed. Emotions are like noodles. If one is processed the others also get taken care of. Watching the breathing is also one way.

**Handling fear** – Fear is managed by welcoming it. One needs to consciously welcome it by saying - I welcome fear and I am not afraid of fear. The result is magical. One has fear because of the unconscious caused by childhood, emotional inconsistency by parents etc. A child has enough occasions to be frightened. The event is not welcomed but the emotion is.

We started with yadyadācarati śreṣṭhaḥ. One should not be looked up to just by position but he should command and deserve that position for the attitudes, values, etc one stands for. Some become leaders by default and opportunism or by just being at the right place at the right time. Such a person destroys the whole structure. One should lead by example. A natural leader is one who doesn't lead but people follow him. The end should not justify the means, like a missionary! In communication what, how of the subject matter, are important. But the most important thing is the other person feels he or she is heard. Even if you know what the other person is going to say listen as though you don't know it. Make sure the person is heard and understood. Patience is very important. Let the other person know you are there for them. This is actually the job of a guru but a leader should have at least a small part of it. When the whole person undergoes a change he becomes a leader. One should realize one's importance in the scheme of things. The more one realizes one's importance the less flippant one will be. And this is a mark of a true leader.

## Fall Vedanta Retreat 2012 with Swami Tattvavidananda

The Fall Vedanta Retreat was held at Arsha Vidya Gurukulam in Saylorsburg PA from October 10 to November 17. This was essentially an adult camp. Approximately 80 students attended the camp. Swami Tattvavidananda Sarswati taught Taittiriyaopanisad and Gita Chapter 9 with Sankara Bhashyam. Swamiji conducted guided meditations and satsangs during the camp. Suddhatmaji conducted the chanting classes. Mark Hertel and Natalie Tuijelaars conducted the Yoga classes. Natalie is visiting Yoga Teacher trained in Sama Yoga and works at 'Yoga One Heart Be'. Kalpesh Jasapara taught Senior Sanskrit classes and Terry Coe taught Junior Sanskrit classes

Taittiriya Upanisad belongs to the Krishna Yajur Veda and is part of the Taittiriya Aranyaka. There are three Vallis (Chapters) in the Upanisad namely, the Siksha Valli, the Brahmananda Valli and the Bhrgu Valli. Each Valli has several sections (Anuvakas). The course covered the Siksa Valli and the Brahmananad Valli.

### Week One

Swamiji started the teaching by invoking the shanti mantra. The Siksa Valli contains the pronunciations and instructions on mantra chanting as well as the different types of Upasanas. The Karmas such as Prarabdha Karma, Shesh Karma, and Nitya

Karma were explained in details. The accumulated karmas cannot be completely emptied as new karmas are continuously added to it. Then the various Devatas namely; the Mitra, the Varuna, the Aryam, the Indra, the Brahaspati and the Vishnu as well as their effect on our lives were explained. The Vayu or is evident expression of life and represents the visible Brahman. Swamiji explained the concept of Vayu. Then swamiji described the Science of Phonetics which includes Varna (the letter), Svara (the intonation), matra (the duration), balam (the effort), Sama (the same pitch), and the samtana (the continuity).

Chapter 9 of the Srimad Bhagavada Gita is the discourse on 'Sovereign Knowledge and Secret'. It is Raj Vidya. Swamiji described it as, the most sacred, most valuable and supreme purifier. Gita is the guiding light which leads to Moksha. Swamiji stressed the importance of Maunam (silence) for looking into oneself without obstructions. Bhagwan says, the secrete is given to the one who is worthy of receiving it and deserves it. Any action performed as an offering to Iswara is Dharma. The Nastikas (non believers) do not believe in this. They are caught in the cycle of birth and death. They are reborn in lower species and suffer in misery. The Bhakti sadhana is the easiest of all Sadhanas. Other sadhanas are Viveka, Dharma, and Pranayama.



## Week Two

Swamiji continued teaching the Upanisad. There are five important Samhitas; namely Adhilokam, Adhijyotisam, adhividyam, Adhiprajam and Adhyatma. Swamiji explained the significance of these Samhitas. Swamiji presented charts for these Samhitas as well as for the Vyahrtis and explained in details the interactions of these entities. The Vyahrtis are used in connection with various rituals.



Continuing the Bhagavad Gita, Swamiji stated a rule of Vedanta which is, all change is superimposed on changeless background. You have to understand the changeless, which is the sense of I AM. It is 'changeless presence. 'I am the presence says the Lord,' the Atma is the presence and I am the Atma of everything. But I do not get attached to anything'. Iswara is present everywhere. The imperishable is the unmanifest, it is pure consciousness , the Atma. Swamiji elaborated on the meaning of Atma being the supreme self.



## Week Three

This week Swamiji dwelt on the significance of Om. Om is uttered in rituals in various situations. It has significance in sacrifices. It is used in the beginning of auspicious rituals and in reciting Mantras as. It is commonly used in Agnihotra and other Homas. Additionally, Swamiji explained the meaning of Svadhyaya and Pravachana and the relationship between the Vedanta student and the teacher.



In the study of Gita this week Swamiji continued the teaching by explaining the meaning of Iswara being present in

everything in the Universe. The Lord pervades the whole Cosmos. But the Lord is not in it. Bhagwan Krishna says. "Neither am I contained inside anything, nor am I the container of anything. In explaining the creation, sustenance and destruction of the universe Bhagwan says, "Nor do those actions bind Me as I am unconcerned and unattached to those actions. Swamiji provided various illustrations to thoroughly explained the meaning of this statement.

#### **Week Four**

This week the study of Upanisad continued in enquiry about the nature of Brahman and Brahmvidya. The Upanisad is part of Brahmvidya. The Upanisad involves superimposing the superior over the inferior thus uplifting the inferior. Swamiji explained the meaning of Vidya, Avidya, and Lakshana. Vidya is knowledge, Avidya is ignorance and Lakshana is something that is presented so that the Brahman can be understood. The meaning is, You are the atma and atma is by which you know what you are. Later, Swamiji dwelt on the five elements, space, air, fire, water and earth. Swamiji then introduced the concept of Koshas and Tapas. Koshas enhance the knowledge of Brahman. The tapas literally means heat but it has several meanings in Vedanta. Swamiji explained the various modes in which this term is used.

In Gita study, Swamiji emphasized the advantages of being Sakshi. Sakshi is one who is not involved and simply observes. Atma is not a Karta or a Bhokta. Silence is an important part of inner peace. He advised the students to be silent as far as possible and talk only when necessary or

useful. Swamiji said that to be silent is a great service to Iswara. Kama and Karma (desire and action) lead to a chain of actions. In a long run it will make you unhappy and unsure. Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are not separate. They are one and the reality is far beyond that. You are that reality.

#### **Week Five**

Swamiji continued further teaching of Taittiriya Upanisad this week in Brahmanand Valli. The significance of five sheaths namely; the Annamaya, the Pranamaya, the Manomaya, the Vijyanamaya and the Anandamaya and their meaning was explained. Then Swamiji described the Purusa as one with head, left and right wing, a trunk and tail. Purusa is produced by the essence of food. The Annamaya is like gross sheath. The Prana sheath is life of living beings. The Manomaya is the mental sheath. The Vijyanamaya is the inner mental sheath. Finally the Anandamaya is the bliss. The Upanisad also dwells on the theory of creation. A detailed description of the concept of Devatas followed.

In the study of Bhagwad Gita, Swamiji said that there should be a balance of papa and punya for the rebirth. Many follow the karma phala as their goal because they have desires. These desires will take them to where they can fulfill their desires. They get into the Vasana Chakra and get caught in the cycle of gata agata (the cycles of birth and death). They have no freedom. Those who are desireless get Atmadarshana and with Chintanam and Nishta they achieve Moksha.

## Week Six

Study continued in Upanisad this week with an elaborate discussion Sankara presented about the existence and nature of Brahman. Various objections have been raised on Sankara's assertion about existence of Brahman. It is a topic by itself. Swamiji explained every aspect of this discussion and how Sankara's arguments negate these objections. This discussion involves the differences between the duality and the nonduality philosophies in Vedanta. Another assumption of Sankara on Jiwa and Iswara as being the same required attention. Objections were raised to this Philosophy and Sankara defended his position. Swamiji then dwelt on the subject of 'fear'. Fear results because the individual does not know its cause. Once the cause is known the fear disappears.

The Upanisad ended stating that the knowledge we discussed is the supreme knowledge, it is the knowledge of self.

In the study of Gita Swamiji talked about the types of Karmas. These are the Shastriya Karma, Sharir Karma, Vyavaharik Karma, Samajik Karma and the Paramarth Karma. Any Karma performed should be an offering to Iswara only if is worthy of such offering. Charity should be done with Shradha. Danam done with improper understanding of Dharma is ineffective. So also the Artha, Kama, Harsha, and Bhayam are ineffective if these are not understood properly. Swamiji then described the Sanyasa Yoga as doing all activities as offerings to Iswara. Iswara treats all equally. So says Bhagwan "Those who devote me spontaneously without expectations, they are in me and I am in them". But Iswara

is not Pakshpati (Partial towards any one). Absolute Sharanagati is an essential step to achieve Moksha. Sharanagati is complete surrendering to Iswara. It is important to practice Ahimsa, moderation in enjoyment, compassion for all, forgiveness to all (Kshama), Peace (Shanti), eating Nutritious food, Charity (Danam), truthfulness (Satyam) and Worship (Bhakti).

The Gita study ends with the firm understanding that one should worship Ishwara always, especially in prosperity as well as in adversity.

On November 29<sup>th</sup> Hurricane Sandy passed by the Gurukulam. Several trees were knocked off by the torrential rain and high winds. The Hurricane caused damage to some buildings on the campus but the classes were conducted regularly with a minimum inconvenience to the students.

On November 13<sup>th</sup> , Deepawali was celebrated at the Gurukulam. Approximately 200 people, including visitors and children took part in the function. Swami Tattvavidanandji addressed the gathering. Swamiji talked about the coronation of Lord Rama in Ayodhya. Swamiji's rendering of the occasion was taken from the Valmiki Ramayana and it depicted the grand occasion in such details with the beauty and pageantry that the listener felt as being right in the middle of this auspicious event. It was a blessing to be at this function. The priests performed the Lakshmi and Kuber Puja. Delicious Deepawali dinner was served at the Gurukulam dining hall. Fireworks followed. The children especially enjoyed the occasion.



On November 11<sup>th</sup>, Samskritam Workshop for Beginners was conducted by Lalitha Chittapragade and Subrahmanam of Samskritabharati of San Jose California. Classes were held at the temple. The purpose of the course was to teach the students the art of conversation in Samskrit. It was a good preliminary course and many students attended.

On October 11<sup>th</sup>, Navaratri Puja was performed at the temple.

On October 23<sup>rd</sup>, Saraswati Puja was performed at the temple.

On October 24<sup>th</sup>, Vijaydashami Puja was performed at the temple.

Suddhatmaji conducted the chanting classes during the camp. Mantras were taken from the Taittiriya Upanisad, and the Bhaawad Gita with long sequences which the students liked very much.

Pujaris Sri Ravichandran and Sri Ganesa performed several Pujas during the camp as well as the regular Pujas at the temple. Lance Daniels and Anil Nagapal relentlessly worked to provide rides to airports and other destinations for the incoming and outgoing students during the six weeks.

The Teachers, Suddhatmaji, the Gurkulam the staff and the volunteers worked hard during the camp and helped it running smoothly, especially during the storm

All six weeks courses are unique. This camp was not an exception. For the Swamiji and the students this camp was one of the busiest. It was also the most rewarding camp. Swamiji was concerned about not being able to finish the teaching undertaken in this course for the reason that the material in the Upanisad was extensive and the time was short. With the blessing of Lord Dashinamurty swamiji completed the course on November 18. It was an intense course. Most of the students in this course have been attending the six week courses for last so many years. They had good understanding of Vedanta. The expectations were high. Swami Tattvavidanandaji is a edicated and scholarly teacher. He is an example of an ideal teacher. Swamiji lives what he teaches. The students have profound respect for this Swamiji. This year it was a blessing to be in Swamiji, s class. Students were looking forward to the next year for Gita chapter X and Chapter 4 of Chhandogya Upanisad with Swami Tattvavidnanda Sarswati.

Officially, The camp ended on November 17<sup>th</sup>. However, the last and very important portion of the Upanisad was still not dealt with. Swamiji continued teaching the Upanisad another day to complete that part of the study. So unofficially the course ended on Sunday November 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Reported by Arvind Bagal**

***Removal of desires is neither possible nor necessary. That I desire is not a problem. The desire becomes a problem when I come under its spell.***

***Pujya Swamiji***

## BOUND

*Snake, snake, snake!  
Cried myself awake.  
Bathed in sweat  
And out of breath.*

*I looked again  
A snake? Nain.  
Its only a rope.  
What a dope!*

*Wealth, wealth, wealth!  
Earn straight or by stealth.  
It was there. Now, Pffft.  
Only a momentary gift.*

*Want to be known  
For deeds of my own  
Look again, think!  
Gone, in a blink.*

*Ah! my son, the future,  
Nurse him, be his tutor.  
I can exist forever.  
No, It is only fever.*

*They all seem so true  
I strive and I stew.  
Darting until I tire.  
Unending flames of fire.*

*I seek to be unbound  
Going round and round.  
With a guru, make a start  
To reach "That thou art"*

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## HORNS OF A DILEMMA

*(A thinking man's cry from the heart)*

Who am I; what am I doing here?  
Life is confusing; endless, a sphere.  
I get irate — with people, with pelf,  
Or am I annoyed with myself?  
My Self? Who or what is it?  
The Body? Or am I only a bit  
Or am I complete, the Whole?

Guide me, nay, Us. Give us Maturity  
Objectivity, Understanding and Clarity  
So we negotiate this life  
Safely, and without strife.  
I know not what lies beyond  
This life, this large, murky pond.  
Am I part or, am I the whole?

They told me early in school  
Walk straight and narrow, like a mule  
With blinkers. Neither left nor right.  
So your life is full and bright.  
But it is a dilemma whose horns  
Cut me up, tear and dance  
On the pieces. Am I still whole?

## Presentation of the Fundación Arsha Vidya in Argentina, 18 November 2012

Pujya Swamiji's students in Argentina are pleased that the Fundación Arsha Vidya was granted official nonprofit status in July of 2012. Swami Dayananda Saraswati is now legally represented in Argentina.

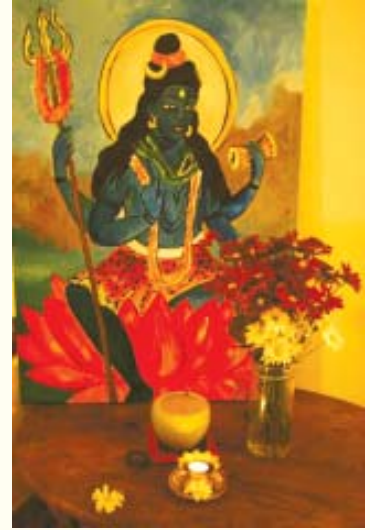
A formal presentation of the Fundación Arsha Vidya was held on the 18th of November in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The presentation included several short videos to introduce Pujya Swamiji to new students who had never met him. All watched with amazement the video showing details of Pujya Swamiji's life and work in establishing major teaching institutions, founding AIM for Seva, convening the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha and various other initiatives. This was followed by a profound and beautiful address by Pujya Swamiji on "Compassion" with Spanish subtitles. The highlight of the presentation was a message from Pujya Swamiji to the students and teachers in Argentina, which was video-recorded in August at AVG Saylorsburg. Pujya Swamiji spoke to us directly about his vision for the Fundación Arsha Vidya.

Following the videos, the board members, who were appointed by Pujya Swamiji in August, were introduced. Among them Horacio Vajovsky talked about his service to Pujya Swamiji since Swamiji's first visit to Argentina in 1990. At the start of the function, Silvia Vajovsky performed the *Arati* and led her students in chanting *Purusha Suktam* and other *suktams* and *shanti mantras*. Both Horacio and Silvia

completed the first three-and-a-half-year course at the Arsha Vijnana Gurukulam in Nagpur and later invited the Acharya, Swamini Bahmaprasada, to visit Argentina and give public talks in 2009.

Swamini Vilasananda, one of the regular teachers in Argentina, is in charge of the Fundación Arsha Vidya.

In the final part of the presentation, after a break in which all enjoyed homemade pastries and tea, a beautiful classical music concert was performed by Marcelo de Aquino Vicente, a dedicated student of Vedanta as well as an accomplished musician who goes to India as often as possible. Marcelo interpreted the Indian





ragas with his beautiful handcrafted rudra vina.

In his message to the teachers and students, Pujya Swamiji addressed the question: "What are the objectives, the work of the Fundación Arsha Vidya in Argentina?"

"It's not evangelism," he said, "It is teaching. It is sharing what you have, because people have so much to own and we should help them own. Therefore, we are not converting any people. We are trying to help them understand themselves. There is so much about each one; so we are not taking them to another cult.

"So it's a different type of work. This foundation can have that kind of work, which will help people get this teaching. There can be translation of the books that we have. There can be regular lectures organized for teachers. Arsha Vidya teachers are there already, qualified people, and they can be supported in whichever way the foundation can support. Then we

can bring some people from India if at all necessary. And [publishing translations of] the books. This is the type of work we have to do.

"Regular seminars we can organize. Workshops we can organize. No debates. We don't want that. We don't want debates or interfaith dialog etc. We don't require all that. So we have nothing against anybody and we are not contending with anybody."

Pujya Swamiji had given the name "Arsha Vidya Argentina" for his group of Argentine students when he visited the country for the first time in 1990. He continued to teach short courses and presented public talks during his nine visits to Argentina up to his last visit in 1999.

The board members appointed by Pujya Swamiji for the Fundación Arsha Vidya are: Swamini Vilasananda Saraswati, President; Bibiana Luoni, Secretary; Rodolfo Lohr, Treasurer; Horacio and Silvia Vajovsky, Antonio Perrone, Angela Espindola, Dr. Alfredo Lauria and his wife Laura Podio, Roberto Toranzo and his wife Stella Thomas. Honorary board members are: Swamini Samvidananda Saraswati, Gambhirah, Marcos Erize, Luis Costa and Khileshvar and Sumati Verma.

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For more information, please see: [www.arshavidya.es/ce-argentina.html](http://www.arshavidya.es/ce-argentina.html) and <https://www.facebook.com/fundacion.arsha.vidya.argentina>

Email: [fundacionarshavidya@gmail.com](mailto:fundacionarshavidya@gmail.com)

The video of Pujya Swamiji shown at the formal presentation of Fundacion Arsha Vidya and related videos are available at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=avwoHAWO8kg&list=PLxfzIjRncK0A7Xgzehi7HGA4BMNhFJGKq>

*Swamini Vilasananda Saraswati*

## Report from argentina

The Valedictory function of the 1st. Course of Sri Rudram Chanting , conducted by Smt. Silvia Vajovsky from Buenos Aires, Argentina, was held on November 16 evening, at the Satya Sai Baba Center.

Smt. Silvia Vajovsky, has been conducting classes in Vedic Chanting, Sanskrit and Vedanta for more than ten years with the blessing of Pujya Swamiji Dayananda Sarasvati, Swamini Brahmaprakashanda Sarasvati and Swami Chitswarupananda Saraswati

The teaching of Laghunyasaḥ and Namakam was completed after two years of deep study and chanting.

The students, all of them very committed, made a big effort to complete the studies, in spite of the difficulties and the lack of time.

Led by Silvia the students chanted Shanti mantras, Laghunyasaḥ y Namakam.

Near hundred persons, with profound respect and emotion listened de Maha Mantra for the first time.

After the chanting Silvia congratulated the students for the meticulous chanting and gave them a certificate for the successful completion of the course.

Two of the students, Rtesh and Medha, addressed the students and the public, to show the importance of chanting Rudram, the love for the teaching and the gratitude to their teacher and the parampara.

Dr. Horacio Vajovsky finished the function talking about the importance of continuing with the Vedic Tradition and the



studies, which enabled them to lead a purposeful life.

After that, all the gathering shared prasad.

*Reported by Dr, Horacio Vajovsky*

## News & Views

THANJAVUR, INDIA, November 26, 2012 (The Hindu): The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is planning to prepare site management plans for world heritage monuments in Tamil Nadu on the lines of the one adopted in Hampi, Karnataka, according to G. Maheshwari, ASI Superintending Archaeologist. She told The Hindu on Sunday that a site management plan was essential for the conservation of world heritage monuments, lest they become endangered with growing urbanisation. Initially, ASI would prepare the site management plan for Mamallapuram monuments and Big Temple at Thanjavur, both of which are world heritage monuments.

Stakeholders would be involved in the preparation as well as implementation of the plan. As a prelude to the preparation, a stakeholders' meeting would be held. Local people, HR and CE Department officials, district authorities and local body officials, youth and media representatives would be invited to discuss the dos and don'ts prescribed by the UNESCO to protect monuments. Zones such as core zone, buffer zone and peripheral zones had been formed around monuments to prevent certain activities that could damage the monument

"But, ASI is certainly not against development or human welfare activities. These should be regulated in such a way that they don't endanger the monuments," Ms. Maheshwari said. She cited the example of Hampi in Karnataka where a proposal by the local authorities to build a bridge across the sprawling monument area was stalled. In its place, a road was laid along the monument without disturbing the heritage site. The

Hampi Development Authority had been formed to implement the site management plan.

"There is a misconception that ASI will isolate the monument from people in the name of conservation. This is not true. The Big temple at Thanjavur is one example where people are allowed to conduct pujas. At the same time, we maintain the temple," Ms. Maheshwari said.

There are 29 heritage sites in Tamil Nadu, out of which 23 are cultural sites and the rest natural sites, she said.

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### Hundreds of Thousands Witness Karthigai Deepam

#### Source

TIRUVANNAMALAI, INDIA, November 28, 2012 (The Hindu): Hundreds of thousands of devotees witnessed the lighting of the Karthigai Maha Deepam on the Tiruvannamalai hill on Tuesday. The ten-day Karthigai Deepam festival, which began with hoisting of the flag at the Sri Arunachaleswarar temple on November 18, culminated with this ritual. Crowds had begun pour into the town from daybreak for performing girivalam or circumambulation of the holy hill. Setting the stage for the final event in the evening, the Barani Deepam was lit inside the sanctum of the temple in the early hours as thousands of devotees watched. At 6 p.m. the Deepa Nattars, who hail from the fishermen community, lit the Maha Deepam atop the hill. The Maha Deepam is a huge cauldron filled with three tons of ghee, with the wick made of several hundred meters of cotton cloth. As the huge

flame became visible from the hill top, lamps were lit in the temple and across the temple town and surrounding villages

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## Hindu Help Line Announces Medical %26 Legal Aid Schemes For The Poor

PUNE, INDIA, November 25, 2012 (Press Release): Conveners, Coordinators & Representatives of Hindu Help Line from over 25 states & many districts of Bharat including the HHL Call Center gathered in Pune for a one day meeting. The meeting was presided over by VHP International Working President Dr. Pravin Togadia & organized by HHL National President Ranjeet Natu.

While reviewing the Hindu Help Line (HHL) work since the launch in 2010 & announcing effective schemes for helping patients & their relatives in Govt. hospitals all over Bharat, Dr. Togadia said, "Health sector remains ignored when it comes to actual help to patients as well as their relatives. If a patient is admitted in a hospital in a town or a city away from the village/home, then at least one or two of his/her relatives have to accompany the patient. It becomes difficult for them to manage their own stay & food while the patient is being taken care of by the hospital. Hindu Help Line in its meeting in Indore recently had announced the Annapoorna Tiffin Service for the relatives of the patients. As a follow up of it, now the total Dhanvantari Hospital Scheme has been introduced."

The prominent features of Dhanvantari Hospital Scheme

1. Under the DHS, in Govt. Dist. hospitals Hindu Help Line will arrange for the Tiffin for the relatives of the patients as

well as fruits for the patients. This will be done with the help of kind Hindus in Bharat.

2. Every 6 Months Hindu Help Line in all districts of Bharat will hold Dhanvantari Medical Camps followed by proper treatment plans.
3. Dadhichi Blood Donation Camps scheme which started last year has got excellent response & since then over 33,000 needy patients were given blood all over Bharat.

Apart from the medical help by Hindu Help Line, there has been a growing demand for Legal Help. Considering this, Hindu Help Line has set up the Hindu Advocates Forum. The HAF will look into legal aid to the poor. For more information contact "source" above

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TIRUCHIRAPALLI, INDIA, November 28, 2012 (The Hindu): A large number of devotees witnessed the Karthigai Deepam lit atop a cauldron made of copper atop Rockfort Sri Thayumanaswamy Temple on Tuesday.

Religious fervor pervaded the area when the temple bell rang and crackers were burst. Exactly at 6 p.m., the temple priest lit the lamp with devotees raising slogans in glory of Lord Siva and Lord Subramanya.

A. Ilamparithi, Joint Commissioner of Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments, said that the preparation for the deepam commenced about a week ago. A 6,560-yard-long cotton cloth was used for making the wick for the deepam, and about 264 gallons of iluppai oil and gingelly oil besides ghee were used for burning the holy lamp which is visible in a radius of about three miles throughout the night.

Later, the statues of Lord Siva, Lord Vinayaka, Lord Subramanya, and Sri Chandikeswarar were taken in a procession through the town. Reciting verses from Tirumarai, a large number of devotees performed girivalam around Rockfort.

- [Email to a friend](#) •

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## Tight Vigil During Thiruparankundram Deepam

### Source

MADURAI, INDIA, November 28. 2012 (by Padmini Sivarajah, TNN): The karthigai deepam was lit on top of the Thiruparankundram hill amid tight security on Tuesday following the recent recovery of explosives from the area. Security was tightened on top of the hill after a bucket full of explosives, including ammonium nitrate, batteries and detonators was discovered near the shrine on November 1. Thiruparankundram is the first abode of Lord Murugan and the festival is one of the most important at the shrine. It began with the flag hoisting on November 19. The deepam was lit in the sanctum sanctorum in the evening after which the mahadeepam was lit on top of the hill. A copper vessel, measuring three-and-a-half feet high and two-and-a-half feet in diameter is carried to the place near the Uchipillaiyar temple on the hill about 150 feet above the shrine and filled with about 300 kg of ghee and a wick made of 150 metres of cloth it is lit using six kg of camphor.

However, the Hindu Munnani has been demanding that the lamp is lit on the ancient lamp post near the Kasiviswanathar temple. On Tuesday, 250 Hindu Munnani members including its state president Arasu Raja and state executive member H Adhisheshan were arrested for attempting to proceed to the

Kasiviswanathar temple to light the lamp. The original spot is now a disputed site as it is situated between the Kasiviswanathar temple and a mosque a few hundred feet away. Speaking to TOI, VHP district president 'Chinmaya' Somasundaram said they have evidence to show that the entire hill of Thiruparankundram, belonged to the Subramaniaswamy temple. "This has been mentioned in a book titled 'Madura Country a Manuel' by J H Nelson, who was the then collector of Madurai in 1868," he said. "Even during my childhood days, the lamp was lit on this stone pillar near the Kasiviswanathar temple, which has a 10 feet deep hole to hold the ghee for lightening the lamp. Somasundaram said that they wanted to revive the ancient traditions and planned to hold talks with the RDO and district authorities and get the nod to light the lamp in the designated site next year. Over 500 police personnel including 50 sub-inspectors, 20 inspectors, DSPs Ravichandran and Purushotham led by superintendent of police V Balakrishnan were pressed into service in view of the occasion.

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## Festivals Bring Kashmiris Together

### Source

KASHMIR, December 1, 2012 (Khabar South Asia): A Kashmir Pandit family makes Rangoli (decorative designs) for Diwali. In doing so, they are following a centuries-old tradition. It has long been customary for Kashmiri Pandits to invite their Muslim brethren to feast with them during this and other major Hindu festivals. Likewise, Muslims entertain their Hindu neighbors during their festivals, especially on Eid.



Diwali was celebrated this year for five days starting on November 13th. Also known as Deepavali, it is the biggest holiday in India. In Kashmir, the festival also offers an opportunity for minority Pandits and majority Muslims to renew their fraternal ties.

”There are just a few families left in this area. Since my childhood, I have seen my Muslim friends visiting our home on every auspicious occasion. For Diwali, again we have invited our Muslim neighbors for dinner, and they will also do the same for us during their festivals,” said Assema Koul.

Muslims eagerly await these joyous occasions. Srinagar resident Shaban Mohammad told Khabar that local Muslims take part in every non-Muslim festival. “We have political uncertainty in Kashmir, but that doesn’t mean that we don’t take part in the non-Muslim festivals. Every year, I visit homes of Kashmiri Pandits and even Sikhs during their festivals,” he said. “Kashmir belongs to them also. They are not visitors here. We have shared pain and happiness together during the prolonged years of conflict,” Mohammad said.

• [Email to a friend](#) •

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## **30,000 Weddings In Delhi, Huge Traffic Jams All Across NCR**

Source

NEW DELHI, INDIA, November 30, 2012 ([ndtv.com](http://ndtv.com)): With today reportedly being the most auspicious night of the year, according to the Hindu calendar, there are around 30,000 weddings happening in and around the National Capital Region. And that has resulted in massive traffic jams across Delhi and Gurgaon. It is reportedly taking at least

an hour to travel from South Extension to Terminal 1 of the Indira Gandhi Airport.

Getting to Gurgaon is a nightmare too. There are kilometre-long traffic jams on the Gurgaon Expressway; it is reportedly taking at least an hour to cross the toll plaza from Delhi towards Gurgaon. “Seems whole Gurgaon & Delhi are hosting wedding... Barat Traffic Jam all over,” a tweet said.

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## **Trinidad Group Hopes To Launch First Hindu Network**

Source

TRINIDAD/TOBAGO, December 16, 2012 (Trinidad Express): The Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha (SDMS), under its company the Hindu Broadcasting Network, has been granted a television licence by the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT). However, it is not a free-to-air licence but rather one to operate only on cable TV networks. Sat Maharaj, secretary general of the SDMS, yesterday confirmed that the SDMS has been invited by TATT to sign the documents for the licence concession. Maharaj said he hoped to launch the country’s first Hindu network, Jaagriti TV, in the next three to four months.

He noted that while there were Indian channels, there was no Hindu channel on the network to cater for the large religious base of practicing Hindus. He said the station would adhere to the same protocol which its radio station Radio Jaagriti followed- there will no advertising of alcohol, no advertising of meat or meat products and no advertising of fetes or parties. “We want to propagate the Hindu way of life,” said Maharaj. “The vision of the Maha Sabha

and its communications arm is to provide a network that accommodates and facilitates the Hindu in the new world reality,” Maharaj said at the time.

## **Pundits’ Attitude, Funds Crunch Hit Sanskrit Encyclopaedia Work**

Source

INDIA, December 2, 2012 (Deccan Herald): The Government of India-assisted monumental project, “Encyclopedia Dictionary of Sanskrit on Historic Principles,” is languishing not only for want of adequate funds, but also due to the over-modesty of the Sanskrit Pundits, laments the eminent 79-year-old Sanskrit scholar and authority on “Vaishnava Agamas,” Dr. Pandurang Prabhakar Apte, now Emeritus Professor, Deccan College, Pune, and of the Academy of Sanskrit Research, Melkote, Karnataka. He spoke to M. R. Venkatesh on a wide-range of issues during his recent visit to Chennai.

Dr. Pune gave the following reply when asked the status of the Sanskrit Encyclopaedia Project.

The “Encyclopaedia Dictionary of Sanskrit” is a massive on-going project under the aegis of the Deccan College in Pune, which comes under the Maharashtra Government, and with Central Government assistance. But the grant is not enough. Previously, the Union HRD Ministry was funding this project. But in recent years all assistance for Sanskrit study projects are channelized through the “Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan” in Delhi. Under this project, they have taken some 1,500 books and Sanskrit words extracted so far is 850,000, which have been arranged alphabetically and 7,000 pages printed. But even under the first “akshara A”, Sanskrit words taken up to three-member compounds, that is all such compound words beginning with A, have not been completed yet.

For example, just under one word, “Agni” there are 500 entries covering 111 meanings and sub-meanings! It is thus a colossal project underway. The project faces a hurdle, not only due to insufficient budget allocations and discouragement of the Government, but also due to the Sanskrit scholars who are too modest and narrow in outlook while asking for funds.

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