



Arsha Vidya Newsletter

Rs. 15/-



॥ गुरु-वन्दनम् ॥

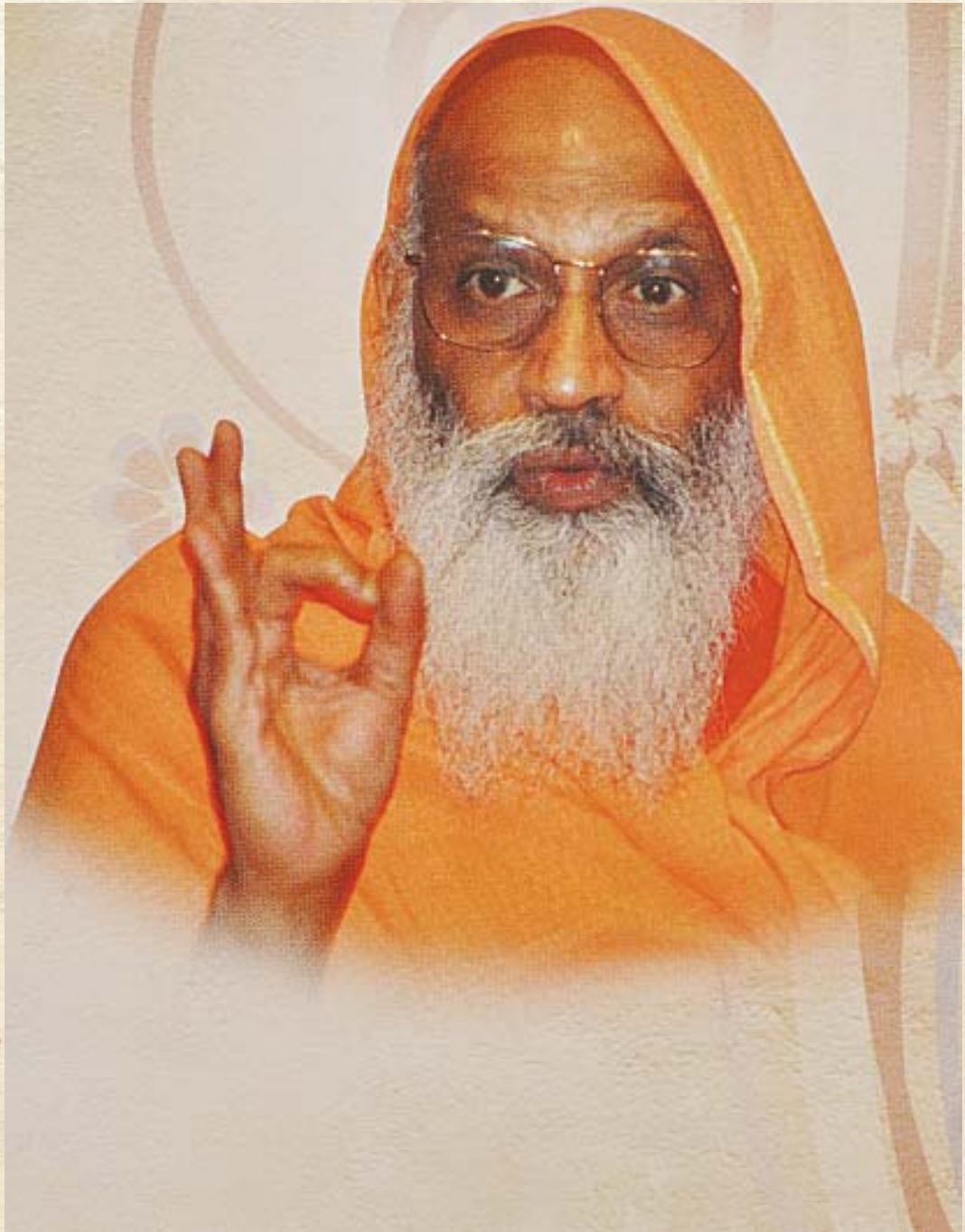
ॐ नमः प्रणवार्थाय शुद्धज्ञानैकमूर्त्ये।
निर्मलाय प्रशान्ताय दक्षिणामूर्त्ये नमः॥

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

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

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

सदाशिव-समारम्भां शङ्कराचार्य-मध्यमाम्।
अस्मदाचार्य 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 5



(continued from the last issue)

In Vedic teaching, we observe certain holidays. On the prārthanā, first day, on the aṣṭamī, eighth day, on the caturdaśī, fourteenth day and on the pūrṇimā and amāvāsyā, fifteenth day, there will be no classes. So, in a fortnight we have four holidays. That means there is a long weekend in every alternate week. This is a good arrangement. Even today the orthodox people follow this system. All the time you have to look up to the sky. Certain configurations of planets in certain houses are very auspicious for spiritual pursuits. Those days are spent religiously. The whole Vedic life is connected to visible astronomy based on what is visible to the naked eyes in the sky. By looking at the calendar you are at once in touch with the whole cosmos, and your cosmic relationship is recognized. You are not just alone here fighting against the whole world. You are a part of the whole setu;p. Therefore, jyotiṣa is very important.

Jyotiṣa is predominantly astronomy. Its astrological aspect comes later. Astrology is useful not for looking at lyour birth chart and making decisions, it is useful only when things do not go well. You keep on doing things, and if you find that everything you do goes down the drain, then you look at the birth chart to find out whether you can do something more than your effort. As a vaidika, you are saying a general prayer, the broad-spectrum prayer, but sometimes the broad spectrum prayer is not adequate. So, you require a specific prayer. Jyotiṣa helps to find out what specific prayer can be said in a given situation.

Prayer is human effort and it is pragmatic. A person who is lost in the clouds does not say a prayer. It is said by a person who is rooted on this earth, who understands his limitations and who does not have this funny notion that he can achieve everything. One who seeks help at the right time is a pragmatic person. Seeking help swhen you need it is an intelligent way of living. The more you think this over, the more you will understand that there is no better definition of 'intelligent living'.

The above six disciplines of knowledge are called ṣaḍ aṅgās, the six limbs with the help of which one understands the aṅgi, that is, the Veda and Vedanta. To understand the meaning of the Veda, you require to study these disciplines of knowledge. They stand for all other disciplines of knowledge—mathematics, biology, geology, botany, medicine, and so on. Anything that you can learn or know by perception or by inference, or through both, is aparā vidhyā. Anything

that the knower learns is aparā vidhyā. Even the knowledge of Vedic mantras is aparā vidhyā.

If you analyse all the disciplines of knowledge listed here, you understand that all of them give you education. Jyotiṣa gives you your place in the scheme of things. Vyākaraṇa provides linguistic education. Through grammar, the style of teaching is unfolded. Paṇini introduced a meta language in order to unfold a language. That naturally implies a lot of logic and reasoning. In the process of understanding the meta language, you develop intellectual discipline. The study of Paṇinian grammar helps you in honing your acumen, and of course memory. Memorising has been a regular part of learning for Indians. They used to repeat the whole Veda. From a young age they used to memorise entire books, such as dictionaries. Memory power is there in everyone. The more you use it, the more of it there is. There is no other way to develop memory than to keep on memorising more things.

The list of aparā vidhyā reveals something significant. There is nothing more sacred for a Vedic person than the Vedas. He accepts the Vedas as body of sacred knowledge. We in fact worship the Vedas. The Arya Samaj people do not have a temple. They have only the Book of Vedas, which they call Veda Bhagavān. The Veda itself is Bhagavān. All secular disciplines of knowledge are in the same category as the Vedas, which are the most sacred. Therefore, everything is sacred for us and nothing is secular. We do not have the word 'secular' because everything is Īśvara. There is no equivalent for the word 'secular' in Sanskrit. We have two words: laukika and vaidika. Vaidika is that which is purely connected to Veda like rituals and so on. All other things are laukika, meaning, vyavahārika, worldly. But that does not mean laukika is secular. We do not have a sacred-secular concept. People use the word 'secular' in a different sense. By secular they mean not connected to religion; in government, it means non-interference in religion, allowing people to follow whatever religion they want to follow. In our tradition there is nothing secular, everything is sacred. Money is Lakṣmi, marriage is Lakṣmi, children are Lakṣmi, wealth is Lakṣmi, land is Lakṣmi, produce is Lakṣmi, success is Lakṣmi; everything is Lakṣmi. Everything is Īśvarā. Now parā vidhyā is defined.

Yadā tad akṣaram adhigamyate : that by which the akṣara is gained, by which Brahman is understood as non-separate from ātman. Tad means Brahman that is akṣara. It means that which does not undergo any kind of loss or decline, that which is always the same.

Adhigamyate means 'is gained'. The root 'gam' preceded by the prefix 'adhi' has the sense of 'gain' most of the time.¹ Why do we give this meaning here? Parā vidhyā is defined here as that knowledge by which one knows Brahman.

This is not right because knowledge itself is Brahman. Therefore, we have to say 'it is that knowledge by which one gains Brahman'. Gaining Brahman is only in terms of knowledge. The self is always self-revealing. It happens to be Brahman. I do not know that gfact. Therefore, the removal of ignorance of the self being identical to Brahman alone is para prāpti, gain of Brahman.² It is the gain of what is already gained. After knowledge, there is nothing else one has to do, as Brahman is an accomplished fact.

Śaṅkara, in his commentary on this mantra, raises an objection³ and clarifies what is parā vidhyā. If all four Vedas are aparā vidhyā, and parā vidhyā is knowledge of Brahman, then parā vidhyā stands outside of the four Vedas. Then how can we say Brahman is known through veda pramāṇa? Definitely it becomes something that is known through other means of knowledge, such as perception and inference, like microbiology is known. That means Brahman becomes an object enjoying its own place and attributes like any other object in the world. Being other than the self, Brahman will become an object of aparā vidhyā. Therefore, the vidhyā by which Brahman is gained cannot be called parā vidhyā. It also cannot be the means of mokṣa.

Further Manu says⁴ that smṛtis, supporting books, that are outside the Vedas and whose vision is not in keeping with the Vedas, have to be discarded because their vision is distorted, and they will not produce results. They are only steeped in ignorance; one should not follow them. They should not even be considered for understanding. Being outside the Vedas, Brhma vidhyā or upaniṣad will have the same status as those smṛtis, and hence one cannot take to its study.

Therefore, the upaniṣads, should be included in the Veda. If the upaniṣads are included in Veda, then one part of the Veda will become aparā vidhyā and the other part will be parā vidhyā. This is similar to saying that half the egg is for hatching and the other half is for an omelette. Half the Veda is pramāṇa and the other half is not pramāṇa. This is not correct. The whole Veda should be accepted as pramāṇa. Again, if the upaniṣads are included in Vedas how can we separate parā vidhyā from the Vedas.⁵ This mantra says that all the Vedas are aparā vidhyā and parā vidhyā is that by which Brahman is gained. There is a clear separation seen here. This is the objection.

¹ अधि पूर्वस्यु गमेः प्रायश्ः प्राप्त्यर्थत्वात् । मुण्डक भाष्यम्

² न च पर प्राप्तेरवगमात्स्यु भेदोऽस्ति । अविध्याया अपाय एव हि पर-प्राप्तिः नार्थन्तरम् । मुण्डक भाष्यम्

³ ननु ऋग्वेदादि बाह्ये तर्हि सा कथं परा विध्या स्यान्मोक्ष साधनम् - मुण्डक भाष्यम्

⁴ यो वेदबाह्याः स्मृतयः याश्च कुदृष्ट्याः सर्वास्ता निष्फलाः प्रेत्य तमो निष्ठा हि ताः स्मृताः - मनुस्मृति १२।९ इति हि स्मरन्ति । कुदृष्टित्वात् निष्फलत्वाद् अनादेया स्यात् । उपनिषदां च ऋग्वेदादिबाह्यत्वं स्यात् । मुण्डक भाष्यम्

⁵ ऋग्वेदादित्वे तु पृथक्करणमनर्थकम् अथ परेति । मुण्डक भाष्यम्

Śaṅkara gives the answer now. He clarifies what is meant by parā vidhyā. It is not the words of upaniṣads that is parā vidhyā. If you ask a Vedic scholar to recite the Kṛṣṇa Yajurveda, he will chant the Taittiriyaopaniṣd, including the sentence satyaṁ jñānm anantam brahma. But he may not fully know what the sentence satyaṁ jñānm anantam brahma means. Whenever he is doing pūjā to the Lord, he will chant Taittiriyaopaniṣd during the abhiṣeka, offering water for bathing. When he studies the Vedas, he learns the upaniṣad mantrās also. That is only aparā vidyā. When he studies the pūrvamīmāṃsā, analysis of the section dealing with the rituals etc., of the Vedas that is also aparā vidyā. When he performs the rituals he is putting the aparā vidyā into practice.

Parā vidyā on the other hand refers to the cognitive vṛtti by which the akṣaram brahma is understood. The knowledge of the identity of the self with Brahman that takes place in the buddhi, on hearing the words of the upaniṣads, is called Parā vidyā. Brahman, the subject matter of the upaniṣads, is to be known. Here the knowledge of Brahman alone is desired to be called Parā vidyā.⁶ Even though one can have all the words of the upaniṣads in one's head, still one will not gain the knowledge of Brahman. Mere words of the upaniṣads are not Parā vidyā. One has to make an effort in going to a teacher and asking for this vidyā. Unless one chooses to know Brahman, this knowledge does not take place.⁷ With vairāgya, objectivity, gained by understanding the limitations of all one's other pursuits, when one exposes oneself to this teaching and understands "Ah! I am Brahman", that is called Parā vidyā.

Nārada knew all the disciplines of knowledge including the words of all the upaniṣads. But he did not know what it was all about, so he was in sorrow. He went to Sanatkumara and asked him for this knowledge to cross the ocean of sorrow. So, when we talk of Rig veda, Yajurveda and so on, we mean only the sords of the Vedas⁸. The words of the upaniṣads stand in the same group. Therefore, there is a separation of para vidhyā from the Vedas and the words of the . The words of upaniṣads along with the tools like grammar, logic and so on to understand their meanings are the 'mdeans' ti gaub that knowledge. Therefore, aparā vidhyā becomes part of the means for gaining parā vidhyā. This is the connection.

⁶ वेध्य विषय विज्ञानस्य विवक्षितत्वात्। उपनिषद्वेध्याक्षर विषयं हि विज्ञानमिह परा विध्येत् प्राधान्येन विवक्षितं नोपनिषच्छब्द राशिः। मुण्डक भाष्यम्

⁷ शब्दऽराश्याधिगमेऽपि यत्रान्तरमन्तरेण गुर्वभिगमनादि लक्षणं वैराग्यं च नाक्षराधिगमः सम्भवतीति पृथक्करणं बह्व विध्यायाः परा विध्येति कथनं चेति। मुण्डक भाष्यम्

⁸ वेद शब्देन तु सर्वत्र शब्द राशिर्विवक्षितः। मुण्डक भाष्यम्

Śrī Rudram Anuvāka 02

(continued from April issue)

नमो॑ भव॒स्य हे॒त्यै॑ जग॒तां पतये॑ नमः॑ ॥ ६ ॥

namo॑ bhavasya hetyai jagatām pataye namaḥ॑ ॥ 6 ॥

namaḥ - salutation; bhavasya – of the life of becoming; hetyai – to the one who is the weapon that destroys; jagatām – of the universe; pataye – to the Lord; namaḥ – salutation.

Salutation to the one who destroys the life of becoming and who is the Lord of the universe.

Bhava is saṁsāra that is often presented by the śāstra as jagat-vṛkṣa, the tree of universe, which we have to fell. The tree we fell is the one that we perceive wrongly. The Lord is the one who has the weapon. He is the weapon, śāstra, for the destruction of bhava¹, a life of becoming, of a jīva. Bhagavān is also called bhava, meaning the one who is in everything as the very existence.

He is the remover of bhava because He is the Lord of the jagat, jagannātha. He is the jagat rakṣaka, the protector of the world by removing bhava for the jīva.

You do not destroy the world since the world is Bhagavān and you are bhagavat svarūpa. Only ajñāna and its kārya, effect, have to be destroyed. The Lord's grace helps you destroy bhava. You cannot independently destroy bhava as you are a product of bhava. By revealing his svarūpa, the Lord has to destroy bhava. Brahma vidhyā is Umā and He is Umāśahāya. Accompanied by Umā. Because of His grace, you gain antaḥ karaṇa pakva, maturity of mind. The grace takes you to a guru by whose teaching, the nature of the Lord is revealed. Thus Īśvara anugrahād eva jñānam, knowledge is only with the grace of the Lord and by revealing Himself, he also becomes the destroyer of bhava.

bhagavān bhagavat svarūpa bhava

bhava bhava

¹ bhavati tiṣṭhati iti bhavaḥ – that which exists in time is called bhavaḥ



Three Year Course at AVG Anaikatti



The three-year course in progress at AVG, Anaikatti is quickly approaching the end



Julie Carpenter

of its second year. The student base has seen very little attrition – it may even have quietly increased in number. The large number of students in this batch can, and must, be attributed to Pujya Swamiji being recognized as the greatest of Vedanta teachers alive today. There are many reasons for such recognition, not least of which the caliber of the teachers that have graduated from previous three-year courses. The current students are reminded of this every day as they benefit from Swami Sakshatkrtanandaji's ongoing

support of each one of the 80 plus full-

time students living here in ashram. Swami Sakshatji quietly attends to all the details that make it possible for us to remain focused on our studies. Whether it be assisting in our understanding of a particular line of inquiry in bhasya, or explaining how a challenging Panini sutra is applied, or the need for a medical referral or special dietary requirement, or someone to turn to for guidance and reassurance, Swami Sakshatji is there. It is also Swami Sakshatji who teaches the daily Sanskrit classes and takes the Vedanta classes when Pujya Swamiji is not in residence.

We have been studying Taittiriya Upanishad bhāṣya in the morning Vedanta class with Pujya Swamiji. Having completed the Z+kc'valla', we are now in the Brahmānandavallā' looking at the five loci of error for placing the "I" notion. Pujya Swamiji guides us

through bhāṣya, clearly pointing out the connections that help one to discover the full purport of the words, and expanding bhāṣyāra's explanations so that one is gently guided to a place where there is no other option but to recognize the truth. This detailed analysis and attention to syntax of the Sanskrit sentences reflects the increase in of Sanskrit now being used in classes as the students become more familiar with vocabulary and grammar. For

many it is an additional blessing that we are able to record and listen to the classes a second time allowing us not only to review grammar points that are highlighted, but most importantly clarify our understanding so that our level of Sanskrit does not inhibit the teaching that is being given.

Ever alert to the objective that the students themselves are links in the paraA' para, with the potential of teaching in the future, Pujya Swamiji's classes also teach the student how to teach. No unnecessary words are used. Each metaphor, many times in the form of an anecdote, or joke, carries a clear explanation of even the subtlest inquiry to be found in the bhāṣya. Constantly alert to the students' level of understanding, Pujya Swamiji expands and gives further clarification when needed, explaining the reason for such detail; no matter where students are from, what background they have, what obstacles they face, each one is reassured that they will understand what is needed and is thus able to relax and let the pramāṅga do its job. The one whose mind has been clinging to the mistaken identities sees the truth shining in the very being of the guru – and the compassion of that truth manifest in Pujya Swamiji knows no bounds as the student begins to humbly acknowledge the mistakes one by one.

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The afternoon Vedanta class, is dedicated to the study of Bhagavad G+´t´ alongside Z´aE´ k´ch´rya´s bh´c´ya. Anyone who has read the G+´t´ Home Study course books, that are available in several different languages, has an idea of how it is to listen to Pujya Swamiji unfold the Bhagavad Gita. Pujya Swamiji's extensive knowledge of both the Gita and Upanic´ads coalesces in each and every class. We are currently studying the Fourth Chapter. Having covered in detail the discussion of avat´ra – Gita being the only place where avat´ra is discussed so elaborately by the [´ruti, we have started our inquiry into the main topic of this chapter, the nature of action. Pujya Swamiji leaves nothing to chance with regards to understanding the tatparya of the Gita. Even topics, such as the varG´a system, that have been so misunderstood and thus challenged, when handled by Pujya Swamiji become yet another source of appreciation for the attention to detail and intelligence in the Order of *[´vara.

The study of P´G´ini sk´tras during Sanskrit classes continues. We are following Laghu Siddhanta Kaumud+´, which contains approximately 1300 of P´G´ini's nearly 4000 sk´tras. P´G´ini's brilliance cannot be overstated. As we sit taking notes, trying to remember the sutra that was learned last week – or yesterday – because it is plays an important role in arriving at the final form of the word we are currently looking at, one can only marvel at the fact that P´G´ini didn't have paper, and books to assist him. As Pujya Swamiji has said on occasion – perhaps the diet then was rich in something that we are not getting nowadays.

Each day ends with satsang. These days, even though Pujya Swamiji still answers any doubts that have arisen or clarifies any confusions, by the end of the hour one or two students have also taken the microphone and, standing in front of the class, told the story of how he or she came to Vedanta and met Pujya Swamiji. The stories are as varied as the students here. Not only is there a wide range of family backgrounds, but a wide range of cultural backgrounds too, with students coming from all over India, as well as Malaysia, Japan, Brazil, Taiwan, Russia, New Zealand, Italy, England, Canada, and the U.S. Student participation in satsang doesn't stop with these stories – we are now taking it in turn to chant some of Taittir+´ya in front of everyone as well. When one has not yet assimilated that there is no second thing, and thus nothing to fear, looking out at approximately 100 shining faces with a microphone no more than 6 inches from one's face can be a little unnerving.

As minutes turn into hours, and hours in to days, days to weeks, weeks to months and months to years, appreciation grows for the grace that manifests in the form of the contributors who give time, money, and energy so that each three-year course can take place. What to say then of the contributor of contributors, Pujya Swamiji, who with boundless compassion, tirelessly and enthusiastically repeating what must have been said by him thousands of times before, assists each student in addressing a problem that when is fully understood, does not even exist.

Sat-sang with Swami Pratyagbodhananda at Syracuse

As the name connotes, Swami Pratyagbodhananda's discourses are always full of insight, witty, and lovely. Not a single moment is dull, the entire session is filled with humorous anecdotes, colorful stories, and scintillating observations on human follies, rather frailties. But, through all questions, prodding's, tooth-pulling queries, and responses, the preceptor wants nothing but wisdom and welfare for his students. Swamiji's command over English idiom and vocabulary is superb. He has at the tip of his tongue – the right word, always the most precise word to convey exactly – what is meant. Total unity between thought (meaning) and word is very difficult to achieve in practice; Kalidasa himself immortalized the travails of communication in the couplet: *vagarthau...*

Swamiji's heart is full of kindness for all. But when it comes to calling a spade a spade, he spares none. He is totally impartial: Swami exhibits the same level of abhorrence to any and all bad habits. Whether they belong to Gujarat, Andhra, Tamil, or Uttar Pradesh, or even North America – they are all taken to cleaners, when they (students, disciples) are found wanting in correct Sanskrit pronunciation or any behavioral trait. But, wherever there is any virtue (or redeeming quality), he points *it* out with the same acuteness of observation. A good deed is never just glossed over, without proper appreciation. Ex: American kitchen counters are

sparklingly clean, adorned with a fresh bouquet of flowers in a vase.

When it comes to speaking Sanskrit words, many tend to trip and commit mistakes. Ideally, one should read and write in Sanskrit (Devanagari) script. And practice, practice a lot uttering Sanskrit verses and words. Also, gradually learn how to break, give pauses to long phrases with correct emphasis and intonation. Swami illustrated the problem with the word, "*prasadam*". This word gets mangled by the people of south and north (India) alike. Thus, original *prasadam* gets morphed into *sadam* in Tamil. Up north, it is spoken as "*par-shad*". The native English speaker (as do today's urbanites in Indian mega cities) has difficulty with pronouncing aspirated consonants (and of course, double and triple consonants): *buddhi*. Misspeaking and mispronunciation are not just innocent mistakes. Often they lead to misunderstandings, some times with disastrous consequences. Purity of body, purity of food, and purity in speech – they are all important for spiritual progress. Thus carelessness in these matters, can lead to unnecessary pitfalls (delays) in the path, a fact often stressed by many enlightened teachers.

To a mellowed (unbiased, unencumbered mature) adult, Swamiji's remarks appear harmless; they are simply meant to stimulate the audience, guide them to learn Sanskrit words with utmost care. Diction is very important (in Hindu liturgy

as in any tradition) – clear pronunciation with proper emphasis on aspirated consonants is a must. Without correct diction, we cannot utter Vishnu sahasranama (or any *nama-vali*) flawlessly. Nor can we decipher the deeper meaning of Lalita sahasranama. For those, who are learning to recite Sanskrit words via English transliteration, the guidance of a preceptor is needed – needed badly. Much grief and hardship can be avoided if one follows closely the words of Swami Pratyagbodhananda (or puja Swami Dayanand Saraswati). Just reading, muttering the English transliterated verses, names, or slokas is not enough. One must have rudimentary knowledge of Sanskrit characters, pronunciation of vowels, diphthongs, consonants, and one must also understand the key to the English transliteration scheme. A bit of hard work, in deed. Alas, there are no short cuts to any learning! Who said any spiritual progress is easy?

One session was devoted to japa (chanting the Lord's name). The efficacy of calling Vishnu's name is illustrated vividly with a short story: How an illiterate, yet ardent devotee called the Lord, (a)gha Mochan. Even calling His name incorrectly yields veritable results. Because embedded in such actions is pure bhakti feeling. Also, Swami emphasized how in the case of the Lord, the name has the same power as the Lord Himself. The name and named are the same. We can do the nama japa, anywhere, at any time, and even mispronunciations and mistakes are pardoned by the Lord Narayana. In a sense, nama japa is (or appears to be) slightly superior to chanting a 'mantra'. For a (un-initiated) devotee, a nama japa is more accessible, it requires less (mental) preparation.

At our local Lakshmi Narayan temple, Swami spoke at length on the origins of Sri Bhagavatam, how the book came to be written. He talked about the birth of Sage Suka; Veda Vyasa's dissatisfaction and despair – even after writing all the eighteen puranas and Maha Bharata, he was still tormented by unhappiness – a feeling of incompleteness enveloped him. Then Narada suggested Vyasa to write Sri Bhagavata Purana. The discourse included the story of Parikshat, his impending death due to a curse (mediated by the great serpent, Takshaka), and his attainment of moksha (Vaikuntha) after listening to Srimad-Bhagavatam narration. Swami also described the six essential attributes of "Bhagavan".

The last session was conducted for young children. Despite being a Sunday afternoon (tail end) event, it too brought out a great vivacity during the interactive discussion with youth. Our Swami urged Mr. Raman to initiate a Purna Vidya Teaching Program for Syracuse children. After eliciting responses (on what they did for Mothers Day) from the audience, Swamiji ended the session with a story of Lord Krishna and a poor village student. Krishna acts as a loving elder brother (Gopal Bhaiya) to the young kid and presents him with a small miraculous milk pot.

Hindu scriptures extol the benefits of sat-sang, association with the Lord's bhaktas. Visiting or meeting a swami like Sri Pratyagbodhananda is tantamount to going to a holy place (like Brindavan). In deed, it is an indescribable boon for all Syracuse Indian residents to see the Swami in our midst, in our homes. Lucky for us, we all got to spend three days in Swamiji's company and participate in sat-sang.

These days, despite a plethora of modern (English) books, videos, and Internet articles (audio & video), it is extremely difficult to come across correct, authentic exposition of traditional scriptures (Ramayana, Bhagavata Purana, and Maha Bharata). In this context, it is very lucky to have a speaker like Swami Pratyagbodhananda who can crisscross four languages and bring the original

meaning of Veda Vyasa's Sri Bhagavata purana (with Sri Vallabha-acharya's commentary) – bring he did, its original glory with witty jokes and hilarious interludes. That, itself is a great soul uplifting religious retreat! We pray for Swamiji's health and hope he would conduct many more spiritual discussions across several continents.

Events in AVG Saylorburg

- Jun 25-26 Swami Veditatmanandaji's talks on "How & Why to live a Dharmic Life", in Salt lake City, UT
- Jul 1 & 15 Taittiriya Upanishad Bhasya Class with Dr. Swaminathan 8:30 am to 9:45 am; Bhagavad Gita Classes by Swami Veditatmanandaji from 10 am to 12:30 pm followed by Lunch. Satsang 1:15 pm to 2:15 pm
- Jul 4 Guru Poornima - Abhishekam to Lord Dakshinamurti, Guru Pada Puja, Talk by Swamiji 11 am to 12:30 pm followed by Lunch
- Jul 1 to 4 Independence Day Weekend Retreat with Swami Veditatmanandaji on Person of Wisdom
- Aug 12 - Pujya Swamiji's 81st Birthday Celebrations
- Aug 12-17 Carnatic Music Workshop
- 2012 AVG Program Schedule
- Aug 12-17 Purna Vidya Teachers Training
- Aug 15 & 29 Pradosha Puja 5:15 pm to 6 pm followed by regular Arati 6 to 6:30 pm and Dinner 6:30pm to 7:30pm
- Aug 19 AVG's 26th Anniversary Celebrations : Pujya Swamiji's talk on Creation is the Creator
- Aug 23-26 -Labor Day's Patrons Retreat

Mahakavi Kalidas

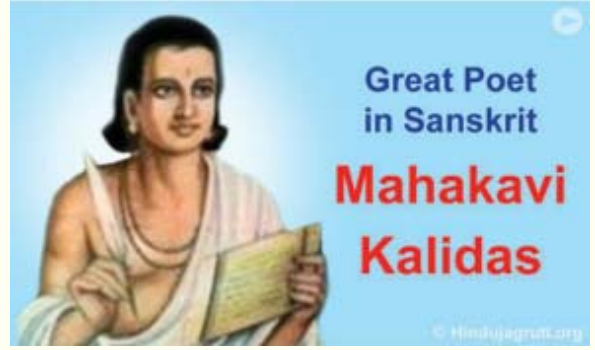
Introduction

One of the greatest poets and dramatists in Sanskrit. His chronicle of the kings of the Raghu clan ('Raghuvamsha'), the great play 'Shakuntala' and other works depict, through many great characters, the highest ideals of life as seen by the ancient people of Bharat.

Kalidas

There are hundreds of languages in the world. However, great and classical literature which people in all countries need to read is found only in a few languages. One such great language is Sanskrit. It is one of the oldest languages. It is the mother of several Indian languages such as Hindi, Bengali and Marathi in the North. Kannada, Telugu and other languages in the South have also been nourished by it.

It needs the genius of poets who create literary epics and great thinkers for a language to achieve world-renown. Sanskrit is eminently lucky in this respect. Sages' celebration of the wonders of nature, the sky, the stars, mountains and rivers, the sun, the moon, the clouds, fire ('Agni') and their devout offering of prayers to the Universal Power are all found in the Vedic classics which/are in Sanskrit. Puranas and historical epics like the Ramayana and the Mahabharat vividly describe the battle between the good and the evil. They also portray the virtues like devotion to truth, a sense of



sacrifice, heroism, cultured living, etc. In Sanskrit there are also beautiful stories of birds and animals like Panchatantra; stories extolling good and basic qualities of wisdom and intelligence. Sanskrit can also justly boast of a rich treasure house of plays, poems and many scientific and philosophical treatises.

A poet who has made a distinct and glorious contribution to this sumptuous Sanskrit literature is Kalidas. He has pictured in his works the beauty in life and pondered upon how we can give pleasure to others by generous and graceful behavior. His portrayals are vivid and heart-warming; his word power is unique. In a few words he is capable of bringing out the entire meaning intended. His writings touchingly show up a noble, meaningful mode of life for the people to pursue. His works are an intellectual treat to thinkers and common readers alike.

A Great Scholar and Poet

Who is this Kalidas ? When did he live and where in India was he residing? Much discussion has taken place for a long time

now about his life and times. Not many queries on this score have elicited definite answers. Several legends have sprouted around him.

According to one such popular legend, Kalidas wasn't always so wise and learned. In fact, there was a time he was considered to be one of the stupidest people in the kingdom!

One sunny day, Kalidas was sitting on a branch of a tree, trying to saw it off. But the dimwitted man was sitting on the wrong end of the branch, so when he finally sawed through the branch, down he tumbled! This act of sheer stupidity was observed by some shrewd pundits minister passing by.

Now these pundits wanted to play a trick on the arrogant princess, to teach her a lesson. She was determined to marry someone who would defeat her in a debate about the scriptures. The princess had heaped considerable abuse on them over a period of time, and they were determined to extract their revenge. So, when they chanced upon Kalidas, they decided to present him to the queen as a suitable match for her.

In order to conceal his stupidity, the pundits asked Kalidas to pretend that he was a great sage, who was observing a vow of silence. Kalidas readily agreed, and they presented him to the queen, saying that Kalidas would only communicate by way of gestures. When the queen asked Kalidas a few questions to test his intelligence, Kalidas gesticulated wildly and the astute pundits 'interpreted' these gestures as extremely witty answers and retorts. The princess was suitably impressed, and the couple was married without much delay.

Kalidas's stupidity could be concealed for only so long, and the night of the wedding Kalidas blurted out something inane. The princess realized that she had married a prize fool. Furious, she threw him out of her palace, and her life.

The dejected Kalidas wandered around, till he came to the bank of the river. He contemplated taking his life when he suddenly saw some women washing clothes on the edge of the river bank. He observed that the stones which the women were pounding with clothes, were smooth and rounded, while the other stones were rough and ragged. This observation hit him like a thunderbolt, and it dawned upon him that if stones could be worn through and change their shape by being pounded upon by clothes, then why couldn't his thick brains change, by being pounded upon by knowledge!

Kalidas thus grew determined to become the wisest and most learned man in the country, and to achieve this end he started indulging in intellectual pastimes, reading, meditating and praying to his goddess Kali to grant him divine knowledge. His wish was fulfilled.

This is one of the most popular legends about Kalidas. There are several other stories but they lack authenticity.

It appears Kalidas was at the court of emperor Vikramaditya. The place and time of this king are also not definite. But it can be said with some certainty that Kalidas lived before the 6th century A.D., i.e., about 1400 years ago. But when exactly he lived before the 6th century is not firmly established. Though a deep affection for the city of Ujjain is discernible in his works, it cannot be said with certainty that he lived there. But we can assume that,

wherever he may have been born, he had lived at Ujjain.

Kalidas, however, had good knowledge of the whole of Bharat. In his poem 'Meghaduta', his descriptions of mountains and rivers and cities and villages stretching from Ramagiri in Central India up to Alakanagari in the Himalayas are very beautiful. In another epic poem 'Raghuvamsha', Kalidas, while portraying the conquests of emperor Raghu, describes the places and peoples, their modes of living, food-habits and trades and professions, rivers and mountains in almost the whole country — Assam, Bengal and Utkal in the East; Pandya and Kerala in the South and Sind, Gandhara and other places in the North-west.

Reading these pen-pictures, one cannot help but conclude that the poet must have had a personal knowledge of these areas. In short, he must have traveled widely across the length and breadth of the land, seen those places, talked to the people and studied their modes of living.

Kalidas possessed that distinct intellect which makes one a great poet. He was a scholar and his works display his poetic genius as well as scholarship. Also they are marked by a belief of what is good in life and people's noble goals of life. He could describe the rich and wealthy life of a royal palace and the serene, simple and peaceful life at a hermitage with equal understanding. He could, likewise, describe the joys of the marital life of a man and his spouse as well as their pangs of separation. He creates scenes of a serious and thoughtful nature as also hilarious scenes of light comedy. In his works is found an excellent combination of art-consciousness, unmatched

wordpower and an unparalleled capacity for vivid portrayals.

The Great works by Kalidas

Kalidas wrote seven works. 'Kumarasambhava' and 'Raghuvamsha' are his two epic poems. 'Malavikagnimitra', 'Vikramorvasiya' and 'Abhijnana Shakuntala' are his celebrated plays. 'Meghaduta' and 'Ritusamhara' are also poetical works of great distinction.

Kumarasambhava

One of Kalidas's greatest works is 'Kumarasambhava'. Critics maintain that Kalidas wrote only the first eight chapters of the epic poem. The work describes the marriage of Lord Shiva and his consort Parvati. It begins with a fine description of that giant among mountains, the Himalaya.

Kalidas's poem gives us a vivid picture of what a good, meaningful life a man could and should lead as propounded by our learned ancestors.

Raghuvamsha

Kalidas's second epic is 'Raghuvamsha'. There are nineteen chapters ('sargas') in this poem. The epic describes the history of the kings Dileepa, Raghu, Aja, Dasharatha, Sri Rama, Lava and Kusa. It also deals briefly with the twenty kings from Nala up to Agnivarna. In the beginning, the poet extols the fine qualities of the kings of Raghu dynasty.

'Raghuvamsha' depicts our ancient, historical culture and tradition. Our ancestors had discussed in detail about such matters as to who could be a good ruler, who is a man of 'tapas' (penance), how one should lead a good, purposeful

life and the like. The poet has portrayed diverse characters like Vashishta, Dileepa, Raghu, Aja and others. Agnivarna is an example of a king who could be termed as 'depraved'.

Malavikagnimitra

'Malavikagnimitra' is Kalidas's first play. The author shows his humility and is uncertain whether people would accept his play. He pleads 'Puranamityeva Na sadhu sarvam, Na chapikavyamnavamityavadyam' (Everything old is not good, nor is every thing new badly). There may be some thing, which may not be of much use in the old, and the new may also be good. The theme of the play is the love-story of Agnimitra and Malavika.

Vikramor-vashiya

Kalidas's second play 'Vikramor -vashiya' is about the loves and tribulations of king Pururava and the heavenly damsel 'Urvashi'.

Abhijnana Shakuntala

'Abhijnana Shakuntala' is Kalidas's greatest creation. This literary masterpiece has been translated into several languages around the world. The story of Shakuntala appears in the 'Adiparva' chapter of the epic Mahabharat.

Meghaduta

'Meghaduta' is a beautiful love-lyric. A 'Yaksha', who is forced to be separated from his mistress for a year, sends her a message. The lady is residing at Alakanagari. 'Go and tell her that I told so', instructs the Yaksha to the cloud who becomes his messenger. The very fact that a cloud ('Megha') is chosen to be a messenger of love is something unique.

The poet fascinatingly describes the travels of the cloud from Ramagiri to Alakanagari. The rivers, hills and mountains, cities and towns, vast fields, farmers' daughters as well as girls in the cities, the birds and the bees — are all described by the poet vividly. It is a total picture of a beautiful world. His descriptions of Alakanagari, the Yaksha's house and the garden around, the Yaksha's wife playing the Veena and her grace and beauty are captivating.

Ritusamhara

'Ritusamhara' is a somewhat small-scale poetical creation depicting the six seasons. However, it is equally appealing. The poet here sees beauty in everything. Each different facet of nature he sees in each of the seasons fascinates him; it is a romantic sight.

Summary of the life and work of Kalidas

In sum, it gives us great aesthetic pleasure to read Kalidas's works. His descriptions enthrall us. With him we are in the company of a highly civilized, cultured personality. It is like a flower which, in bloom, spreads its fragrance all around. And a man's mature, ripened mind and intellect brings pleasure to those around him. In Kalidas's creations, we enter the world of people pure in mind and body and who are graceful. We learn here the manner in which man's nature can reach high, moral levels. It pleases us deeply to come into contact with characters like Parvati, Dileepa, Raghu, Aja, Shakuntala, Dushyanta and Kanva. It is for this wonderful experience that we as well as people in other countries read Kalidas.

Śrī Śaṅkarācārya's Kāśī Pañcakam

With the commentary Tatva Prakāśikā

by

Svāmi Tattvavidānanda Sarasvatī

Verse 5

कशिक्षेत्रं शरीरं त्रभुवनजननी व्यापिनी ज्ञानगङ्गा
भक्तिः श्रद्धा गयेयं निजगुरुचरणध्यानयोगः प्रयागः ।
विश्वेशोऽयं तुरीयस्सकलाजनमनस्साक्षिभूतोऽन्तरात्मा
देहे सर्वं मदीये यदि वसति पुनस्तीर्थमन्यत्किमस्ति ॥

kaśikṣetrṁ śarīraṁ trbhuvanajanānī vyāpinī jñānagaṅgā
bhaktiḥ śraddhā gayeyam nijagurucaranaḍhyānayoḡaḥ prayāgaḥ ।
viśveśo'yam turiyassaskalājanamanassākṣibhūto'ntarātmā
dehe sarvaṁ madiye yadi vasati punastīrthamanyatkimasti ॥

शरीरं śarīraṁ – body, कशिक्षेत्रं kaśikṣetrṁ – the pilgrimage centre of Kāśī, त्रभुवनजननी trbhuvanajanānī - - the mother of the three worlds, व्यापिनी vyāpinī – all-pervading, ज्ञानगङ्गा jñānagaṅgā – the Ganges of knowledge, भक्तिः bhaktiḥ – devotion, श्रद्धा śraddhā – faith, इयम् Iyam – this, गया gayā – Gaya, निजगुरुचरणध्यानयोगः nijagurucaranaḍhyānayoḡaḥ – the communion of meditation on the feet of one's preceptor, प्रयागः prayāgaḥ – Prayāga, अयम् ayam – this, विश्वेशः viśveśaḥ – Lord of the Universe, तुरीयः turiyaḥ – the fourth, तुरीयस्सकलाजनमनस्साक्षिभूतः - saskalājanamanassākṣibhūtaḥ, - obtaining as the witness of the mind in all living beings, अन्तरात्मा antarātmā – the inner ruler, यदि yadi – if, मदीये madiye – belonging to me, देहे dehe – in the body, सर्वं sarvaṁ – everything, वसति vasati – abides, पुनः punaḥ – so, अन्यत् Anyat – other, तीर्थम् Tīrtham – pilgrimage center, किम् kim – which one, अस्ति asti – is?

Body is the pilgrimage center of Kāśī . The all-pervading flos of knosledge is the Ganges, the mother of the three worlds. Devotion and faith are this city of Gaya. The communion of meditation on the feet of one's preceptor is the city of Prayaga.

Atman, the fourth, is this Lord of the universe. It obtains in all living beings as the witness to the mind and the inner ruler. As everything exists in my body, where is the need for any other pilgrimage centre?

This verse is in the metre called sragdhara. In Vedanta, there is a nyāya called nyāya nahi ninda nyāya, the logic of non-censure: nahi nindā nindyam ninditum api tu stutyam stotum; the intent of the censure is not to censure one, but to glorify the other. Superficially, the poet seems to censure something, but his intent is to highlight the glory of the thing under consideration. The intent is to glorify the higher, not to censure the lower. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was once asked if he would go on pilgrimage to Kāśī. He replied that he was not interested because he sees Śiva in his own heart. He urged his disciples to have motiveless devotion in the heart, rather than visiting places. He was highlighting what is important rather than putting down pilgrimage.

Pilgrims usually visit Prayāga and Gayā in addition to visiting Kāśī. Śrī Śaṅkarā included all the three places in the symbolism. The sacred city of Kāśī is body. Just as the Ganges flows in Kāśī, so also the manifest consciousness flows in this body. According to mythology, Ganges is called triloka sarit, the river of three worlds, as it flows in heaven as well as the nether world also. It is called Mandākinī as it flows in heaven. Atman, the Awareness Absolute, manifests in the body-mind as the witness of the three states of waking, dream and sleep.

Śraddhā, the love for knowledge is Gayā. In Gayā, people perform śraddhā, the ritual propitiating the manes. Śraddhayāa kṛtam śrārdham, the ritual is called śrārdha because it is performed with love and devotion. Generally people perform this ritual without fail, but there is a misconception that it is inauspicious, unlike temple worship. The origin of this misconception could be the general fear that people have for death. Anything connected with death is abhorred. But death is as real as life. Once a bereaving woman prayed to Lord Buddha to revive her son. He told her that he would indeed bring the dead body to life if she could get a fistful of rice from a home that had no experience of death. Śrārdha is as auspicious as any prayer. In it, we worship God in the form of manes.

Meditation is Prayāga. Prayāga is the confluence of the three sacred rivers Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī the unseen. Similarly, in meditation, as one contemplates upon Īśvara's feet, the body, mind and ego resolve in Śiva, the Awareness of Being. Īśvara alone appears in the form of preceptor and then as Atman, the sadguru, the preceptor in the form of the inner Being. Ultimately, Īśvara and guru resolve in Atman. Meditation on the feet is symbolic of śiva śaraṇāgati, self-surrender.

The seeker surrenders to the awareness of being and abides in the inner silence. It is dhyāna yoga. It is yoga because it is the communion of the body-identified persona with the Reality that reflects in the body-mind. This communion is Prayāga.

Atman is turiya, the fourth. It lights up the entire content of the waking, dream and sleep, and yet transcends them. The content of the waking consciousness does not affect Atman. Atman is never ever attached to the content. These states happen; they do not happen to Atman. Nothing ever happens to Atman just as the day and night do not happen to the sun. That turiyā is Śiva. The moment you watch the mind, you become the witnessing awareness. Already, you are not the persona any more; you are the impersonal intelligence which is Śiva.

Śiva is Viśveśvara, the overlord of Viśva, the universe. Viśva is also the one who identifies with the content of the waking consciousness. Vividha pratyayagamya viśvam. What we taste, touch, smell, see and hear is the Viśva. Who is the master of this Viśva? The Awareness Absolute is the master. That Kāśī, Śiva, is you. Śiva is obtaining in our hearts as antarātmā, the innermost reality.

How does one realize the antarātmā, the inner Reality? By realizing, "I am not the body, I am not the organs of action, I am not the sense organs, I am not the mind (emotions), I am not the intellect, I am not the ego". Abide as pure 'I am'. That is the gateway to the truth. As we abide in the pure 'I am', we would resolve into the pure awareness of the being, which is the antarātmā. That antarātmā is the sākṣi of the entire movement of the mind, not only in one's heart but also in the hearts of every living being. It is the same Atman that reflects in the body-minds of all the living beings, like one sun reflecting in a billion dewdrops or one electrical energy shining in a million bulbs. Śiva, Bhavāni, Gaṅgā, Kāśī, Prayāga, Gayā – all are here in this body. What else is needed to purify it? Tirtham is that which sanctifies. There is no other place that is supposed to purify us. Atma tīrtham param tīrtham, says the Sūta saṁhita. People roam all around in search of a shrine or river that could purify them. But, they do not realize that the greatest shrine of all is Kāśī shining in the heart as Atman. Taking a tourist bus and visiting various pilgrimage centers with a group of people is not an end in itself. It is good for national integration, but not enough for Self-realization. The striver should discover silence, peace and happiness, in oneself by yoga or by assimilating the truths enunciated in this encomium. That is the real pilgrimage.

hari om tat sat śrikr̥ṣṇārpanamastu

Visit of AIM for Seva students to North East

On 19th of March I went to Rishikesh to just be with Pujya Swamiji for few days and get some guidance from him for Aim for Seva work. On 20th Smt. Sheela Balaji, Swamini Swatmanishtananadaji and myself had a meeting with Pujya Swamiji. In that meeting Pujya Swamiji asked Swamini Swatmanishtananadaji and myself to go to North East and meet the parents of the students who are with us (Aim for Seva Hostels) in Pune, Belgoun, Chikmanglur and Khategoun.

On 15th of May after noon 3pm we reached Guwahati , where we stayed over night in Jalaram Mandir and next day on 16th of March by road we went to Shillong, Meghalaya. From Shillong 90km away there is a place called in East Khasi Dist. So on 17th we could start early morning from Shillong to that place and reached there around 11-30. We could see, there were more then 100 people and their children were waiting for us. It was such a great feelings we had, because the students were talking one by one and telling their feelings of being in our Aim for Seva Hostels. Then the parents started telling the changes they have marked in their children's life coming home from Aim for Seva Hostels after 2, 3 years. The parents told us that we were



surprised to see our children's behavior and we are fully satisfied. Then we had a lunch together and in night we came back to Shillong. Next day we could meet

some of the organizations and social workers in Shilong. It was a very good meetings, we could exchange our ideas and assured for helping each other .

On 20th of May we could reach Agaratala, in Tripura, where Vanawasi Kalyan Ashram people help us for our accommodation and traveling. There also we could meet many local people those who work for tribal welfare. Many of these people knew Pujya Swamiji and some of them could have Pujya Swamiji's blessings also in Guwahati and Culcatta.

Next Day we could have Mata Tripura Sundari's Darshanams and met a tribal leader called Shri Vikram Jamatiyaji. He is working for getting all North East tribes together and save the tribal culture in North East and he has got lots of success and that is why he was attacked by Christian terrorists many times. He was so happy to see us in his house. He had served us breakfast and assured us for helping hand with us. That same day we went to place called Kumarghath, where Pujya Swamiji through one of his devotee and student(Dr. Indu——) from USA, had donated a Hostel building to Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram. The students and staff welcomed us with a cultural programme and we stayed there on that day.

Next day on 22nd whatever we could see and witness we will not forget in through our life. Many of us, let me put this way that 90% of Indians do not know and can not believe in our so called independent



Bharat(Country) our people we will be living their life as a refugees in our country.

Since last 15 years, 45,000 thousand Riyong people from Mijuram are living in Tripura as a refugees. They told us that 1997 they were driven off (thrown out) from their home land of Mijuram to Tripura and since then they are totally dependant on Tripura Government. Center Government provides them

provision and few things, which is not enough for them. We have seen in their house their will be tow people and 6 to 8 children. Children do not have cloths to wear. We have seen that unless the child is 8 to 9 year old they are not provided cloths to wear. Children do not have schools. Parents do not have the voting rights there, because they are from different state. Since last 15 years they have not cast their vote. They do not have driving license, no rasincards, no Indian identity with them. They can not go for labourer work also, because they are in refugee camp.

When we had a meeting with few of their so called leaders, they told us that there is lats of pressuer on us for going back to our mother land(mijuram) nether center Govt. nor Tripura or Mijuram govt. is ready to give us a written assurance that we will be given totally protection and at least for one year they will provide us for our livelihood. They told in month of Feb.2012 Mr.Chidambaramji (Home Minister) visited our camps and he also said you people better go back, but did not agree for written agreement. Then they have give to him a Memorandum for their rehabilitation, but so far there is no action taken by any Government for them.

Finally They have requested us to take the copy of that Memorandum and show to our Indian (Bharatiya) brothers and sisters and let them know our demand is right or wrong and let them know that in what kind of condition, circumstances we are living here in our country.

On 23rd we came back to Guwahati and 24th 25th 26th we went to Majuli Village(



The Brahmaputra Island, where Satradhikaris, Vaishnava Acharyas have their Mathas). There we could meet Vivekananda Kendra people and some of the Satradhikaris. They could take us to see the Island and the work they are doing there. They also told us about their struggle of not allowing other people to come there and destroy their culture. Lastly they said us if we have any plan for starting any project there, they will support us.

On 27th we had a meeting in Guwahati with people those who are working for tribal people. They were very to meet us because they came to know that what kind of work we are doing.

Namaste

Swami Aishwaryananda Saraswati

AVT Jaipur family at Rishikesh

A spiritual camp was held for Arsha Vidya Tirtha, Jaipur family at Rishikesh from 18th to 25th May, 2012 under the auspices of Swami Brahmaparananda Saraswatiji. About 100 devotees from Maharashtra, Surat, Udaipur, Jaipur, Delhi and all the children of AVT Jaipur Chhatralayam participated.

The Ashram on the bank of Ganges added to the grandeur of the environment.

The day commenced at 5.15 a.m. with Rudrabhishekam in the temple. AVT children chanted the Rudram rhythmically and in a melodious voice. It was followed by the dhyanam conducted by Swamiji wherein the devotees' went into a *transcendental mode*. This was followed by Lectures on "*Tattvabodh*" by Swamiji, who is maestro in this field. *This enhanced our knowledge on atma-jnanam*. This jnanam is imperative to understand all other scriptures is what was unfolded



to us beautifully and in a most simple way by Swamiji.

Next came the psychology Lectures by Dr. Amrita Murthy, who is a *shishya of Pujya Swamiji*. Dr. Murthy dealt with day to day problems related to memory, stress, dementia, personality building etc.

Afternoons were kept reserved for games for all the children, Ganga snanam for all, and yoga conducted for all, by AVT children. After the evening aarti in the temple, was Ganga aarti which was mesmerizing. The Chhatralayam children added to the beauty of it all by the *melodious Ganga stotram*.



On 21st May, there was a special and elaborate Ganga puja done by *Gulab*, 9th class student of Chhatralaya. It was his special day as he got *Brahmopadesam from Swamiji* in the morning. This special ceremony in itself was a very unique phenomena. It was a



Guru-shishya relationship which one rarely gets to see. All of us were indeed blessed to see such a sight, specially for a boy to come up to

this stature!

8.30-10:00 p.m. saw a fiesta of Bhajans. The Chhatralayam children were the main performers, be it on Harmonium, dholak, manjira. Other devotees' also participated freely. It was great to see so much of talent amongst the youngsters.

The highlight of the cultural week was "*Deep-se-Deep Jale*" — a dramatization of the Chhatralayam children of their development and day-to-day activities. They portrayed their transformation from a *village lad* to a "*Gurukulam Chhatra*" beautifully. It was wonderful to see their parents also a part of the skit.

The *Ganesh Vandana in Kathak* style by Swamiji's shishya was simply breathtaking.

Inspite of the hectic busy schedule, Swamiji took out time to take us to visit Kunjapuri—a Shaktipeetham. It was really fun climbing the 309 steps though none could beat the Chhatralayam children. HE also took us to Vishwamitra Ashram to have darshan of Swami Brahmattmananda Saraswati. This is where Swamiji stayed and studied for few years before moving to Swami Dayananda Ashram. We were very Blessed to have darshan of Mahamandaleshwar of Kailash Ashram also.

The camp was indeed an enthralling experience. It was amazing to see so many young children along with their parents and grandparents started their vacation in such a holistic atmosphere. *We all have returned home with definitely discovering some new dimension in ourselves!*

We are eagerly awaiting for *June 2nd, 2013*, when Swamiji will be holding the next camp. The countdown has seriously begun for all those who attended the camp.



Swami Dayananda's message to his Argentine students

Twenty-second Anniversary of Pujya Swamiji's first visit to Argentina.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dl-ziNi9wZk&feature=youtu.be>

Love for India and Vedic culture is wide spread in Latin America. Several Indian masters had travelled all over Latin America in the last century. Swami Tilak was a close friend of Pujya Swamiji. He spoke Spanish and walked barefoot. He was a genuine sadhu. Pujya Swamiji visited Argentina nine times starting in 1990 and he visited Brazil even more times than that starting in 1983.

Ayurveda teaching and practice is now mainstream in Argentina, as well as Bharata Natyam and classical Indian music, besides Yoga and Meditation etc. Now Vedanta is coming to the forefront. We can't get the books translated fast enough. There is so much demand.

Watch this video which was a gift to the Argentine ambassador to Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay at his farewell ceremony recently.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g_5d0BejL1E&feature=youtu.be

With best wishes and love,

Swamini Vilasananda

A new Student Home for rural girls

Udumalpet : February,2012.
A new Student Home for rural girls was inaugurated in Kurichikottai in the presence of Swami Dayananda Saraswati, on 6 Feb. 2012. Spread across 1.64 sq mts of land the Atmalayam complex contains 6000 sq ft. built up area which includes a dormitory, a kitchen and dining for the girls Student Home. Udumalpet becomes AIM for Seva's 89th Student Home and the 18th Student Home in Tamil Nadu.



Kurichikottai will have 50 students in phase I, beginning from the academic year June 2012. The girls will be in the age group of 9 – 18 years studying in 5th to 12th Std.

Speaking on the occasion , Swami Dayanada Saraswati spoke about the virtues of Danam and the need to give back to the society. He commended the local community for their commitment to the wellness of the society.

The entire project is a donation from the local community , effectively mobilized by Gurupriya Mathaji, Coordinator for Udumalpet region.

The student home infrastructure is funded by multiple donors this includes corporates like the Servall Group and GVG Group , Janani Hospitals and local philanthropists.

On the occasion of the inauguration a bhoomi puja was performed for a Meditation cum function Hall (Dhyana Mandapam), and a small Dairy farm.

The Dhyana Mandapam building is donated by Smt.Hema Veluswamy & Family of the GVG Group, Udumalpet In Memory of her Parents,Smt. V.Janaki & Sri.K. Venkatesalu of DPF, Coimbatore.



The Cow shelter is sponsored by Sri.S.Vijayprakash & Family of Coimbatore In honour of his parents Smt. N.Rukmani & Sri. A.Sukumaran, Kurichikottai.

The inauguration was well attended with active representation from the local community, administration and local business establishments. This included Vali Thottam S Govindrajan and R Pazhanisamy , Director, RSR Transport . The guests were happy to see the talent show presented by Students of Dharmapuri Chattralaya The inauguration was concluded with a formal vote of thanks by Dr. Jhansi, local committee member AIM for Seva, Udumalpet



Swami Dayananda Jayavarthanelu Rural & Tribal Hospital – Anaikatti, Coimbatore

Coimbatore March 4, 2013. Swami Dayananda Jayavarthanelu Rural & Tribal Hospital – Anaikatti, Coimbatore participated in a Medical Camp Fair at the CBE Collectorate.

This Fair was organized to promote awareness about the Hospitals where the C M's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme is available. The Dist. Collector, Mayor and MLAs along with JD Medicals visited the Stall.



hours at both our AIM for Seva Dayananda Tribal Girls Student Home ,AIM for Seva Dayananda Tribal Boys Student Home – Anaikatti, and the Swami Dayananda Jayavarthanelu Rural & Tribal Hospital – Anaikatti, Coimbatore. During his visit he inquired with the Warden, Cook and a few students about their well-being . He was also happy to see the use of solar power for the water heater & lighting at both the hostels. The director was especially impressed with the Tribal Hospital and its cleanliness. AIM for Seva

staff were happy to receive this surprise visitor as he is known for his commitment to improving the Govt. Tribal Schools & Hostels and his visit augurs well for the Anaikatti projects.



Shri KV Giridhar IFS, Director Tribal Welfare inspects the Girls Student Home



Director of Tribal Welfare visits Anaikatti Projects

April 15, 2012, By Pramila Krishnan,
DC, Chennai

2 years ago, 23-year-old E. Ramu worked as an office assistant in the Mayajal movie complex in Chennai. Now he is the top-scoring II B.Sc. Maths student in Swami Dayananda College of Arts and Science at Manjakudi village in Kumbakonam.



His parents, farm coolies in Tiruvannamalai, couldn't dream of sending Ramu to college. But with the help of the Swami Dayananda education and charitable trust, which runs the college, Ramu is able to continue his studies. This college has opened its doors for learning to scores of other students like Ramu—majority of them first generation learners. "I paid only Rs 2,000 to join the college. Though my course fee was Rs 6,000, the management accepted what I gave for the seat, understanding my financial background. I will complete my B.Ed. and work as a teacher, helping other poor children like me," said Ramu.

His juniors R. Priyadharshini and B. Suganya, residing in the hostel managed by the trust, are proud of their institution. "Our college provides seats to underprivileged students. Actually, those with fewer marks are accommodated first because poverty could have debilitated their performance. But with the coaching here, we improve fast and score big", they said.

Correspondent G. Ramachandran said many students found jobs in big firms such as WIPRO, which runs a rural BPO within the campus. "Rajagopal, who completed his schooling here and even worked in our college, is now heading the BPO. We are proud that half of the employees in the BPO, who belong to downtrodden families and studied in our college, have got good jobs", he said.

R. Janani and her sister Suveetha, students of Swami Dayananda government-aided school are popular; one is an orator and the other a sports person. "We teach not just textbook lessons but also values to be followed right from childhood," said K. Muthulakshmi, school principal.

"What we like to give the children is a life, not just education. We look after their health as well as their personality when they are in our chatralayas and other institutions and hope they will become very good citizens," says Sheila Balaji, trustee, AIM for Seva that is central to Swami Dayananda organizations.

<http://www.deccanchronicle.com/channels/cities/chennai/college-helps-deprived-fulfil-dreams-563>

**'GNANA BHASKARAM SHIBHIR' UNDER THE
GUIDANCE OF
SHRI SWAMI BRAHMAYOGANANDA
18th to 27th May 2012 - YOGA SHANTHI GURUKULAM**



Shri Swami Brahmayogananda conducted a six day 'Gnana Bhaskaram Shibhir' consisting of 32 classes on '*Dasha Upanishad Saara Sangraha*' at the holy place of Sringeri between 20th and 25th of May 2012. It was a revolution of a kind as 200 students of Yoga Shanthi Gurukulam had travelled from across the world like the US, Dubai, Muscat and many parts of India to attend this uniquely arranged camp by Swamiji.

The Shibhir commenced with an inaugural function comprising a prayer song and a sacred Puja to the Chatur Vedas. For these six days, the 200 students were day and night engrossed in 'Athmeeka Vicharam' at Sri Adi Chunchanagiri Mutt, a serene and scenic place, located on the banks of river Thunga, Sringeri.

The students virtually did not have any connection to the outside world with six class sessions planned every day between 6 AM in the morning to 9 PM in the night. Swamiji's hectic and tightly scheduled classes elaborately covered the 10 principal Upanishads in addition to Kaivalya Upanishad. The students also

enthusiastically participated in daily Group discussion sessions to revise and recap the class room teachings. A surprise quiz contest was organized by students of the Gurukulam covering various subjects of Vedanta and the whole camp was divided into 6 groups.

After concluding the six-day Upanishad camp with a Samarop function, as part of this Shibhir, a special one-day Yatra was arranged to visit Saradambal temple, Rishaya Sringeri temples at Sringeri, Kollur Moogambika, Udipi Krishna and Mangala Devi at Mangalore.

This one-week camp organized by Swamiji was a land mark one in terms of the subject content and will be yet another memorable camp for the students who attended it. The campers had the complete satisfaction of attending all the 11 Upanishads in a single place at a single stretch of six days.

Swamiji, recently concluded his class room series on Bhagavad Gita Saara Sangraha- One Adhyayam in one class session. It is to be noted that this series commenced in October 2011 on Vijayadasami and concluded on June 17th 2012 with a uniquely organized Samarop function. Swamiji conducts weekly regular classes covering Bhagavad Gita Moolam, Bhagavad Gita- Adi Sankara Bhashyam, Rama Gita, Panchadasi and Brihadaranyaka Upanishad in addition to the weekly Gita chanting sessions and Abhishekham and Puja to Sri Medha Dakshinamurthy.



News & Views

Stuttgart Hindus Celebrate

STUTTGART, GERMANY, June 4, 2012: From the outside, the old factory building on Bad Cannstatt's Lehmfeldstrasse is quite unimpressive. Once inside, however, it offers a different picture: the dilapidated concrete building holds within itself a magnificent temple. Hundreds of Tamils from Sri Lanka in colorful clothing crowd into the room decorated with garlands of flowers. The air is warm and filled with incense. It is very noisy. Bare chested men in white robes beat on large drums and play oriental melodies on long oboe-like instruments.

Some 1,000 Hindus from a radius of 62 miles have come this Sunday at the height of the temple festival in Bad Cannstatt, and also some Germans, for whom the spectacle is not to be missed. After the ceremony in the temple, the men have come out carrying the statues of the Deities on their shoulders. In Sri Lanka the procession outside the temple could take place every day, "in Stuttgart, it is allowed only once during the ten days," says 24-year-old Thadchajini Sothinathan.

While the convoy passes through the streets, the music continues to play. The Hindu priests, the Brahmins, throw coconuts to the ground,

so that they burst. The hard shell represents the outer ego shell of man. When the shell is crushed, the soft core, the good qualities are exposed.

Michigan Temple Upgrade Complete

TROY, MICHIGAN, USA, June 16, 2012 (AP): It took seven years and \$10 million to renovate and expand the Bharatiya Hindu Temple to accommodate the growing numbers of worshippers who have arrived in the Detroit area from India. The temple in Troy, a northern Detroit suburb, has been enlarged from 28,000 square feet to about 70,000 square feet, The Detroit News reported. Its prayer hall houses seven new interior temples that were made in India from marble that was mined there. Other parts of the building, including teak doors, were also built in India then transported to Detroit by ship and train. Local masons spent a year assembling the parts inside the Bharatiya Temple. At least 25,000 Hindus live in the Detroit area and about 800 families worship at the Bharatiya Hindu Temple, said Tom Patel, chairman of the temple's board of trustees. "More people are joining and coming, and we needed more space to offer services," he said.

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Tattvabodhak helps you appreciate
the beauty, profundity and vastness
of the vision of Vedanta

Swami Dayananda Saraswati



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