

# YOGAVAASISHTHA TEACHING

-By Swami Shuddhabodhananda

Swami Shuddhabodhananda Saraswati (Mumbai) has taught selected verses from the Yogavaasishtha. The teaching began on the Vidyaranya-punya-tithi, March 5th, 2006, and concluded on March 20th, 2016. The teaching was spread over regular classes and yearly spiritual retreats. About 4200 verses were selected from this magnum opus, said to contain 32,000 verses. These verses were selected in two ways. The first set consists of separate, individual verses centered on a certain topic. The second set consists of all the verses in one or more chapters devoted to a



Swamiji Giving lecture

single topic. Sections containing voluminous supplementary stories were excluded. These selected verses and chapters contain about 85% of the highest teaching of the Yogavaasishtha. The text unfolds many sublime topics not commonly found in the principal Vedantic texts generally studied. The Yogavaasishtha was written by Valmiki at the behest of Brahmaji for the good of humanity.

Pre-eminent among the chapters selected are the topics of Devaarchana-vidhaana (Ni.Pu.Ch. 29 to 42) taught by Lord Shiva to sage Vasishtha and Arjuna-upaakhyaana, the teaching of Lord Krishna to Arjuna narrated to Rama in anticipation by Vasishtha in the Tretayuga (Ni.Pu. Ch. 52 to 58). Devaarchana-vidhaana is the highest mode of worshipping the Divinity principle through nididhyasana. The teaching of Yogavaasishtha is very highly rated and deemed unparalleled by none other than Lord Brahmaji, Lord Rama, the Siddhas (a group of rishis), sages Vishwamitra, Vamadeva, Nimi, Krutu, Bharadvaja, Pulastya, Atri, Dhrishti, Narada, Shandili, Bhaasa, Bhrugu, Bhaaranda etc..

The teaching of the Yogavaasishtha was further complemented by a detailed word-by-word teaching of the entire Brahmasutra bhashya from November 2006 to January 2012. Taking into account the highly analytical nature of the sutrabhashya, Swami Shuddhabodhanandaji restricted these classes to very regular students alone.

The Chatussutri, the first four sutras, along with their bhashya was attended by 62 students whereas the rest of the text was attended by 32 students. The Ratnaprabha gloss with Poornanandiya was followed during the teaching of the Chatussutri. For the rest of the bhashya, the Nyayanirnaya gloss by Ananandagiri was very closely adopted. The entire bhashya was organized under around a thousand topic-wise captions. This facilitated an easy grasp of the subject matter, especially where the bhashya is too lengthy. By and large, books on the Brahmasutra in various languages do not present the bhashya topic-wise, except for a general table of contents in some editions.

The learning of the complete sutrabhashya was a golden opportunity for students of Sri Swamiji, since such teaching through the medium of the English language is very rare.



Talk session under progress

-Report by Sudhakara Shanbhag ([sssbvt@gmail.com](mailto:sssbvt@gmail.com))