



Arsha Vidya Newsletter

Rs. 15/-



Paduka Puja to PujyaSwamiji



New year Day Puja at AVG

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Mundakopanishad

Mantra 3.1.7

बृहच्च तद्विव्यमचिन्त्यरूपं
सूक्ष्माच्च तत्सूक्ष्मतरं विभाति ।
दूरात् सुदूरे तदिहान्तिके च
पश्यत्स्वहैव निहितं गुहायाम् ॥ ३.१.७ ॥

*bṛhacca taddivvyamacintyarūpaṁ
sūkṣmācca tatsūkṣmataraṁ vibhāti .
dūrāt sudūre tadihāntike ca
paśyatsvahaiva nihitaṁ guhāyām. (3.1.7)*

tat -- that; *bṛhat* -- is limitless; *divyam* -- pure consciousness;
ca -- and; *acintyarūpam* -- not available for thinking;
tat -- that; *sūkṣmāt* -- than the subtle; *ca* -- and;
vibhāti -- reveals itself in many forms; *tat* -- that;
dūrāt -- than the remote; *sudūre* -- is very far;
iha -- here; *antike ca* -- and near;
śyatsu -- in the conscious beings; *iha* -- here; *eva* -- only;
āptakāmāḥ -- those who have fulfilled their desires;
nihitam -- placed; *guhāyām* --in the *buddhi*

That Brahman is limitless, pure consciousness and is not available for a thought. It is subtler than the subtlest and reveals itself in many forms. It is very far from what is remote, and is very near here, right now in the body. In all conscious beings, it is present here in the *buddhi*.

Tad bṛhat ca: it is limitless. The word 'tat' means the *ātman* under discussion. Since it is limitless, there is no path involved here. Nor is it located in the *buddhi*. The *buddhi* is only a means to understand Brahman. So, the *śruti* knocks off the very concept of location by saying *bṛhat*. Any object which has a location in space, is limited because it is only in one place. Brahman is not in space, but space is Brahman. Brahman is, Brahman is everything. It is the meaning of *bṛhat*. There is nothing bigger than Brahman, and being limitless, it is one. there cannot be limitlessness plus oneself.

Divyam: not worldly, self-effulgent. Pure consciousness is the nature of *ātman*. It is the *svarūpa*, the nature, of the knower. Śaṅkara explains it alternatively as that which is not an object for the senses.¹⁶⁵ Whatever one experiences belongs to this world; *ātman*, not being an object of experience, is *divya*.

Acintya-rūpam : not an object of thought. Anything that possesses *jāti* species, *guṇa*, quality, *kriyā*, action, or *sanbandha*, relationship, can be objectified by a thought. There are not many Brahman, so it does not fall under any species. Brahman does not have any quality or action or any relationship because Brahman is *nirguṇa*, free of any attributes; *niṣkriyā*, free of any action and *asaṅga*, unassociated. It means Brahman is not available as an object of a given thought, like a pot. Every object is an object of consciousness. Brahman is the nature of the subject, consciousness. The thinker, the thought and the object of thought- all three are Brahman. It is the *svarūpa* of oneself.

Tat sūkṣmāt sūkṣmataram: it is subtler than the subtlest. One can at least think of something very subtle. But this is subtler than that. It is subtler than even a particle. A particle has no size; but it exists in consciousness. That consciousness is the truth of the particle as well as the one who is conscious of the particle. Brahman is subtler than the subtlest because it has no form, and it is the cause of everything including the subtle space.

Tat vibhāti: it shines in various forms. Being the cause of everything, it is space, it is time, it is the sun, it is the moon, it is the earth, it is the body, it is the mind and so on.¹⁶⁷ It reveals itself in various forms. There is no question of asking where to see and when to see Brahman.

Dūrāt sudūre: This Brahman is farther than the farthest. *Dūrāt* means 'than a very remote place.' It is beyond that. It is beyond *brahma-loka* also. *Brahma-loka* is a long way to go. For the one who is trying to reach Brahman, it is *dūrāt sudūre*, meaning, one can never reach it, if it implies distance, time can be one of the intervening factors. Perhaps one can reach it after a long time. But it is something beyond the remote, which one cannot reach at all. The one who searches for that limitless Brahman is Brahman. That is the point, it is not really away. When one is searching, it is far away.

If one gives up the search without knowledge, then also it is far away---there is only despair! Brahman is consciousness that sustains the despair. "I cannot get this Brahman. O! It is far away!" if one sits under a tree waiting for Brahman to surface, it is definitely *dūrāt sudūre*, farther than the farthest. It is too difficult to comprehend for the one who is not ready, who is not blessed with a teacher who knows the methodology of teaching. That is why it is *dūrāt sudūre*. The idea conveyed here is that one should not look for Brahman as a thing to be reached. There is no distance between oneself and Brahman.

Distance can be taken in terms of time. If something happens at a particular time, then it is an event. Brahman is not an event, it is not going to happen in time. Only ageing will happen in time. The cognition 'I am old' is because of Brahman. Both the young and the old are Brahman. So if one looks for Brahman in time, it is not going to happen; so it is *dūrāt sudūre*.

If one employs an inappropriate means of knowledge, or looks upon the study of Vedanta as some kind of intellectual exercise, leading to indirect knowledge, Brahman is far. It is not going to work. It only sets one up for a trip. Vedanta must be looked upon as a means of knowledge so that one can relax and listen. One cannot afford to get tensed up while being exposed to a means of knowledge. Brahman, that is the *ātman*, is the subject matter here and it is ever experienced. There is no question of indirect lacking, it is only in terms of lack of clarity. If Vedanta is looked upon as giving indirect knowledge, one will be eternally waiting for some experience to take place. Brahman sustains that very expectation. So it will not take place. Brahman becomes far, *dūrāt sudūre*. Even if one looks at Vedanta as means of knowledge, lack of preparedness, like absence of *śraddhā* and so on, may keep Brahman away, and therefore, Brahman becomes *dūrāt sudūre*.

Since it is *dūrāt sudūre*, one may think that Brahman is far away; so the says, *tad iha antike ca*: that Brahman is here, right now as the very self. The word '*iha*' refers to time as well as space. In this body right now one can gain Brahman since it is the self of the very knower.¹⁶⁸ One is not required to move an inch physically. Nor is a thought movement necessary. Every thought is Brahman. To understand a pot one requires a thought modification to objectify the pot. Even that thought modification is not required to understand Brahman. The *Kenopanīṣad* says, "It is known in and through every thought as the consciousness in the thought and the consciousness revealing the thought and the consciousness revealing the thought itself!"¹⁶⁹ It is available right now, here in the *buddhi*. So it is *antike*, the nearest. The use of both near and far together reveals that it is neither far nor near. It is oneself.

It is not the seeker blossoms into Brahman. Then, the Brahman-fragrance comes out spreading divinity around! There is no scope for poetry here. One has to cut out all those frills. One cannot fain Brahman poetically. Once one knows Brahman, then everything is poetry. Until then, one has to be very objective and deliberate.

One requires a mind that is not poetic, a mind that is not trying to find new adjectives. One is always interested in finding new adjectives. If one merely says, "It is a blue sky," it is not enough. One has to say, "The spotless, vast, blue sky." In literature one may have to make it more descriptive and flowery, if that is the style. But here, one is dealing with the teaching of the realities. One has to drop all the adjectives.

In a subject matter like mathematics or physics there is no place for adjectives. What adjectives will one use for the particle or the electron? There, at least one can say 'a moving electron' and so on, because particles and electrons have attributes and location. But here it is not possible. One has to seriously look into the need for removing the orientation towards adjectives. Only then will the mind relax to see the *vastu* that is free from adjectives. Some people use adjectives for Brahman like 'the supreme Brahman,' 'the divine Brahman' and so on. But Brahman is always free from all attributes. What one needs are bare words, minimum words, and that too, words implying Brahman. When words themselves have to depend upon their implied meaning to reveal Brahman, adding more adjectives is fangerous.

Paśyatsvīhaiva nihitaṁ guhāyām: brahma is available right now, here, in the *buddhi* of people who have I have *viveka*. It is recognised *buddhi* with the help of the words of the *śāstra*. *Guhāyām* means *buddhi*.

165 दिव्यं स्वयम्प्रभम् अनिन्द्रिय-गोचरम् । (मुण्डक भाष्यम्)

166 सूक्ष्मादाकाशादेरपि तत्सूक्ष्मतरं निरतिशयं हि सौक्ष्म्यमस्य । सर्वकारणत्वात् । (मुण्डक भाष्यम्)

167 विभाति विविधम् आदित्य-चन्द्राद्याकारेण भाति दीप्यते । (मुण्डक भाष्यम्)

168 इह देहे अन्तिके समीपे च विदुषामात्मत्वात् । सर्वान्तरत्वाच्च । (मुण्डक भाष्यम्)

169 प्रतिबोधविदितं मतम् । (केनोपनिषत् 2.4)

To be continued.....

NEW YEAR 2018 - TALK OF ACARYAJI

Jan 1, 2018 anaikatti



At the outset, I wish you a very Happy New year 2018. This day we are celebrating, marks the beginning of the year. We have so many New Year days- we have one New Year day on April 14, we have Ugadi, Chaitra *shukla paksha pratipada* which comes around the first week of April and in Gujarat *Kartika masa pratipada* is called New Year day. This first January is another New Year day.

Any of these days we can celebrate any one or each of these days as a New Year day. Puja Swamiji beautifully says we require such days. We have a new beginning as it were because human being want some change to start afresh. Therefore a day like this becomes important for all of us. This New Year day is called कालपर्व.

Parva means a day or a period of time which is commemorating the beginning or end of some event. Etymologically speaking पिपर्ति इति पर्व- that which fills up. A particular day which fills up our life with some enthusiasm or with some spiritual or religious fervour is called *parva*, a festival day. We have various types of *parva* –

- दिव्यपर्व (*divya parva*) - festival day associated with a celestial phenomenon. Like *Makara Sankranti* is commemorating the sun entering into a particular *makara rashi*.
- देवपर्व (*deva parva*) - A day associated with some particular *devata*. Like *ekadasi*, *pradosam*, etc.

- मानवपर्व (*manav parva*) - a day associated with some social occasion like harvesting day celebrated in different states, or a day associated with a particular happening in an individual's life like someone's birthday or wedding day, birth of a child, etc.
- वनस्पतिपर्व (*vanapasti parva*)- A day associated with some particular plant. Like *tulasi vivaha* in *Kartika masa*, *ashwatha puja*, etc.
- प्राणिपर्व (*prani parva*)- festival day associated with some animals. Like *nAgapancami* when we worship the snake, *gopAshtami* when we worship cows.
- जयन्तिपर्व (*jayanti parva*) - a day associated with birthday of some *devata*, *avatara* or of some great people
- राष्ट्र पर्व (*rashtra parva*) - a day associated with one's country like Independence day, Republic day, etc.

Thus there are many types of *parvas* to commemorate various occasions. Today we are celebrating कालपर्व (*kala parva*) - a day of celebration associated with time.

There is a debate going up in social media as to whether we should celebrate this New Year day since it is not our Indian New Year day. But this controversy is not necessary.

Kalidasa says -उत्सवप्रियाः खलु मनुष्याः – human beings indeed like to celebrate. We just need a reason to celebrate. We are using the English calendar and are so much familiar with - January, February, etc much less than *hindu masa*, *tithi* etc. So there is nothing wrong in celebrating this New Year day and we can also celebrate our *Ugadi*, *vishu*, *pratipada* . Like sometimes we celebrate our birthday twice- calendar date and *nakshatra* day and get chocolate twice. So we need not have any resistance to celebrating this New Year day. Somebody has written a beautiful *sloka* on this particular point-

न भारतीयो नववत्सरोऽयम् । तथापि सर्वस्य शिवप्रदः स्यात् ।
यतो धरित्री निखिलैव माता । ततः कुटुम्बायितमेव विश्वम् ॥

It says, this is **not an Indian New Year day. Still let it be auspicious for everybody. Since whole earth is our mother. For us the whole world is our family.**

Therefore we do not mind in joining others in celebrating New Year day. It is one more *kala parva* for us and *Bhagavan* says- कालः कलयतामहम् (*kala kalayatam aham*) - BG ch10,v. 30.

Thus we have one more day to appreciate and welcome *Bhagavan* as *kala tattvam* and express our gratitude . On this day we wish by saying- **“I wish you a Happy New Year”**.

We can look at the significance of the words- **“I wish you a Happy new Year”**.

- New Year means the year which is now starting, 2018 . There are any number of New Years
- As Pujya Swamiji said - We require such a day when we start afresh because we always have this feeling that things are not going well, when will it change ? I want to start afresh. Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella wrote a book titled- Hit refresh. The title conveys this spirit. The significance of the word New Year is that it is a day that gives us an opportunity to start afresh.

• The words – “I wish you (a Happy New Year)” indicates that I cannot be happy ignoring other’s happiness. I wish you and everybody to be happy. This is one of the important teachings of *sastra*. This teaching we find in Bhagavad Gita as well.

यज्ञशिष्टाशिनः सन्तो मुच्यन्ते सर्वं किल्बिषैः । BG Ch..3 verse 3. Partaking what is left over after *yagna* , noble people become free from unfavourable invisible results of action.

After sharing our resources, we enjoy. Means we include other's happiness in our happiness.

भुञ्जते ते त्वघ्नं पापाः ये पचन्त्यात्म कारणात् IBG ch.3 verse 3

Those who are self-centered, not thinking of others happiness, who want to be happy at the cost other's happiness, they are eating (collecting) *papam*. When gross selfishness is there in life, *papam* is bound to be there. Therefore it is important to consider others' happiness . I wish a happy New Year indicates this particular attitude that throughout the year I will not ignore other's happiness, but include others well-being in my happiness.

When I say- “**I wish**”- I have to be really genuine about it. It should come out from my heart. I really wish the person happiness. So along with the wish, there can be prayer for that person also.

So I pray to the Lord and chant some mantra related to lord with the attitude that this day whom-so-ever I wish happiness, let that wish be fulfilled. I wish myself a Happy New Year and happy New Year to other people too.

The question is how can my New Year be happy and how I can make this New Year a happy one for others?

One who remains unhappy constantly, cannot contribute to other's happiness. A happy person is likely to make others happy. A sad person will spread sadness only.

So let me discover how I can make my New Year 2018 happy. Everybody wants to be happy. Everybody wants to make the New Year a happy one. How can I make it so?

I can make my year happy, by making everyday a happy day. Everyday can be happy, by making every hour a happy hour. Every hour can be a real happy hour, if every experience is a happy experience. Because a unit of life is an experience. Our entire life is consisting of experiences. So if my every experience, more or less is a happy experience , then every hour will be happy hour and every day will be a happy day and whole year will be a happy year.

The question is how to make my every experience a happy experience?

First of all we discover this fact that the quality of experience is not predominantly decided by what happens to us, but it is decided by how we respond to the experience. In other words, what is my attitude towards the happening decides the quality of my experience. If my attitude is proper, my experience will be a happy experience, a fulfilling experience. Therefore, predominantly the quality of my experience is decided by my attitude to every happening in my life. This is the first fact we discover. Then we stop blaming everybody, saying - " Because of this person my whole day is ruined today". All this blaming will not be there. My happiness is predominantly decided by my attitude. If attitude is changed, quality of experience will change.

The question is how to get proper attitude?

Any attitude is cultivated predominantly by having right understanding. Some attitudes are inborn, some come from family background. But most of the attitudes we need to cultivate by having right understanding. Any attitude is abiding, sustaining when it is based on right understanding. If you have right understanding, right attitude then your experience will be a happy, a fulfilling experience.

What is the right understanding which makes our experience happy and fulfilling?

Certain facts we need to keep in our mind which constitute right understanding.

1. First part of that understanding is - facts cannot be changed. In fact that which cannot be changed is a fact. Like suppose somebody shouted at me today at 9.22 am. That is an empirical fact that cannot be changed. Many people react, resist to this fact of happening.

Now something can be done about it. One option you have is you shout back which is what we generally do. Or we can see why that person shouted at me. There must be some pressure or I might have given some reason for that person to react. Is there anything to be corrected from my side? Rather than resisting to the fact, we make every fact of our life which is in the form of various happenings a learning experience. Pujya swamiji would say- if you make every experience a learning experience, then you are never a loser because you have learnt something from that experience. So first of all I understand that facts cannot be changed.

2. Similarly I understand that I cannot change people. Most of the time we lose our happiness because we want people to be different. Pujya swamiji emphasised this point very much. He would say- “ **Give people freedom to be what they are. If you give them freedom, you get freedom.**” What a nice thing pujya swamiji taught us. Nobody can change anybody else. Only thing is you can show the beauty of change by your own life. You don't have to advise or tell anybody. Seeing the change in you, person will hopefully change. So, let me not connect my peace and happiness with a particular behaviour of people. As long as I am dependent upon a particular behaviour of people for my happiness, I will not have lasting happiness in my life. So let us drop that agenda for the world.

3. Another thing which is important for relative happiness is to have harmony.

Harmony between my activities and my desire. Many times between what we wish and what we are doing there is contradiction. Like I want people to love me, but my behaviour is very antagonising. How can I expect people to like me? Or, like I want everybody to help me, but I am not ready to help anyone. There is a discrepancy. So make sure there is harmony between our activity and our desire. Most of our conflicts are because of disharmony between what we are doing and what we want.

Another aspect of harmony is let there be harmony between two desires. Sometimes we expect opposite things. I want to be very popular and I want to have deep long meditation also. Both are contradictory. So let me have harmony between my desires.

Another important point is, let there be harmony with people around. Let my behaviour be such that I create more friends than enemies. Because you always get more from your friends than your enemies. So if people are friendly with you, then you will definitely more from them. So harmony in relationship with people around is definitely important for *vyavaharika sukham*.

4. Another important thing for happiness is prayers and prayerful attitude. Whatever we do in our life we always acknowledge the importance of hidden factor which can be taken care of by prayers. Another important thing is prayerful attitude. Prayerful attitude means attitude of seeing everything as given and also acknowledging the presence of the giver, Isvara all the time. It implies *prasada buddhi*. This prayerfulness is important for our year becoming happy.

5. Pujya swamiji would emphasise one more thing. We need to earn a lot of grace to make our life happy. Because finally according to our *sastra*, your happiness is *punya phalam*. How do you earn that grace called *punyam* ? By reaching out actions and prayers. These are some of the means for relative happiness. Of course, Upanishad says -

तमात्मस्थं येऽनुपश्यन्ति धीरास्तेषां शान्तिः शाश्वतं सुखम् नेतरेषाम् । कठ ५-१२.

tam Atmasthanam pashyanti dhirah teshAm shAshvatam sukham, na itareshAm.

Finally abiding ever-lasting happiness is possible only by discovering myself to be limitless *brahman*. But till *atma nishta*, relative happiness is possible by such factors and lot of prayers. Pujya Swamiji would say that we should never lose an opportunity to earn grace.

Also, how can I contribute to other people's happiness because I tell them – “I wish you a very happy New Year”?

- First of all, as Pujya Swamiji says be compassionate to others by becoming non-judgmental about yourself and of others. We cannot make a solid judgement about anybody because we do not have complete data about anybody to make a judgement. Therefore in my approach let me be compassionate to others by becoming non-judgmental.

- Another thing- Let me be gentle in my approach while interacting with others. And also whenever I receive favour from anybody, I express my gratitude. Never take anything you receive for granted. If a person does even a small thing, then also acknowledge it and express your gratitude properly. We have seen this in Pujya Swamiji's life.

- Another thing we do for others- we pray for everybody from the bottom of our heart - ***sarve bhavantu sukhinah..***

Thus we can bring happiness in others life by our proper attitude towards them and we bring happiness in our life by proper attitude to all happenings in our life.

This day is celebrated in some places as *Kalpataru* day- a wish fulfilling day. Whatever you wish today , it will be fulfilled. You can pray that this year I would like to focus on this particular aspect in my life. Like let me focus on *uparati*. O lord, please bless and help me.

Invoking the grace of Lord Dakshinamurti and Pujya Swamiji for making this coming year a very happy and fulfilling one, I wish you all once again a very happy New Year.

***Transcribed by
Padma Ramaswamy***

Swāmī Paramārthānandājī's New year [2018]



om sadāśiva samārambhām śaṅkarācārya madhyamām asmad ācārya paryantām vande guru paramparām om

First of all, I wish you all a very happy, healthy, peaceful, prosperous, successful new year 2018.

Today, the topic that I am going to talk about is, “the glory of *sanātana dharmaḥ*”. *Sanātana dharma* is popularly known as Hinduism. *Sanātana dharma* is a compound word, consisting of two words, *sanātana* and *dharma*. And the word *dharma* is a significant word, with many shades of meanings. And, I will refer to three meanings that are there in our tradition.

The first and formal definition of *dharma* given by the traditional *ācāryā*, *jaimini maharṣi* in his *pūrva mīmāṃsa sūtrāṇi* is, “*codanā lakṣaṇaḥ arthaḥ dharmaḥ*” - anything revealed by *vedā* is called *dharmaḥ*. This is the definition given in *pūrva mīmāṃsa sūtram* by *jaimini maharṣi*. *Arthaḥ* means, the teachings or message. Coming from which source? *codanā*. The word *codanā* in that *sūtram* means, *veda vākyāni*. *Lakṣaṇam* means, *pramāṇam* - a source of knowledge. *Codanā veda vākyam eva lakṣaṇam, pramāṇam yasya arthasya codanā lakṣaṇaḥ arthaḥ*. Anyway, leaving aside the sanskrit words, the final meaning of this definition is, *dharmaḥ* means, vedic teaching. The definition of *dharma* or the definition of Hinduism should be, vedic teaching is Hinduism or *dharmaḥ*.

Then, the second and third meanings are based on the *benefit* of following the teachings of the *vedās*. If the humanity or society follows the vedic teachings, what are the benefits that we will get? One is, the benefit at the cosmic level, the outer level. And the other is, the benefit at the internal level.

The benefit at external level is, maintenance of harmony and peace at all levels - at individual level, family level, social level, national level, international level - that which preserves peace and harmony is called *dharmah*. *Jagataḥ dhāraṇāt, dharmah*. Derived from the root *dhṛ* - to maintain or sustain. Vedic teachings are called *dharma*. Because, *by* following that we can maintain / sustain peace and harmony at all levels. So, the second meaning of *dharma* is, that which maintains harmony.

The third meaning of *dharma* is, not only it maintains peace and harmony outside. But it maintains peace and harmony within ourselves also. A *dhārmic* person - the one who follows *vedic* teachings - can enjoy peace of mind, he can enjoy a joyous life also, which is called *dharmah*, otherwise called, *puṇyam* at the internal level. All these three meanings are there for the word *dharmah* or Hinduism.

And, it is called *sanātana*, because we believe that these teachings have been given by the Lord Himself, through the medium of *ṛṣis* -

yo brahmāṇaṃ vidadhāti pūrvaṃ yo vai vedāṃśca prahiṇoti tasmai |

tagṃ ha devaṃ ātmabuddhiprakāśaṃ mumukṣurvai śaraṇamahāṃ prapadye || [śvetāsvatara]

It has originated from the Lord Himself. Therefore, it does not have a beginning. And since the Lord is the originator, the Lord is the maintainer also of this *dharma*. In the *bhagavad gītā* [11.18] Arjunā says, "*tvam avyayaḥ śāśvata dharmagoptā*" - you are the protector of this *dharma*. And since the Lord is the protector, it will survive rest of the time also. Therefore, even though *sanātana dharma* may face several challenges - throughout the history it has faced, even now it is facing - but, in spite of all this challenges this *dharma* will survive, eternally. It is beginning less and it will be endless also. And, being eternal it is called *sanātanam*.

The second meaning of the word *sanātanam* is, that which is ever valid and therefore which never goes out of date. It can never become obsolete at any time. It is always valid not only in this generation but, in the generations to come also it will remain valid. Therefore, eternal and ever valid teachings of the *vedās*, is *sanātana dharma* or Hinduism. So, what is the definition of Hinduism? Eternal and ever valid teachings of the *vedās* is *sanātana dharma*.

And, these teachings have been later elucidated, expanded and clarified by several later secondary scriptures also, like *smṛti*, *itihāsa*, *purāṇa* etc. All those secondary scriptures are also considered to be part of the *vedā* only. Therefore, when I say *vedic* teachings, it includes all the teachings of the supportive scriptures also.

Now, the question is, what is the glory of these teachings? We have been learning the teachings of the scriptures for years. Therefore, the teachings are endless. But, today, being auspicious New year day, auspicious because, we have done the *pūjā*. We will try to remember some of the salient teachings of the *vedās*, especially the ones I appreciate.

The first and foremost teaching the *vedā* gives us is this - this entire world or universe in which we are born is the most wonderful infrastructure that any human being can conceive of. This universe is the most wonderful cosmic infrastructure which any human mind can conceive of. Not only it supports life, but it has got all the resources for our physical growth, emotional growth, intellectual growth, spiritual growth - for all of them provision is there in this wonderful creation.

Therefore, never take this creation for granted. As human beings we have got the intellectual resources to appreciate the wonder called this universe. If at all there is any ugliness in the creation, it is only within a small negligible area where human beings are there. If there is any ugliness, anywhere in this vast cosmos, the ugliness is only in a small negligible area where human beings are there. That means, ugliness is our contribution. Otherwise, the cosmos, the universe is the most wonderful infrastructure, governed by countless principles, without violation. Not only physical principles, but the law of *karma*, called the moral principles also. *śāṅkarācāryā* in His *brahma sūtra bhāṣyam* for *sūtra* 1.1.2, describes this world as -

asya jagato nāmarūpābhyāṃ vyākṛtasya aneka karṭṛ bhokṭṛ saṃyuktasya pratiniyata deśa kāla nimitta kriyāphalāśrayasya manasāpy acintya racanā rūpasya janma-sthiti-bhaṅgaṃ yataḥ sarvajñāt sarvaśakteḥ kāraṇād bhavati, tad brahmeti vākyaśeṣaḥ I

Whether you study at the micro level or at the macro level, World is the most wonderful infrastructure, *manasāpy acintya racanā rūpasya* - which we cannot even remotely visualize. Therefore, the scriptures say that, *as intelligent human beings* we should give time to appreciate the glory of this creation. Therefore, *vedā* is never tired of describing the wonders of the universe. We have been seeing in *taittirīya upaniṣad* first chapter - *anuvāka* 1.7.1 - several descriptions of the universe -

prthivyantarikṣaṃ dyaurdiśo'vāntaradiśaḥ I agnirvāyurādityaścandramā nakṣatrāṇi I āpa oṣadhayo vanaspataya ākāśa ātmā I ityadhibhūtam I athādhyātmam I prāṇo vyāno'pāna udānaḥ samānaḥ I cakṣuḥ śrotraṃ mano vāk tvak I carma māṅṃsagṃ snāvāsthi majjā etad adhidhāya ṛṣiravocat I

- anything you take in the external world, or any organ you take in your own body, talk to the relevant specialist, they are still studying every organ, dividing and dividing and dividing, and every part of the organ requires life-long study and so they are not able to complete. The more we look at the creation - outer or inner - it is a wonder. Therefore, may you - as an intelligent human being - appreciate this universe.

Not only that, *vedā* prescribes certain regular activities, in which we acknowledge the contribution and express our gratitude through a token offering of water, called *tarpaṇam*. One of the most popular - vedic ritual is, *nitya sandhyāvandanam*. In that, right from young age, we are only asked to appreciate the glory and the wonder of the this creation, which supports and nourishes us. And the centre of the solar system being Lord *sūryā* Himself, daily *sandhyāvandanam* is, the appreciation of the contribution of the Sun. Without Sun, life is impossible. "*ādityam tarpayāmi, somam tarpayāmi, aṅgārakam tarpayāmi, budhaṃ tarpayāmi*" - planets we remember, the Sun we remember, water we remember, fire we remember. Appreciate, Acknowledge, Express gratitude.

And, as even we appreciate this cosmos, this infrastructure more and more, this appreciation will get gradually converted in to admiration, and admiration will gradually get converted in to reverence. Not only I talk about that, but as even I talk about that, my hands will join in reverence.

namaḥ savitre jagadekakṣuṣe I jagatprasūṭī sthiti nāśa hetave I trayīmayāya triguṇātma dhāriṇe I viriñci nārāyaṇa śāṅkarātmane I

For me, *brahmā*, *viṣṇu* and *śiva* are none other than the *pratyakṣa sūrya devatā*. Appreciation to admiration to reverence. This universe is not only a gift of the Lord, this universe is the very manifestation of the Lord Himself. Even in this *ganeśa pūjā*, one of the words used is *namo namo ganeśāya namaste viśvarūpiṇe* - this whole universe is the manifestation of the Lord.

Therefore, a vedic person is one, according to whom, the appreciation of god and the vision of god does not require closing of the eyes but vision of god is by opening of the eyes. Therefore, 'where do I see god?' if you ask, a Hindu will say, 'where do I not see god?.' This divinisation of the world is the first and foremost lesson of the *vedā*. Don't imagine god is an extra-cosmic thing, existing somewhere exclusively, but it is the one available in and through in our every perception. This is the first lesson - *sarvam viṣṇumayam jagat*.

Then, the second lesson that the *vedā* gives is, this cosmic infrastructure has got an already inbuilt harmony in itself. We need not create harmony. We need not harmonise the world. And therefore, *vedā* tells the human being, that what is requested of you is, don't disturb this natural harmony. No new harmony is needed, it is inbuilt. The only request to the human being is that, don't spoil the harmony. This request is uniquely given to human being only, because the only living being who can abuse, exploit and destroy this very infrastructure, the only living being who has the power to do is, the human being. All the other living beings in the form of other animals and plants never violate the harmony. They have got instinctive and inbuilt program by which they live, grow and die, without disturbing the harmony. A vast forest will be in absolute harmony, until we, the great ones enter. The vast ocean will be in wonderful harmony, until we enter. Badrinath, Kedarath - all those places will be in wonderful harmony, until we enter. Wherever we go, we destroy the harmony, we destroy all other living beings, and in the process, we destroy ourselves.

And therefore, *vedā* instructs, 'Oh human being may you be responsible' All the *dharma śāstrams* and instructions are given not to the local buffalo, not to the cow or horse. All the instructions are given to the human beings only. And, all the values are reduced to two basic principles. "*ślokārdhena pravakṣyāmi yadyuktam grantha koṭibhiḥ paropakāra puṇyāya, pāpāya para pīdanam*".

So, never hurt the infrastructure or never disturb any living being which is part of this infrastructure. If you can contribute positively wonderful, *para upakāra puṇyāya*. If you can, you do. Otherwise, at least follow *ahimsā* to the maximum extent. Take to *para upakāra*, by avoiding *para apakāra*. This is the foundation of all the values of life, "*ahimsā paramo dharmah*".

Therefore, the second important vedic lesson is, be a responsible member of this cosmic orchestra. When a chanting is going on, in a particular *śruti*, there are some people who are stone deaf. The *śruti* they don't understand. When everybody is chanting *akaṇḍa mandalākāram* in a particular *śruti*, he will say that in a rough voice. You will feel irritated. But, he does not know what is the *śruti*. Similarly, the whole cosmos is a music, it is a rhythm, it is a harmony. Let us join it and live a life in a responsible manner. This is a *dhārmic* life, which makes a person a Hindu. So, the second lesson is - Be responsible. The first lesson - Gratefully appreciate & acknowledge this creation.

The third lesson is, since we are drawing resources and support from this cosmic infrastructure, we will have to give back. As a taker from the cosmos, I have to give back also. The humanity has the responsibility to contribute to the structure. For this contribution alone we have got a fantastic scheme, called *pañca mahā yajñāḥ*, which I am never tired of talking about. Because, I consider it as the most glorious scheme. These 5 *yajñās* are -

1) *deva yajñah* - we start the day contemplating upon the cosmic wonderful infrastructure you have, looking upon it as the very body of *viśvarūpa īśvarā*. In every *mantrā* that is said. As I have quoted, *laṃ pṛthivyātmane gandhān dhārayāmi / haṃ ākāśātmane puṣpaiḥ pūjayāmi / yaṃ vāyvātmane dhūpaṃ āghrāpayāmi / raṃ agnyātmane dīpaṃ darśayāmi / vaṃ amṛtātmane amṛtaṃ mahānaivedyaṃ nivedayāmi / saṃ sarvātmane sarvopacārapūjāṃ samarpayāmi*

When we are doing various *upacārā* to the Lord, we are saying this. 'Oh Lord I am offering *candanam*, visualising you as the manifestation of *pṛthivi*. Similarly, every *upacārā* only reminds us that bhagavān is available in the form of the *pañca mahā bhūtāni* and their products. I gratefully acknowledge this gift and make a prayer that everyone who is part of this universal infrastructure are like my own family. *Mātā ca pārvatī devī pitā devo maheśvaraḥ, bāndhavāḥ śiva bhaktāśca svadeśo bhuvana trayam, śivabhaktāśca or viṣṇubhaktāśca*. The entire creation, with living and non-living beings, let there be peace and joy. *Sarve bhavantu sukhinah*.

I start the day not by remembering my small family. But, I expand my mind to remember my largest family. If we start the day with *deva yajña*, my narrow mind will expand to accommodate the whole universe. This is *deva yajñah*. Start the day with remembrance of the Lord, not as a small idol in your room, but the Lord as the live universal organism.

2) The second one is *pitṛ yajñah*. god has given this infrastructure and this body that I have. The human body (I have) has come to me because of my parents. god is the *sāmānya kāraṇam*, parents are the *viśeṣa kāraṇam*. Because of them only I am here and I am able to appreciate. Therefore, show your gratitude towards the parents. *Mātā pitṛbhyām vapusō janakābhyām udānvaham namaskaromi vijñāna janakābhyām* - not only they have given me the body, they have given me the wonderful education and culture. And therefore, I revere them, I do *namaskāra* every day; and take care of them in their old age. They supported me when I was a child. It is my responsibility to reverentially support them when they need me. This reverential service that I do to my parents is called *pitṛ yajñah*, which is the responsibility of every single Hindu, the *sanātana dharma* follower. Because it is said, for every *pāpam* there is a *prāyaścitta*, but for ingratitude there is no *prāyaścitta*. Therefore, be grateful to the macro, be grateful to your immediate source also, the parents. It is called *pitṛ yajña*. Not only while they are alive, even after their death we have to remember and acknowledge.

3) Then, the third one is *manuṣya yajñah*. I remember the contribution of all other human beings - because of the farmers, grains are available; because of weavers, clothing is available. Food, clothing and shelter - they are all because of other human beings contributing to me. Therefore, in return, I have to share whatever resources I have with others, which is called *manuṣya yajñah*.

4) Thereafter, *bhūta yajñah*. Not only human beings contribute to our welfare, even animals and insects and worms. The lowly earth worms are very, very valuable. We think it is nauseating, but the earth worms are making the land fertile. Thus, from worms onwards, birds onwards, everything contributes. Trees give us the oxygen, which we breathe. Thus, I am aware of the contribution of every plant and animal, and I contribute to them also in whatever manner I can. That is called *bhūta yajñah*.

5) Then, finally *brahma yajña*. I am enjoying these wonderful teachings *because of* the vedic scriptures. And the scriptures are there because the *ṛṣis* - in an endless *paramparā* - in spite of so many calamities and problems, they have preserved them. Now there are so many technological advancements for preservation. But in the olden days, they had to preserve in the mind when even the writing had not come. The entire *vedā* was received orally, preserved in the head and transmitted to the next generation. And even when the writings came, not our computer and all. They had to take the palm leaf and they had etch every letter. Remember, the *vedā*, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhāratam* [one lakh verses], all these, the *ṛṣis* have preserved. The *ācāryās* have preserved. In spite of the onslaught of other people trying to destroy these also, somehow the scriptures have managed to survive. Therefore, I have to express my gratitude to the *ṛṣis* and the *ācāryās*. That is called *brahma yajñaḥ*. *Brahma* here means *vedaḥ*.

Not only should I acknowledge, I should do my best to preserve this knowledge for our own future generations. Thus, *pañca mahā yajña* is the best scheme provided by the *vedās* themselves for contribution to this wonderful infrastructure. This is the third lesson. What is that? Be a contributor. So, be an appreciator. Be responsible. Be a contributor.

And, the fourth and final vedic lesson. The *vedās* point out that, if only we receive, understand and assimilate the vedic teaching and understand the principle by which the entire cosmic infrastructure is functioning, not only this knowledge will help us in living a meaningful life, but this knowledge will be useful in going through the later part of our life also, which is ageing and so on. But that is also an integral part of living. And once we understand the infallible principles of the universe, we will know how to accept those also very gracefully, without resistance. Because, the greatest challenge in life is going to be confronting the old age and death. The best preparation is, assimilation of the cosmic laws. In the *bhagavad gītā* - which is an extract of the vedic teaching - Lord *Kṛṣṇā* tells -

mātrāsparśāstu kaunteya śītoṣṇasukhaduḥkhadāḥ |

āgamāpāyino'nityāstāmstitikṣasva bhārata || [BG 2.14]

So, we have to understand and assimilate that everything that arrives in our life, they all will have to leave us, one by one. The things that will come to us will have to go away from us or we have to go away. The people who enter our life one by one, also will have to leave one by one; or, we have to leave them. In our own body, every faculty in our body gradually came - right from conception onwards, various faculties of *jñānendriyams*, *karmendriyams*, all these faculties gradually came. And, gradually these faculties will have to go also. Finally, the very body which we have acquired in time will have to go away. Every arrival will be followed by departure. Every union will be followed by separation. These are the infallible laws of this cosmic infrastructure. As long as we remember these laws, we can age gracefully and accept these events as very, very natural events. They are not extraordinary events happening only to me, about which I have to complain. Nothing can be complained about.

jātasya hi dhruvo mṛtyurdhruvaṃ janma mṛtasya ca |

tasmādaparihārye'rthe na tvam śocitumarhasi || [BG 2.27]

Death is transition of life from one body to another. It is transition of life and it is not end of life. Then we will ask, why this transition? Answer is very simple. Because after sometime, this body becomes worn-out and it is not capable of expressing life, any more. Therefore, naturally, the worn out body will have to be replaced by a fresh, new and efficient body. *Kṛṣṇā* gives the example,

vāsāṃsi jīrṇāni yathā vihāya navāni gṛhṇāti naro'parāṇi |

tathā śarīrāṇi vihāya jīrṇānyanyāni saṃyāti navāni dehī || [BG 2.22]

when the clothing is worn out we get a new clothing. It is good news or bad news? It is a good news only. Similarly, death is not *amaṅgalam*.

yamāya dharmarājāya mṛtyave cāntakāya ca |

vaivasvatāya kālāya sarvabhūta kṣhayāya ca |

auḍumbarāya dadhnāya nīlāya parameṣṭhine |

vṛkodarāya citrāya citraguptāya vai namaḥ ||

There is no *amaṅgalam* in this creation. Thus, life is beautiful, growth is beautiful, ageing is beautiful, death is also wonderful. We can go through all these with a cheerful face, if only we assimilate this message.

If we don't have the emotional strength to go through these experiences, for that also the solution is there in the infrastructure, (about which I talked about in an earlier New Year talk).

Oṃ namo bhagavate anantāya, let us chant the *īśvara nāmā* and draw strength from the very infinite creation. With that strength we can go through all these things with emotional strength and with a cheerful face.

Therefore, I consider *sanātana dharma* is a wonderful gift from the Lord. We are fortunate that we are born into this. Let us thank god for this and try to follow the teachings. First learn it and then follow the teachings to the extent possible. With this prayer I conclude my talk.

ॐ पूर्णसदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते । ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Transcription by M/s T.Śrīnivāsan & P.Bālasubrahmaṇyam, and edited by students of Swamiji



SWAMI SAKSHIJI'S CAMP AT AVG

Swami Sakshatkritanandaji conducted a camp at AVG, Anaikatti from Dec 25, 2017 to Dec 31, 2017. The subject was Brihadaranyaka Upanisad Chapter Two. 120 students participated. The uniqueness of the camp was Swamiji taught all the Mantras with Sankara bhasyam from memory without referring to any book or even paper. It was also a get together of AVG Anaikatti alumnis of 2010-13 batch.



A summary of the class is presented.

AN OVER VIEW OF BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISAD: Brihadaranyaka Upanisad occurs in Sukla Yajur veda. It appears in Brahmana section of Vedas. Isavasya Upanisad appears in Samhita section of Vedas. Brihadaranyaka Upanisad is considered as a commentary of Isavasya Upanisad. It has three sections- Madhu kanda, Muni kanda and Khila kanda.

Sri Sankara has written bhasyam for kanva shaka. This bhasyam is one of his best works. Sri Sureshvaracharya's vartika of 12,000 verses on Sankara bhasyam is popular. Sri Vidyaranya's Vartika Sara on Suresvaracharya's Vartikam and Vidyaranya's commentary on Madhyantina shaka are other works on Brhadaranyaka. Sankara bhasyam is also read with Sri Ananda Giri's tiika and Swami Vishnudevananda's tippanis on all the commentaries.

MEANING OF BRIHADARNYAKA UPANISAD: Upanisad means brahmavidya which is arrived from the root sad with the prefixes upa and ni and the meaning is appropriate because this knowledge destroys samsara totally. Brihad means big in size. Aranyaka means that which is studied in the forest. Upanisad means Brahma Vidya that is the destroyer of ignorance.

SAMBANDHA BHASYAM: Bhashyakara writes a commnetary known as sambandha bhashyam that gives the connection between karma kanda and jnana kanda portion of the Vedas. Sri Sureshvaracarya writes more than 1,136 verses on sambandha bhashyam alone. The main idea conveyed in the sambandha bhashya is that karma kanda also accepts siddha vastu, viz atma that is different from the body, (dehavyatirikta atma), though impliedly, as subject matter of karma kanda and hence brahman also can be the subject matter of Vedanta pramana. The implication is that many upayas revealed by karma kanda are meant for gaining the desired ends in the next janma which can be possible only when atma that is different from the body. Having said this, bhashyakara presents karma kanda as means for preparing the mind and creating vairagya for the world here and hereafter including the position of Brahmaji, the highest end that a human being can achieve so that one can seek knowledge of the self and gain moksha.

SANTI MANTRA: The santi mantra ‘purnamadah purnamidam’ contains the essence of Vedanta. The ultimate reality is purnam Brahman. The jagat comprising name and form is also purnam and has come from that purnam brahma. When you remove jagat-purnam from the cause that is purnam brahma, purnam brahma alone remains which reveals jagat as mithya and atma as satyam.

MADHU KANDA: FIRST CHAPTER:

The first chapter essentially deals with adhyaropa, superimposing the namarupa jagat on brahma and also the karanatvam of jagat. There are two important crucial mantras in the first chapter on which bhashyakara has written elaborate commentaries.

Mantra 1.4.7 in which occurs vidyasutram - ‘atma iti eva upasita’. This vidya sutram reveals that atma is whole and one should know atma as caitanyam, as one whole free from parts. One who knows seer alone as atma or hearer alone as atma or thinker alone as atma.... does not know atma and atma is more than that. Atma pevades all of them and yet free from them. It is adhishtana of all of them. Mantra 1.4.10 in which occurs avidyasutram - ‘yonyam devatam upaste anyosau anyohamasmi iti na sa veda’. Even though the famous mahavakya ‘aham brahmasi’ occurs in the first part of this mantra, the second part does criticism of bheda buddhi. These two mantras together point out that the vishaya for first chapter is predominantly avidya and vishaya of second chapter is vidya. This has been said by bhashyakara in his introduction to the second chapter.

MADHU KANDA: SECOND CHAPTER:

There are six brahmanas or sections in second chapter. The first three brahmanas deal with apavada. The fourth brahmana is a commentary on vidya sutram. The fifth brahmana deals with jaganmithyatvam and sarvatmabhava of atma. The sixth brahmana deals with Guru Sishya parampara.

AJATA SATRU BRAHMANA: *Gargya*, a brahmana approached *Ajatasatru*, King of *Kasi* and told him that he would teach Brahman. Even for telling this the King offered him 1000 cows as *dakshina*. *Gargya* taught about brahma with attributes and that one should do meditation on that brahman using various *alambanas* like sun, moon, lighting, various elements and so on as a means for gaining Hiranyagarba which is moksha. Whatever *Gargya* taught the King knew and he knew something more of *saguna* brahma upasana than *Gargya* and also the results of various meditations. *Gargya* did not know about nirguna brahma. Having exhausted his knowledge, he approaches *Ajatasatru* to teach him.

The king told that it was not proper for a kshatriya to teach a brahmin. But he magnanimously agreed to teach Gargya informally. Holding him by his hands, he went to a sleeping person. The king called him by the various names of candra-devata which is part of samashti prana. The sleeping person did not wake up. Then the king shook him with his hands and the person woke up. The action of waking up a sleeping person revealed the fact that prana is not a conscious principle as it did not respond to the calls. Body also did not respond and so body also is not a conscious principle. Jivatma did not respond because of its dis-identification with everything. So the bhokta or conscious principle is jivatma alone. During sleep it remains in its true nature as paramatma free from samsara. The transactions in dream does not disprove this fact because the dream transactions are mithya, and the sruti uses the word iva to point out this. Finally the sruti gives a name to the paramatma as satyasya satyam. The next two brahmanas are meant to explain the name satyasya satyam. The same mantra that gives the name explains the meaning of the word in sixth case as prana, the samashti and vyashti sukshma sariram and the ultimate reality as the truth of this prana.

SISHU BRAHMANA: The meaning of prana is given in this section. Prana is called sishu or calf. It is located in the body generally and its specific location in the body is head. It is tied to the strength in the body and the food is the rope as food provides strength. Karana-sanghata, sukshma-sarira is the meaning of the word prana. It is glorified in the rest of the mantras. Even though it is specifically located in the head, its manifestation is maximum in the right eyes and all other devatas worship prana. This worship is revealed by the sruti in the form of pointing out which devata worships from which part in the eye. The red lines indicate Rudradevata's worship, the waters indicate Varunadevata's worship and so on. Then a mantra is quoted in support and the various organs in the head are identified with the names of different rishis. How come this prana is called satya in the sixth case inflected word 'satyasya'. This is said in third brahmana.

MURTHA AMURTHA BRAHMANA: The manifest part of the jagat/individual body is called sat which is murtam or having form. The unmanifest part of the jagat/individual body is called tyat which is amurtam or not having form. At samasti level fire, water and earth are murtam and space and air are amurtam. At vyasti level other than prana and inner space are murtam and prana and inner space are amurtam. When sat and tyat are combined we get the word satyam which refer to the perceptible and imperceptible elements. This satyam is prana because prana is product of these five elements. Subtle body at individual and total level includes vasanas also. What is superimposed on atma is this murta-amurta-jagat and it is negated by the sruti by saying neti neti. When everything is negated what remains in non-negatable satyam, the nominative case-inflected satyam. So the final meaning of the name satyasya satyam is paramatma.

MAITREYI BRAHMANA: Yajnavalkya wanted to become a jnana nishta for which he wished to take sannyasa. He told his wife Maitreyi of his desire to take sannyasa and his intention is to divide the properties between his two wives. Maitreyi asked whether wealth will give her immortality. Yajnavalkya replied in negative and said wealth will only give comforts and not amrtatvam. Maitreyi told that she did not want the properties but only the knowledge that he knew, that will give immortality.

Yajnavalkya was pleased that Maitreyi had vairagyam and was a jijnasu. He taught her atma vidya. First he pointed out the means for vairagya. Vairagya is the natural consequence when one sees the fact that every love that one gets in the world is conditional love and that love towards oneself is the greatest love. Wife loves her husband for her own sake. Husband loves his wife only for his own sake.

Similarly one loves children, money, other worlds, etc for one's own sake. So atma being the dear most, it must be of the nature of ananda and that one should see that atma for which one should know it. After knowledge one should remove all doubts and errors. By knowing this self one becomes all knower. There is only a seeming commandment in the sruti vakya. In jnana kanda 'vidhi' is not possible. Vidhi is meant to draw the attention of a person away from the vishayas and place it in the upayas of knowing the atma.

The right vision is that there is nothing other than atma or the self. The wrong notion is that there is something other than atma. When you know something as other than you, you have rejected that thing and it becomes anatma and love for anatma is not real love. When you have rejected the world, the world also rejects you. Then there is sense of isolation leading to samsara. That phalam of atma jnanam is ananda prapti and sarvajnatva prapti. Ananda prapti is at emotional level and sarvajnatva prapti is at the intellectual level. They are one and the same.

Main teaching in Vedanta is to reveal brahmatma as the intellegent and material cause of this world. If that is so, jagat becomes mithya and brahma is satyam. In this section we see the sruti presenting brahma as srishti-sthiti-laya-karanam through various examples. The manifestation of all the Vedas from brahma through the example of sparks, etc coming from fire, indicates brahma is cause of creation or artha prapanca as word and meaning are inseparable. The drum-conch-veena example reveals sthiti karanam and the various waters resolving in ocean reveals laya-karanam. Atma is samanya sat and cit and every visesha sat and cit cannot be perceived without samaya sat and cit. Every visesha resolves in samanya which is ultimately atma.

MADHU BRAHMANA: Madhu is bhogya vastu, a product. Everything in the creation is madhu because everything is an effect or bhogya indicating from one standpoint and cause or bhokta from another standpoint. So the entire jagat is mutually dependent. The entire jagat is classified under three heads - adhibhutam, adhidaivam and adhyatmam both at the total and individual level. All the beings are madhu for adhibhuta and adhibhuta is madhu for all the beings. All the beings are madhu for adhidaiva and adhyatma also and adhidaiva and adhyatma also are madhu for all the beings. Adhibhutam refers to elements and so on. Adhidaivam refers to devatas presiding over adhibhutam. Adhyatmam refers to devatas presiding over various functions at the individual level. All these have mutual interdependence and hence mithya. Only adhishthana atma revealed in Maitreyi brahmana is satyam.

The glory of this brahma vidya is illustrated through a story of Dadyang Rishi teaching Aswini Kumaras. This vidya is gained by student even at the cost of doing cruel karma and this teaching is given at the risk of one's life. That parmatma created this jagat and entered it in order that people can know them through the created jagat. Created jagat being mithya, it becomes the means to know the satyam which is adhishthana of mithya jagat. Brahma alone is in the form of all these names and forms. Its svarupa is sarvanubhuh, that which is the content of every experience.

VAMSA BRAHMANA: This Brahmana is meant for glorification of the teaching. This is not a recently originated teaching. It is coming down from beginningless time. It is not born of a given human intellect. It contains the Guru Sishya parampara list. The teaching originated from Hiranyagarbha and has come down to me through the lineage of teachers. The names are listed so that we can chant the same. We get cittasuddhi and the grace of the rishis in the tradition by doing japa of this section.

SWAMI SADATMANANDA'S CLASS: Swami Sadatmanandaji taught introduction to Chapter 3 in one class. He explained that Chapter 1 and 2 are Sruti pradhanam and Chapter 3 and 4 are Yukti pradhanam. When studied through Sruti and Yukti, the teaching will be clear like a bel fruit in hand. He briefly taught Yajyavalkya's teaching in the court of King Janaka.



GURU PADUKA PUJA: Led by Swami Sakshatji, the students did Guru paduka puja to the padukas and Murti of Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati at the lecture hall on the concluding day.

SWAMIJI'S ADDRESS TO AVG STAFF: Swamiji appreciated the tireless work done by the staff members towards discharging their duty in general and during camp in particular. He encouraged them in continuing their service as dedication to Pujya Swamiji and get his blessings.

RELEASE OF PUJYA SWAMIJI'S BIOGRAPHY: On Dec 25, 2017, Swami Sakshatji released the second edition of 'Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati – a brief biography' in English by N. Avinashilingam. Swami Sadatmanandaji received the first copy. Swamiji appreciated the design and contents of the book. The book was distributed to all the campers present.

Report by N. Avinashilingam

Hindus recognize divine influence in life Melkote Ramaswamy

The Hindu tradition permits its devotees to worship in many ways.

This is a result of vision and the wisdom of our ancient rishis, who were trying to accommodate a diverse spectrum of maturity levels.

Hindus can choose to worship from an array of ishtadevatas (favorites), each one representing some aspect of one and only God. We also have the choice of praying to God with form (sakaara) or without form (niraakara) or to one with attributes (saguna) or without attributes (nirguna). Further, one may worship God in the form of earth, fire, space, air or water. In South India, there are temples dedicated to each of these: at Chidambaram for space, at Arunachalam for fire, at Kancheepuram for earth, at Kalahasti for air and at Jambukeswaran for water.

There are several other subtle manifestations of God. It doesn't take much to realize and recognize that the world around us in all its ramifications is simply given to us — the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the rivers, the oceans, the vegetation, the forests, the animals and the birds. We had absolutely no hand in creating any of these.

In a sense, these are all God-given gifts to us. If we accept this premise, we can recognize the hand of the Lord in myriad other ways. One such is order. The sun always rises in the east and sets in the west, the moon goes around the earth, and all the planets revolve around the sun without ever colliding with each other following what physicists and astronomers call Kepler's laws and exerting gravitational forces. There is a certain rhythm/ regularity in the occurrence of seasons. There is regularity in the occurrence of tides.

In the human body, we can discern three types of order: physical, physiological and psychological. If one were to look at the number of drugs and over-the-counter medicines in a typical drugstore, we get an idea of the number of ailments that can possibly exist in the human body. Many things can go wrong, but they often don't, because of an inherent order. In other words, there is harmony in the way the organs work. A disease is simply a breakdown of order in the body-mind complex.

Order also manifests as harmony in nature. Humans and animals coexist living in their own worlds, while also enriching and supplementing the creation, which in itself is part of a bigger order.

It is humbling to realize and recognize that everything in the universe is just order and we are just blessed to be a part and parcel of this divinity called God.

We often speak of the "Seven Wonders of the World" without ever realizing we are part of the biggest wonder — one that transcends all religions.

Melkote Ramaswamy is a physicist, speaker, writer and author and is an active member of the Hindu Temple of Central Indiana. He has attended several Vedanta camps at Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, Saylorsburg. He is the author of *Vedanta through Drushtaanta* (Adhyatma Vidya Mandir, Ahmedabad 2013)

आर्ष संस्कृति तीर्थ



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स्थल	“आर्ष संस्कृति तीर्थ” - आश्रम, कुछडी, पोरबंदर, गुजरात
संपर्क	मोबाईल नं. ०८८७८४५५७५४ ● ०८४२७७३४३६४
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श्रीमद् भगवद्गीता एवं उपनिषदों का द्विवर्षीय निःशुल्क अभ्याससत्र



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नोंध :- ३५ वय पर्यन्त के युवक-युवतियां दिनांक ३१ जनवरी २०१८ तक स्वपरिचय के साथ आवेदन पत्र भेजें।
अभ्याससत्र पर्यन्त आश्रमनिवास करना होगा।

मनन आश्रम - सरदार ब्रिज के पास, झाडेश्वर-३९२०११, जि. भरूच, दूरभाष - ०२६४२-२३०५१८



स्वामिनी तन्मयानन्द

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT - Mr. PRAFUL SEJPAL, MOBILE NO : 08903119999

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We are happy to announce the Vedanta Retreat (Residential) at Sri Sarada Brahma Vidya Kendra,
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17th May to 20th May 2018

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- The Retreat will include
 - Introduction to Vedanta , Basics of Sanskrit
 - Sahasranama Parayanam, Walks in and around Tea Estates

For registering to participate in the retreat please call **09486639156 / 08903991086** OR

E-mail jeevanmuktanada@gmail.com / narayansub@yahoo.com

Retreats offered by AVG Anaikatti until May,2018

The following are the retreats planned until May,2018. More camps will be announced in due course. Every retreat will include temple puja, meditation, classes on vedanta, satsang (Question and answer sessions). Chanting, yoga and sanskrit classes may also be included. Participation in Gurukula seva during the camp as needed will be appreciated.

You may register for these retreats at <http://arshavidya.in/camps-retreats>

Retreat Id	Retreat Dates	Retreat Description
R18-02	8:00PM Tuesday, 6 th Feb to 12:30PM Saturday, 10 th Feb	4 day retreat on <i>Values to prepare oneself for atma-jnanam</i> with Swami Shankarananda. This will be based on verses in the 13 th chapter of the <i>Bhagavad Gita</i> .
R18-03	8:00PM Saturday, 24 th Mar to 12:30PM on Saturday, 31 st Mar	7 day retreat with Swami Sadatmananda on <i>Sadhana and Sadhya</i> based on a text <i>Sadhanabodhini</i> .
R18-04	8:00PM Saturday, 14 th April to 12:30PM on Saturday, 21 st April	7 day retreat on <i>Atma Vidya (Self knowledge)</i> with Swami Shankarananda. This will be based on the 1 st Mundaka of the <i>Mundakopanisad</i> .
R18-05	8:00PM Saturday, 19 th May to 12:30PM on Saturday, 26 st May	7 day Family retreat on <i>Selections from Yoga-sutras and selections from the Bhagavad Gita</i> with Swami Sadatmananda and Swami Shankarananda. Children over 6 can accompany their parents and will be offered separate classes.
R18-06	8:00PM Friday, 9 th Mar to 12:30PM on Saturday, 11 th Mar	Weekend retreat with Swami Sadatmananda on <i>Freedom</i> .



Paduka Puja to Puja Swamiji



Swami Shakshatkridananda's Class and his Pada Puja



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Mahā Śivarātri Pūjā

We welcome you to participate in the Mahā Śivarātri Pūjā at the Gurukulam on **Tuesday, February 13, 2018**. We begin with the Nitya-Pūjā in the morning, which will be followed by Akhaṇḍa-nāma-japa, Ekādaśa-Rudrābhiṣeka Special Pūjā & Mahā-ārati in the evening.

PROGRAMME

Nitya-Pūjā	...	5-30 AM
Akhaṇḍa-nāma-japa	...	8-00 AM to 1-00 PM
Ekādaśa-Rudrābhiṣeka	...	4-00 PM
Mahā-ārati	...	7-30 PM
Mahā-Prasādam	...	8-00 PM

P. S. Please send your Puja offering Rs. 251/- to reach us on or before 12-02-2018. Use the form given below. Please make your Cheque or DD payable to **Sruti Seva Trust, Coimbatore**. Alternatively amount can be transferred for the credit of Sruti Seva Trust to Indian Overseas Bank, Chinna Thadagam Branch, A/c. No. 064301000007129. IFS Code IOBA 0000643 In case of Electronic Transfer please intimate details over e-mail at office@arshavidya.in You may also be one of the sponsors of the day by offering ₹ 5000/- or more.

PŪJĀ OFFERING

Enclosed is my offering for the special Pūjā on the day of Mahā Śivarātri on 13-02-2018

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Swami Sakshatkridananda addressing AVG Staffs





Swami Shakshatkridananda's Camp Participants