

Gita Saptah Camp by Swami Sakshatkrtananda

at Rishikesh from Nov 02 to Nov 09 2016

Swami Sakshatkrtananda organised a Gita Saptaha Camp in Kovilur Vedanta Mutt, Rishikesh in view of the non-availability of our ashram during that period. Swami Sakshatkrtananda camped in the mutt a week earlier along with committed students led by Kumara Chaitanya to convert the infrastructure for conducting camps at the mutt. It was a highly challenging task. The needs of the students were meticulously visualised and provided for by Smt. Visalatchi ammam and her team.



The camp started on Nov 02 2016 at 6 45 AM after Puja to Lord Karpaga Vinayakar. Swamiji explained the circumstances which led to the camp. The camp was attended by nearly 100 people. Around 12 of them were Swamijis and Swaminis. A substantial part of the rest were students from 2010-2013 course in Anaikatti. Some of the foreign students from this course were there in this camp. The atmosphere was reminding us of the enthusiasm that was witnessed in Anaikatti during 2010-2013.

The schedule was tight. Meditation at 6:45 was followed by three classes in the forenoon with appropriate breaks. One class was there in the evening and a satsang in the night. After four days the classes were extended from 60 minutes to 90 minutes sometimes. The last two days we had six classes.

Since all the students had studied the Sastra thoroughly during 2010-13, covering the entire Gita mulam in one week was a pleasant journey. Swamiji started with Adyasa Bhasya and the upodgata Gita bhasya of Bhagavan Sankaracharya. Swamiji covered all the slokas and relevant Bhasya extracts totally from his memory. This should have inspired the students to memorise Gita and significant bhasya vakyas. Swamiji made it a point to unfold the connections from chapter to chapter and within a chapter Sloka to Sloka and within a Sloka paada to paada. The flow was unfolded beautifully and it was an unique opportunity to see the tightness of slokas and chapters.



Connections were given wherever needed to Gita Slokas across chapters, Bhasya, Gita Home Study Course, and Pujya Swamiji's teachings in the three year course. Significant grammar points and vighraha vakyas were highlighted to understand the meaning of words contextually. Popular misunderstandings in a few places were highlighted on a cautious note. After the camp, one cannot but keep the vision of Gita in terms of the importance of Karma Yoga in integrating the teaching with daily life.

On 9th morning the Gita saptah as such was over. Students offered their reverence to Swamiji by way of showering flower at his lotus feet and received the prasada. Few campers -- Ravi Malhotra, SudhaRavi, Mark Hertel ,Lalitha Ramachandran, Lakshmi(Russia) and Swamini BrahmaPranada Sarasvati spoke about the camp experience.



That afternoon Gita parayanam was done under Swamiji's guidance and culminated with an Arti. The following day -10th November there was an abishekam and Puja to Pujya Swamiji's Adishtanam by Swami Sakshatkrtananda. All the participants expressed a desire to have the next camp dates announced.



-Report by A.S.Venkataraman, Chennai,Camp Participant.