

Bhashyam Vedanta Retreat 2012 Report

You are limitless. The limitless is Iswara. The projection of samsara on atma creates the wrong perception of being limited. The self knowledge is the means to remove this perception.



The Bhashyam Vedanta Retreat was conducted from July 15 to July 21 at Arsh Vidya Gurukulam in Saylorsburg P A .

Approximately sixty adults and four children attended the camp. Swami Viditatmananda Sarawati taught Brahadaranyaka Upanisad Passage 1-4-7 with Sankarabhasya. Swamiji held satsang sessions in the evenings. Savithri Maniji arranged a children program. Yoga classes were conducted by Mark Hertal.

The registration was complete on the 15th of July and Suddatmaji held an orientation in the evening. He explained the course schedule and the facilities available at the Gurukulam.

Swamiji taught this Bhashya mantra by mantra explaining the meaning and implications. The Bhashya is in the form of discourse and objections. It is essentially a discussion in which Sankara refutes the objections and the teachings of duality. Swamiji explained the concepts of the undifferentiated and the differentiated self. There were significant objections to the proposition that the supreme self entered into the universe. The argument was that a thing cannot enter itself. Sankara establishes advaita (non-duality) giving

various illustrations and supporting arguments. The whole presentation is a scholarly discussion on the Self and how it pervades the Universe. There was an elaborate discussion on prana and it's characteristic.

This is a brilliant work of Sankara and it is enjoyable when an accomplished teacher like Swamiji explains step by step the knowledge imparted by Sankara. The students attending this class have been taking courses at the Gurukulam for many years. At the end of the class, the students were pleased at the way Swamiji conducted the class and answered the questions. Many students expressed a wish that in future more courses based on this Upanisad will be taught at the Gurukulam.

Savithriji had very little time and a few students to put together a children's cultural program. She presented a small program.

The kitchen staff provided good food and served it on time. The priests Sri Ravichandran and Sri Ganesa performed the Pujas regularly.

Suddhatmaji and the Gurukulam staff, the teachers and the volunteers worked hard to make the camp a success.

The camp ended on July 21, 2012.