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**Arsha Vidya
Newsletter**

***In fearless voice we
proclaim***

***The Rishi's message
from all our house
tops***

***And bring the men of
different claim***

***To a fold of love
where oneness lasts***

Ātmānaṁ ced vijānīyāt

PujyaSwamiji's transcribed talk

This is the fourth issue of the serial article, continued from previous issue.

In Sanskrit we have three words qualifying knowledge: pratyakṣa, direct knowledge; parokṣa, indirect knowledge and aparokṣa, neither direct nor indirect knowledge, that is, immediate knowledge. Having talked about pratyakṣa and parokṣa, now aparokṣa topic is started....

We have another type of knowledge that is peculiar, which is neither direct nor indirect. When I say that knowledge is not direct, it becomes, naturally, indirect. Suppose, I say it is also not indirect; in the negation of indirect knowledge, I negate both. So, it is neither *pratyakṣa* nor *parokṣa*. It becomes *aparokṣa-jñāna*, immediate knowledge, knowledge that does not require either direct or indirect means of knowledge.

Now, let us take *ātman*, 'I' the self. Is 'I' *pratyakṣa* to you? Is it an object seen by your eyes or heard by your ears? No. It is not an object because 'I' is the self, who uses the eyes and the ears. Naturally the self cannot be an object of the senses. Therefore, it is not *indriya-pratyakṣa*.

Someone says, "You must look within yourself and know the *ātman*." Who is to know the 'I' *ātman*? If I have to know the *ātman* other than the one who is present now here, then that becomes *anātman*. *Ātman* cannot be *sākṣi-pratyakṣa* because *ātman* is *sākṣī*. Therefore, *ātman* is neither *indriya-pratyakṣa* nor *sākṣi-pratyakṣa*.

If *ātman* is not *pratyakṣa*, does it become *parokṣa*? If it does, it means you are inferring the *ātman*. You may say, "I infer that I am." "Why?" "Because I am married. The logic is that no woman will marry a nonexistent being. Because I remain married, I must be existent." No one infers his or her existence like this. 'I am' is not born of inference; it is 'me' who makes use of the means of knowledge called inference in order to arrive at knowledge.

Inference is a kind of thinking process, with the help of which you are able

to understand certain connections between two different things. When you are walking on the road and hear the sound of a particular horn, you move to the left because you know a scooter is coming behind. You can infer the type of vehicle by the difference in the sounds. When a truck comes, it makes another sound. You do not turn back to see what is coming in order to move aside. You know that by the time you turn back you will be knocked down. So, you have the knowledge of the connection between various sounds and the vehicles that make the sounds. The knowledge of the connection between two things is the basis for inference. This is *vyāpti-jñāna*, invariable concomitance. The invariable concomitance means that if one thing is there, the other thing must invariably be there. If you see the smoke, there must invariably be fire. Fire must be there or must have been there. The fire might have gone, but still there can be smoke. Therefore, we use the phrase 'must have been there'. Fog is not smoke. It looks like smoke but it is not smoke. Fog does not come from fire, whereas smoke always comes from fire. The source of smoke is fire. When one is there the other must be there. Only then is an invariable concomitance established, which could be used to infer fire when there is smoke. We extensively use *vyāpti-jñāna* in our day-to-day life to make a lot of inferences.

Ātman, the *sākṣin* is the one who makes use of inference based on sensory data. The *sākṣin* exists even before perception and inference. Before perception I am there. Before making an inference I am there. Therefore, the knowledge 'I am' is born of neither *pratyakṣa* nor *parokṣa*. It is also not born of *śabda*, words. You do not say 'I exist' because somebody told you so. Suppose, somebody else comes and says, "You do not exist" you do not become non-existent. So, *ātman*, 'I' is not *parokṣa* either by inference or by words.

The self-evident, 'I' is *nitya-aparokṣa*, always evident. Being self-evident, *ātman* never becomes out of mind. Out of mind is out of sight, but *ātman* never becomes out of mind because it is always there. The mind may be

awake or it can go to sleep or it can dream. The mind can come and go, and it has various forms of thinking. You know all the conditions of your mind. In all the various forms of thinking, in all the three states of experience, *ātman*, 'I,' always is.

With reference to the various conditions of your mind you can say, "I am a waker, I am a dreamer, I was a sleeper." You say in the morning at least, "I slept well," which reveals that 'I am' is there in sleep also. The distinguishing feature of sleep is that the mind is not there. Neither there is the experience of this body, nor the experience of this world. But you cannot say, "I was not there in sleep." If you do, how do you know you were not there? There must be a witness to point out 'I was not there'. Unless you were there, you cannot say, "I was not there." When you say, "I was not there", all that you mean is your mind was not there. Therefore, I am there very much in sleep since I am able to narrate the experience later in the waking state.

In dream, the mind was there, but this body was not there, this room was not there, this time and place were not there, all the people here were not there. It was a different time, space and situation in dream, which is why it is called dream; otherwise that also would become a waking state. You are dead to your physical body and physical environment in the dream. You create a world of your own. The mind was there without your having any say over it. This is the dream state. But *ātman* was there in dream, which is why you are able to narrate your dream experiences also. Similarly, in the waking state, characterized by the presence of the physical body and the physical environment, *ātman* is very much there.

Therefore, *ātman*, 'I' never becomes *parokṣa*. Nor is it an object of *pratyakṣa*. Yet it is evident, and therefore, it is *aparokṣa*. What is self-evident alone is *aparokṣa*. There is only one thing like the self; everything else is not self and becomes evident to the self. *Ātman* alone is *nitya-aparokṣa*. Everything else is either *pratyakṣa* or *parokṣa*.

Now, suppose somebody comes and tells you, “You must dive deep within yourself and discover the *ātman*.” Deep within what? Who is to dive? I am the one who goes about diving. We are talking about this ‘I am’. This *nitya-aparokṣa-ātman* is referred to in this *mantra* as ‘*ayam pūruṣaḥ*, this person’ who is immediately known, who is ever evident.

This person takes himself to be varieties of things. ‘I am’ itself does not have any problem. If you stop there, there is no problem. But then, adding a lot of things after ‘I am’ is the problem. Suppose a person gives his name, ‘I am Subramanya’. That name is a loaded name. Subramanya is also the name of the Lord. But this local Subramanya, also known as Subbu, is heavily loaded with sorrows, tragedies and also facts redounding to his credit. He says, “I am the father of five daughters, Swamiji. Three daughters are yet to be married.” You can feel the load from the very tone in which he talks. This Subbu is loaded with all his biography, his *gotra*, lineage, his family problems, including the biography of his grandfather and great grandfather. The connections are loaded. Everything is okay up to ‘I am’. The ‘so and so’ stands for a number of things, said and unsaid. There are a lot of things one cannot say aloud. Therefore, it is a loaded ‘so and so’.

Naturally, one is necessarily led to take oneself to be a *saṃsārin*. In other words, ‘I am a *kartr*, a doer; I am a *bhoktr*, experiencer, of the results of my action now and also later; I am a *martya*, a mortal’—these are all the conclusions one has about oneself as a *saṃsārin*. The person also believes in the *śāstra*, and therefore he further thinks, “I am someone who is distinct from the body, who will survive the body and go to other worlds later and enjoy the results of action. I hope I will go to heaven. At least for some time I hope I will remain there.” Another person who does not believe in the *śāstra* says, “I am only this much. I am all the cells and particles only. All the cells just put together on this bonal frame, I am.” This is the conclusion.

If this conclusion is true, then there is nothing to know. However, we cannot accept that this conclusion is true; there are valid reasons for it. That is

the reason why when there is an announcement ‘Swami Dayananda is talking about the self’ I find at least a hundred people sitting even in Stockholm. They do not know anything about me, they have not seen me or heard me before, yet I find the people sitting there listening to me talk about the self!

I do not know you. How can I talk about you? I am not telling you ¹*nādi-jyotiṣa* or anything. I am addressing an audience. In fact, you are the one who has to talk about yourself to me. When you come to listen about yourself, it means you have a doubt. The doubt is ‘I do not think I know myself; that *ātman* is not known to me.’ Everybody has this problem. Everybody has an insight about the self that it is different from what one takes oneself to be. It is not wishful thinking. You may want the self to be different because you cannot accept the one that is there. So, you may wish that the self be different from what you take yourself to be now. No. It is not wishful thinking. It is real thinking born of an insight.

There is an insight about yourself, the self that is more than you think yourself to be. You have some moments in your life when you find you are totally different, you are totally acceptable to yourself. Those moments of joy, moments of happiness, give rise to an insight, ‘I can be more than what I am.’ You want to be that one always. When you hear that someone is going to talk about the self, you always feel like listening. Therefore, there is a case for the existence of self-ignorance.

...to be continued

¹ *Nādi-jyotiṣa* is a form of astrology where a person, through one’s thumb impression, gets complete details of his or her life; believed to be from ancient palm-leaf manuscripts.

Camp at AVG by Swami Viditatmananda Saraswati
From December 14 to 18, 2019

Value of Values Part 02 *(Continued from March 2020)*

Moksha is the privilege only of the human beings. Freedom is the result of right choices. When choice is there, you can also make wrong choice and make your life miserable. Liberation is the privilege that only human being enjoys as the most evolved being. Other creatures will remain as they are. Humans born as human being and dies as dog or god; choices are there, that's why this teaching. Values are like the guidelines to make the right choices. So, you can start creating happiness for yourself. By following values as I am not obliging anybody, I am just helping myself by following the order. All conflicts are created by values which are part of universal order. Conflicts are because of values. Conflict means stress, one part of me rejecting the other part. If we do not do something about self-dissatisfaction, self-rejection and self-condemnation, these conflicts can build up leading to big depression and all other mental problems.

Why do I reject myself when I do not like myself? Why do I not like myself because I have expectations of myself all the time. Not only I have expectations from others, I also have same expectations of myself on how I should treat others. I am happy with myself whenever I conduct myself in a kind and compassionate manner. That's why as Pujya Swamiji said: "Transform yourself from being a consumer to a contributor". When I fail, I disapprove of myself; I am the worst critic of myself; a constant judgment is going on what I did is right or wrong. I judge myself based on the values; expectations and values become the basis of judgment. When I fail those expectations, I am strict with myself. When I hurt, cheat or tell a lie, I violate values. Whenever I violate values, I disapprove of myself. That's what creates conflict. It is created because I have strict expectations of myself. I am stricter to myself than anyone else. That's why always seeking approval is a biggest problem for everyone.

We seek approval from significant people in our life. Self-judging and self-evaluation is continuously going on; that is where I have to pay attention.

Why do I want myself to be truthful and kind? That is where I am in harmony with myself; I am happy with myself. When I find myself telling lie, I am at conflict with the self. It doesn't come from outside; it comes from myself. I am a self-conscious being; a judgmental being always makes judgments. Buddhi, the judging mode of the mind, judges whatever it comes in contact with. The nature of our intellect is to judge. In every interaction, I first judge and then I decide my interaction. First, I am judging myself before I judge others. All of these are given to us, so that we become liberated, but the same thing binds us in order to remain acceptable to myself by conducting myself in a manner where I approve of myself. It is as simple as that. How do I avoid self-deception by knowing values? Bhagavad Gita says that grief and delusion are the fundamental human problem. Nothing will solve the problem of grief and stress unless we understand this. More we understand all these mechanism within us, more appreciation we will have. That's why we need to understand the value of values.

These values basically come from our own self, as they represent universal harmony and universal order. They are all based on our nature. When we follow these values, we act in harmony with our own self and there is harmony within self. When we violate these values, we are going against our self, creating disharmony within ourselves. Love of the self is natural; that's why we love these values. We are born with love for these values. When I am able to follow them, I feel good about myself, and we also want others to follow them. If this is so important, then why do we see so much violation of values? Why do I violate them? By telling lies, cheating, pretending and hurting, we act against our own nature, even though we love our nature and these values, and also love other when they follow values. Still why do we find ourselves going against these values?

There are two sets of values in our life: Natural values and Universal values. We are born with these values and we are aware of them. Given the choice, I always want to follow these values. Everybody wants to behave in a honest, loving and kind manner. Nobody deliberately violates these values willfully. The person is compelled to violate the value. In third chapter, Arjuna asks this question. Why do people commit sins? Impelled by what, does a person violate the values? Why does a person conduct himself in such a manner? What impels him to violate, to hurt; impelled by what?

kena prayuktaḥ. Arjuna meant to say that compels the person, impels the person to undertake a behavior which is unbecoming, *anicchinnaṇi vārṣṇeya* – even though it is not desired. A person does not want to tell a lie, hurt, or be cruel but like an owner compels the servant whether he likes it or not. *Balāt niyojitaḥ*. As a master can compel a servant to do things against his own will, similarly, what is it that compels me to act against my nature? This shows a great insight that a person violate values by compulsion. There is a famous statement, attributed to Duryodhana –

जानामि धर्मं न च मे प्रवृत्तिः जानामि अधर्मं न च मे निवृत्तिः

jānāmi dharmam na ca me pravṛttiḥ jānāmi adharmaṁ na ca me nivṛttiḥ.

I know what is righteous but cannot adapt. I know what is unrighteous but am not able to avoid it. He finds himself helpless and cannot refrain from doing what is wrong. Is he free or is he bound? On the one hand, he is free to do whatever he wants to do. Even though outwardly he displays this kind of attitude, does that really reflect his freedom? Does he really want to do that, or he is compelled to do that. That is a very important question.

Freedom is that I am able to act according to my free will; that is what the freedom is. Among all the beings, it is only human being endowed with free will and act; no one else can do this. If humans are not there, everything will be in perfect harmony. Only humans can violate and hurt other beings because we are given free will. It gives me freedom to abuse the order of nature. Traffic law says, “wear helmet”; it’s my life and I don’t want to wear it. There is this compulsion within ourselves, that comes from the second set of values.

Certain things are very valuable to me as per the society that I am born and raised in. Material values, wealth, power, fame etc. are valued by everybody. It is unfortunate that these are valued everywhere. We give values to these material achievements because of the lack of understanding of fundamentals of life, of ourselves. It is because of the wrong perception of ourselves and of the world. True perception of myself is that I am a happy being. We keep doing one activity after the other because the mind is not at ease with itself. My conclusion is that I am not all right as I am; so if I become wealthy, I am all right; if I get power, I can be happy; If I become famous, I can be happy. This is what we find the whole world valuing. As said in Tattvabodha – *ihāmutrārthaphalabhogavirāgaḥ* - dispassion for the ob-

jects of enjoyment in this world and the other.

I need to be wealthy, famous and powerful because that is what world respects. Even in temple also, I have to be in a long line, and some politician - wealthy person gets priorities. So wealth, power and fame are esteemed. I want to be successful also. So, my idea of success is shaped by the world; it has always been like this. Materialism is seeing success in this material accomplishment. It comes from total lack of understanding about myself not realizing that success is my nature. By becoming wealthy or famous or powerful, what am I seeking? Nobody seeks wealth for the sake of wealth; everybody seeks it for *ātmasukham*. Everyone wants to be a pleased self. What I always love is a pleased self. That is called real success; a pleased self is a success. Whatever I want is always for pleased self. Wealth, fame and power make me pleased, so they become important for me. As I am raised in the society, I automatically acquire these values, not knowing that pleased self is my nature and not dependent on all the acquisitions. How the whole world praises wealthy and successful people, and I want to be successful, to be praised and those things become important for me.

Values like truth, non-violence etc., about which we are aware and we naturally love, but do not know why we love them, that clarity is not there. I do not associate kindness and truthfulness with success. I associate wealth etc. with success. There arises a situation where we have to make a choice between honesty and money, and there comes the conflict. By telling the truth, I may lose this much money; I will be exposed; my fame, wealth, position is at stake; my job is at stake. Thus, very often life puts us in a difficult situation where whether be honest and following value or be in conflict with the core values. We find that we cannot practice both of them, either be honest or be wealthy. Whenever we find headlines in newspaper on people's honesty, there are headlines on people's material gains, etc. The Value of the wealth is the assimilated value. I don't know what I seek to gain by being truthful. We have concluded that if you are more honest, then you will be left behind. Smarter you are, you go ahead in life. These universal values, natural values are not recognized values as the wealth etc. are recognized; assimilated values over unassimilated values in the words of Pujya Swamiji. One is compelled to be dishonest. If the situation arises that I tend to lose something dear to me; I compromise on values. That's why the conflict is;

otherwise, I am always honest. No one tells lie for the sake of telling a lie. The Kauravas were more powerful and successful. The Pandavas were falling behind in term of those visible strengths. The point that we want to make is that whenever a person violates value, it is not out of not understanding; it is out of compulsion. When that compulsion is not there, the person is a saint. When those conflicts come, these values are compromised. I am saying this so we understand that towards corrupt and dishonest people, we should be more sympathetic. They are helpless; they appear powerful outwardly, but as far as their inner condition is concerned, they are affected by insecurity, jealous, fear and other such negative tendencies against their own nature which they are going to regret.

As Lord Krishna says - *kāma eṣaḥ krodha eṣaḥ*, it is craving that turn into anger that compels a person. People are helpless; outwardly they look very powerful, but inwardly very weak. We should understand their helplessness and be more sympathetic to them. Even though human being loves to be kind and non-violent, he still acts in contradiction to what he likes himself to be.

There are two conflicting values in our life. Today a young man thinks that you can go ahead only if you violate values; that is not true, except it might require more hard work and creativity to achieve what others are achieving easily. These conflicting values are there and that's why conflict; otherwise, the whole world would have been heaven. We love the saints; we don't love evil people. How these values are valuable that we need to understand. I may not value outer success for what they are; I value them for pleased self. If this is clear, easier it becomes for us to hold on to our values. Less clear this is, more we become controlled by these passions. If these things are not resolved in our mind and not assimilated unfortunately, we become prey to these compulsions.

When a Swami passes through customs trying to save custom duties, one part of his mind tells him to just tell a lie, nothing to declare; then other side tells him to tell the truth. If you allow the mind, it will compel you to make wrong choices. You must realize why we violate the values. Those universal values are the means for the pleased self. What will please me is our own perception of ourselves to consider worthy based on these achievements. No joy when I get promotion or raise. I got two raise, my colleague got four

raise; that makes me unhappy. It is my perception of myself that makes me unhappy.

The text begins now.

अमानित्वमदम्भित्वमहिंसा क्षान्तिरार्जवम् ।

आचार्योपासनं शौचं स्थैर्यमात्मविनिग्रहः ॥ १३-८ ॥

amānitvam adambhitvam ahiṁsā kṣāntirārjavam

ācāryopāśanam śaucaṁ sthairyam ātmavinigrahaḥ 13-8

Value: 1 – *amānitvam*

amānitvam is translated as humility, absence of *mānitva*. The state of being a *māni* is called *amānitvam*. What is *māni*? One who possess *māna* – pride is called a *māni*, *ātmanah ślāghanam* - exaggerated view about myself, exaggerated view about my glory, my greatness. *Amānitvam* can be translated as absence of pride, humility. Lord Krishna begins with this value. Every human being has this pride. Humans are proud person, self-conceited beings. Person is proud because he has some qualification - I am learned, I am handsome, I have name, fame, power, accomplishment in life. They are overvalued by me, exaggerated in my own estimate. We value ourselves based on what we possess. I think I am great because of my wealth power, knowledge etc. There is a need on my part to be great. In my own perception, I feel good about myself. The basic need is to feel good about myself.

When do I feel good? When I am great in my own perception, I feel good. Society says a wealthy person, learned person, famous person is a great person; therefore I think I am great when I am all that. This is what I have picked up from the world around me, the idea of greatness. I want to be great is a genuine desire. We should not condemn the need to be great. But what makes me great? That's where the problem comes. Wealth, name, fame, power etc. gain importance or value in my life. But then it does not stop there; a proud problem has an inherent problem within oneself. I want to be great but I don't think I am great. I feel great when you say I am great. We have some significant people in our life and we keep seeking their approval. As I don't approve myself, there is a need to get approval from others. So I need to present in a manner to get approval, respect and validation from others that I am great. I want them to declare that I am great, respectable, learned etc. How do I know it? When they respect, then I know

that I am respectable. I basically have difficulty in accepting myself as I am, so I have these strong needs to earn respect from others, and then I feel good about myself.

Basic need is to feel good about myself. I think I'm something, but you tell me that I am something. I respect myself only when other people tell me that I am respectable. How do I know that you respect me? That is my inference, you smile at me or you laugh at me? What should be the extent of smile - what should be your gesture - mind is always calculating. All the time my feeling good about myself is based on what you see. Some people might not be generous in their expressions. People are not very generous in acknowledging. They may respect me but I have my own notion of what is being respected, and if I feel that I am not respected as per my requirements, that affects me. My feeling good about myself simply depends upon others. The need of being respected by others is the problem; *kāma eṣaḥ krodha eṣaḥ*. *Mānitvam* is a strong need for being respected. People don't always have time for you and your needs. They also need respect from you. I must keep you happy in order to that you keep me happy. *Mānitvam* is seeking respect, a deep need for being respected in the manner in which I think you should respect me.

That craving, that need, the need of being respected must be strongest, so Lord Krishna puts it first. More intellectual you are, the more egoist you are. More inflated the ego I have, stronger is my need of acknowledgement from others. Need for *Kāma* is, when the acknowledgement come from the pleased self I seek from others. Mind is a constant battle field; who did what to me, that's all I think about. My mind is going on what they did to me and what I am going to do to them when I get opportunity. When we have mind like that, that mind is not conducive for knowing Brahman; it is an expression of strong bondage, ignorance. *Mānitvam* is a strong expression of ignorance. For the egoistic people, it is a strong need. That's why Lord Krishna starts with it.

We will continue how these values are to be followed.

Being conscious of our mind, what kinds of thoughts are arising in our mind recognizing the thought of *mānitvam*. Recognize that thought. This is sure of unhappiness, bondage, misery. Value for becoming free from that

state of mind.

Having recognized how it makes me miserable, value for getting freedom from pride or *mānitvam*. How to become free?

Pratipakṣabhāvanā - *Bhāvanā* means attitude, a deliberately taking opposite positions. I deliberately take opposite position to neutralize *mānitvam*. I must see the mechanism of certain *mānitvam* thoughts, reverse and neutralize them. That's how the mind becomes free from *mānitvam*.

- Transcribed by Sri Manoj Kitta , Edited by Sharanji

To be continued.....



Satsaṅga¹ with Pūjya Swami Dayananda Saraswati

Part I

Question: The inner leisure you speak of in the morning meditations is amazing. The connection with *īśvara* is very real and the inner leisure is there for some time, because of the total acceptance that you taught us in meditation. But the problem is to sustain that inner leisure during the course of the day when things that happen which are not very palatable, and when you interact with people with whom you cannot see eye to eye. How to maintain the leisure in different relationships and work environment?

Pujya Swamiji: When you do *pūjā* and meditation, you have the connectedness with *īśvara*, and enjoy the inner leisure. That is a blessing. When you say that someone does not see eye to eye with you, you have to learn to accept that in his/her eyes, you are the one who does not see eye to eye. It is not one-sided. Therefore, we have to accept that 'I don't see eye to eye.' The other person has also the right to not to see eye to eye with you. Everybody has got a right to have his/her own perception. We cannot own others perceptions. You allow them to have their own perceptions. The acceptance that others perceptions can differ from yours gives you a degree of leisure. We have to interact with people. Life is like that. In fact, we are born as an individual relating to the total. We have many circles of relationships. Even unknown people are related to you, their actions can bother you, their actions can disturb you. You read in the newspaper that 'somebody did this or that.' That somebody is not known to you, yet it affects you. We are born with the *vyāṣṭi* (individual), and *samaṣṭi* (total) difference. The total exists in different levels. Therefore, you can get affected by the total because the total is more powerful than the individual, the individual 'you'. It can affect you. You have to learn to keep outside the people, and things that affect you so that your leisure is not affected. Thank God, they are already outside

¹ Excerpted from the satsaṅga with Pūjya Swami Dayananda Saraswati held in Oct 2014 at the Dayananda Ashram, Rishikesh for a group of CEOs. This is Part I of the Satsaṅga. The audio recordings were transcribed by Ramanujam Raman, Harish Biladi, Shridhar Rajarao, Sudhakar Apadharana, and Surekha Bhatt, and edited by V. Swaminathan, respectively.

Question: Isn't drawing boundaries especially difficult?

Pujya Swamiji: You have to draw boundaries for yourself as well as for others. The boundary, the *Ṭakṣmaṇarēkhā*, which permits only that far and no further. You draw boundaries so that others don't tread upon you, and likewise you don't tread upon others. Drawing boundaries helps you retain your inner leisure which is your connectedness with *Ṭśvara* .

Question: You spoke about a certain happiness that comes from being associated with *Ṭśvara* . In this journey towards the knowledge of the self, one begins to have lesser and lesser value for the external material objects, like a car or whatever, which were looked upon as objects of happiness previously. Could you please expand on this dimension of happiness when one is on the journey towards knowledge of the self?

Pujya Swamiji: In the beginning, there will be certain distaste, withdrawal from certain objects, and certain values that you had before. But they all will come back when you discover a certain leisure. You can look upon your wealth as a means to help others. You can do those things through which many people are benefitted. This is *seva*, helping others. Therefore, this decrease in interest in usual pursuits is only temporary. You can direct them for *seva*. I am a *sadhu*, but I have All India Movement for Seva which has built more than 100 plus *chatralayas* all over the country benefitting thousands of people. I ask all the *sadhus* to do *seva*. You don't lose anything but others gain. In *seva*, there is a joy. If you have the riches with you, you are just rich. When you do *seva*, you become richer because your heart has expanded to accommodate more people.

Question: What is the difference between attachment, and love, especially in the context of one's children and family? Sometimes attachment becomes over-bearing.

Pujya Swamiji: Love is free from boundaries. You love your children; you love others children. Love knows no boundaries whereas attachment is confined. The *Gītā* says, "*asaktiranabhiṣvaṅgaḥputradāragrḥādiṣu*² "*abhiṣvaṅgaḥ* is *atisnehaḥ*; *sneha* is affection and *atisneha* is attachment.

² *asaktiranabhiṣvaṅgaḥputradāragrḥādiṣu* |

nityam ca samacittatvam iṣṭāniṣṭopapattiṣu || Bhagavad *Gītā*, 13.9

Absence of sense of ownership, absence of obsession towards son, wife, house and the like, and constant evenness of mind regarding the gain of the desired and not desired. (from *Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā*, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Arsha Vidya Research Publication Trust, Chennai, India, 5th reprint, 2015.)

One must have *anabhiṣvaṅgaḥ*, *naatisnehaḥ* with reference to children, wife, home, vehicle, job, wealth etc. You must have affection. You must differentiate attachment from affection. Attachment is doting on somebody. It is not good for the children also. Children grow well if we give them space to grow up. The space is not only outer space but the inner space. Pray for them, teach them, and allow them to grow. They will grow very well. Affection, *sneha*, is required. It is mandatory. You have to show your affection overtly. Indian parents don't have the habit of showing overtly their affection for their children. This was so because of the joint family. One will not show overt affection on one's own children because the brother's children will also be there. They will exhibit affection for the brother's children but not to their own. Now also this habit continues even though the joint family is no longer there. Overt affection is necessary. Overt means external. It is very important. The children need that. I am appealing to parents to show overt affection towards children. One should also be overtly affectionate with one's spouse.

Question: How do I explain the presence of God to children? Our son is 21 years old. We brought him up with good values, and he is a very good person. He is not an atheist but he questions the presence of God. He wants a scientific explanation for everything. So, how do we handle this?

Pujya Swamiji: All that is here is God. Where is the question of the presence of God? We don't need to give an address for *Bhagavān*. All that is here is God. Then he has no question. His question is how? You ask him how he acquired his body. Where is the knowledge? Without prior knowledge you cannot create even *kitchidi* which is the easiest thing to make. Even I can do it. Nevertheless, making *kitchidi* requires knowledge. This body cannot be created without knowledge. By whom is it created? Who has the knowledge to create not just one body but the whole *jagat*. You need to explain this to him. Bring him to the retreats in Arsha Vidya Gurukulam to get exposure to the teaching.

Question: It is said in the corporate world that to succeed one must have a killer instinct. This creates a lot of disturbance for oneself and others. Would Swamiji comment on this?

Pujya Swamiji: I once read a leaflet which said, 'An executive is paid to

execute.’ He can’t give excuses. He has to deliver constantly. But this is not possible. Even the best batsman in cricket can get out. He can have a killer instinct alright but then he can lose the middle stump. We cannot be blind to the law of probability. Even a rock thrown up will come down at the acceleration of 32 ft/sec/sec. We don’t have the last word in everything. This is the reality. Therefore, it is better to have a humble attitude. The ensuing inner leisure will allow one to do the job better, and to make proper decisions. “I don’t think that there is anything that I cannot do,” is the meaning of killer instinct. I would rather prefer to have the attitude of “Why not? I will succeed!” I open my mouth and talk. This is success. I walk, and reach the other side of the road, it is success. I eat, and then again, I am hungry, another success. My whole life is a story of success after success, after success, after success. The killer instinct which is a heart-breaking pressure for the executives can be abandoned. Instead, “Why not? I will succeed!” is a better attitude to have.

Question: Having the killer instinct may also lead to achieving the goals by the wrong means. Could you shed light on the means to achieve the desired goals?

Pujya Swamiji: Quite often one faces the conflict of *dharma* and *adharma* while endeavoring to achieve one’s goals. In life, one has to achieve the goal of *dharma* also. Nowhere in the world *dharma* is considered as an end to be accomplished. In the Vedic culture, human ends, *puruṣārtha*, are four-fold – *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *mōkṣa*. *Dharma* is to be accomplished first. *Artha* is the pursuit of wealth, power, name, and security. *Kāma* is various avenues of pleasure. *Dharma* does not sub-serve *artha* and *kāma*. Since *dharma* can be in conflict with the pursuit of *artha* and *kāma*, it is considered as an end to be accomplished by a human being. *Dharma* is *kula-dharma*, *ācārya-dharma*, *śiṣya-dharma*, *bhakta’s dharma*, husband’s *dharma*, wife’s *dharma*, son’s *dharma*, doctor’s *dharma* – there is *dharma* for every role. Therefore, no achievement is worth it at the cost of *dharma*. This is indeed a big recognition.

Question: The reality is that the competition may not be playing by *dharma*. How do you resolve this dichotomy?

Pujya Swamiji: It is true that according to the *dēśa-kāla*, place and time, the norms of *dharma* get challenged. In the Mahābhārata war the two sides did

not go by *dharma* all the times. There were compromises made. However, *adharma* is still *adharma* and one has to do *prāyaścitta*, atonement. This can be in the form of a *pūrta*³ karma, that is, doing something for the benefit of the community.

Question: How does chanting the *Viṣṇusahasranāmam* or the *ŚrīRudram* help one?

Pujya Swamiji: The chanting helps but then if you know the meaning, it will help better. We have books on these two⁴. Please read the books. Read the books, twice, thrice, four times so that you remember the meanings.

Question: When we want to achieve something some of us raise the bar by ourselves. Sometimes this raising the bar disturbs our inner peace. We are constantly pushing ourselves with the thought, “I got to get there.” How do we know when to stop raising the bar, and how to stop it?

Pujya Swamiji: When you walk on a dark road, you have a torch in your hand. This torch will light up only about 10 feet. So you go 10 feet. You have to walk 10 miles but now you walk only 10 feet because only that much light you have. Similarly, your goal is to be reduced to many pieces. What is that you have to achieve in a given day, that alone you work towards accomplishing that day. This way, you can achieve a lot of good things. Even planning for the future is today’s planning. Tomorrow you can either conform with it or change it. Really, by living one day at a time, you will retain the inner leisure.

³ *pūrta-karma* is defined as

वापि कूप तटाकादि देवता आयतनानि च । अन्नप्रदानं आरामश्च पूर्तमित्यभिधीयते ॥

Vāpi kūpa taṭākādi dēvatā āyatanāni ca । annapradānam āramaśca pūrtamityabhidhīyatē ॥

Elsewhere, Pūjya Swamiji has explained *pūrta-karma* as, “In those days they used to say that one should build a *vāpi*, a reservoir of water, a way of harvesting water; *kūpa*, a public well; *taṭākādi*, a pond for the cattle in the villages; *ādi*, etc., which can include a school, clinic and so on; *devatāāyatanāni*, a temple, an abode for the *devatās*. Then, *anna pradānam*, providing food or providing certain opportunities for people to earn their livelihoods; *ārāmaśca*, places of rest, and so on. All these, *pūrtamityabhidhīyatē*, are called *pūrta-karma*, *karma* that produces *puṇya* because your free will is employed here.” (Prayer and Prayerful Life, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, in 2004 Anniversary Address.)

⁴ *Viṣṇusahasranāma*, with translation and commentary, by Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Sruti Seva Trust, Coimbatore, India, 2005. *Śrī Rudram*, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Arsha Vidya Research and Publication Trust, Chennai, India, 2010.

Question: Can you please expand further how to understand that all that is here is *Īśvara*?

Pujya Swamiji: I said that everything is given. The world is given; sun is given; the laws are given; my body also is given through parents. The parents don't have the knowledge of how the body is made, how the eyes are made, how the ears are made etc. They do not have the knowledge. But then, without knowledge there cannot be an intelligently put together creation, such as the human body. In fact, everything in the universe is intelligently put together. It is an intelligent creation. Therefore, knowledge must be somewhere. There is no other individual who can have *all* knowledge to create the universe. I say *all* knowledge. All ears hear; all eyes see; all human minds emote, think, know, get confused, and get clarity. It is all given. The giver is called *Īśvara*, and the given is not separate from the giver. In this country you cannot ask the question, 'where is *Bhagavān*?' Even the person in a village who has never gone to school, never studied the *śāstra* or the Vedas, will laugh at you for asking the question. He will smile and remark, "are you asking for the address of *Bhagavān*?" All that is here is *Bhagavān*. That means, the giver and the given are both one and the same. If you take the total, the physical order is *Bhagavān*. That I move, I get up, I sit – are all because of the physical order. The biological order is *Bhagavān*. The physiological order is *Bhagavān*. The *psychological* order is *Bhagavān*. The order because of which I know or get confused, is also *Bhagavān*. The various orders govern me. If I look at myself from the view of the total macroscopic orders, I am very much with *Bhagavān*. I can also then appreciate the fact that all that is here is *Īśvara*⁵.

... to be continued

⁵ For further elucidation on the subject of *Īśvara*, the reader is referred to, "Bringing *Īśvara* into your life," in Talks & Essays - Vol 2, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Arsha Vidya Research Publication Trust, Chennai, India, 2019.

(009) FALOODA LEVEL GOES DOWN!

Here is a person, an absolute miser. He has a lot of money but would not go to a restaurant because he does not want to spend the money. Some people talked to him about a milk-shake called Falooda. He wanted to have this drink, but his wife did not know how to make it. He mustered enough courage and went to a restaurant and ordered this milk-shake. The drink was brought with a straw. He began to sip. As he began sipping, the level of the milk-shake in the glass started receding. He was alarmed. He said to himself, "I have paid so much money. Alas! The level is going down." Therefore he could not drink the milk-shake nor could he just watch it! What a plight!!

Every *sukha* is like this milk-shake. As you experience it, the object is exhausted, the sense organs are tired and the mood changes. *Sukha* is possible only when all the three are in proper alignment. The object should be there in desirable quality and quantity, the senses should be fit and the mood should be proper. It is not humanly possible to keep all these three in alignment for a good length of time. It is like putting a carpet on the back of three horses and riding them at the same time.

Report on the National level meet of Saints and representatives of Institutions on Sri Shankara Jayanthi Celebrations

In response to the invitation by **Vedanta Bharathi**, of which Sri Sringeri Jagadguru Shankaracharyaji Maharaj is the Chief Patron and Sri Shankara Bharathi Swamiji of Yadathore Sri Yoganandeswara Math is the Patron, nearly 180 Saints and representatives of Institutions attended the above meeting held at Sringeri on 25th and 26th January, 2020 .



The meeting was organized with the divine blessings of Sri Sringeri Jagadguru Shankaracharyaji Maharaj and was inaugurated by Sri Sringeri Jagadguru Vidhushekhara Bharathi Sannidhanam. Notable saints and Institutions took part in it. Arsha Vidya Sanyasis and Sanyasins from various part of India also participated.

Following were the main topics discussed in the sessions .

1. The importance of the teachings of Sri Shankara in conveying the message of Ekatmata – national integration.
2. The ways and measures being practiced by different organizations

in propagating the teachings of the Upanishads and Vedas as propounded by Sri Shankara.

3. Following the example and teachings of Sri Shankara, how San-yasis can set example for .
4. Experience of the organizers in arranging the mammoth Soundaryalahari Samarpan and Vivekadeepinee Samarpana programs conducted at Bengaluru which were attended by Hon'ble Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modiji and Hon'ble Home Minister Sri Amit Shah ji.
5. The common programs that could be arranged all over India to achieve national integration through the teachings of Sri Shankara.
6. To begin with introducing the Stotra literature in every household.
7. To organize Ekatmata Yatra in the backdrop of the experience in such a Yatra arranged in Madhya Pradesh
8. To introduce programs like Vivekadeepinee (Viveka Deepini is a collection of 37 verses from Prashnottara Ratna Malika, which emphasizes on the moral values inherited in our culture) to inculcate values in the early age of students.

After detailed deliberations the following resolutions were passed unanimously.

1. To urge the central government to declare universal thinker and the man who rejuvenated Sanathana dharma Adi Shankaracharya's birth day, Vaisakha Shukla Panchami as **"World Philosopher's Day"**
2. To celebrate **"Shankara Jayanthi"** with not just on religious ground, but also on spiritual grounds including all the sects of the society and encouraging others to do so.
3. In the earliest possible time conduct **"Ekatma yatra"** across the country and through that means make the Upanishad based teachings of Adi Shankara reach every households
4. Teach **"Viveka Deepini"** at the schools run by our institutions and also in all the educational institutions known to us so that every student would become a responsible citizens.

5. Any **adhyatmic speech** should be started by chanting any shloka composed by Adi Shankaracharya.

The above meet was followed up with another meeting held at Satya Sai Ashram, Brindavan, Kadugodi, Bengaluru on Mar 14th and 15th 2020 in order to further discuss on the resolution passed at Sringeri Meet.



Over 60 Sanyasis and other Aastikas participated in this conclave from different parts of the country. Many dignitaries like Maha Mandaleshwar, Sanyasis from **Arsha Vidya Gurukulam**, Ramakrishna Matha and other spiritual organizations, professors from various universities etc.were part of this 2day conclave.

The main agenda of this conclave was to continue the discussions and plan the activities based on the decision that was made in Sringeri meet.

The first topic was, “how to celebrate Shankara Jayanti in an uniform manner” in each and every house/ in colleges / Universities / involving all sections of society. Everyone agreed to start with one day Shankara Jayanti celebration in a meaningful manner by chanting the stotras from Shankaracharya and contemplating on the meaning. Selected shlokas from various Adi Shankaracharya works have been listed which are to be chanted on the Shankar Jayanti day.

The second topic was on teaching the Viveka Deepini in the schools across India. The positive impact that one can see on the self and on the society was shared. Poojya Sri Sri Shankara Bharati Swamiji emphasized the importance of Viveka Deepini and shared many instances that Vedanta Bharati has come across while doing the Mahabhiyana of teaching over 2 Lakhs students in Bengaluru.



Swamiji also suggested that a committee be immediately formed to take up the tasks and a workshop be planned to train the volunteers who would involve in this activity. Swamiji committed that Vedanta Bharati would send Vidwans to their respective places whenever the Workshop is planned. There was also a request for creating an online teaching document which would be of great help for the Teachers who would be taking these teachings in the schools.

A brief discussion on the Ekatma Yatra was presented by Poojya Sri Paramatmananda Saraswathi Ji and other dignitaries. A draft plan was presented.

Swamini Sumanandji

I am saddened to inform all of you that our beloved Swamini Sumanandji (Dr.Heera Sehra) passed away peacefully in NJ nursing home on 04/08 at 9:40 pm. The cremation was done at Paula Funeral Home Stroudsburg, pa on 9th April. Due to Covid19 restrictions nobody from the ashram could attend the funeral ceremony, but offered our distant prayers for Amma's peaceful onward journey.

- **Suddhatma, General Manager, Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, Saylorsburg, PA**



Message from Swami Veditatmanadaji:

It is with great regret and a sense of loss that we received the news of the passing away of our beloved Swamini Sumanandaji. I knew her from the time she came to the Gurukulam in 1990 and have many fond memories of her love and devotion.

She became a staunch devotee of Pujya Swamiji right away and offered herself completely to Pujya Swamiji. Since she was a doctor by profession

before she came to the Gurukulam, she started monitoring the health and diet of Pujya Swamiji and went to India when Pujya Swamiji did and came to the US when Pujya Swamiji did. She provided motherly care to Pujya Swamiji.

Swamini Sumanandaji offered everything that she had to Pujya Swamiji and thus we have (now the old) lecture hall and the activity center in the Gurukulam. I am sure she must have helped Pujya Swamiji in other projects as well.

She attended the residential Vedanta course in Anaikatti from 1995 to 1998 and then spent time in studying and Sadhana both at Anaikatti and Rishikesh Ashrams. Finally she came to Saylorsburg and spent the remaining years studying and with her Sadhana while, of course, helping others as much as she could. She herself needed help in the last years and the staff and the management of the Gurukulam took good care of her. She spent last ten years in nursing homes first in Pennsylvania and then in New Jersey. While in the nursing home in New Jersey, notably Sajani and Ram took good care of her.

We will miss her presence, her love and her laughter. She was an ardent student of Vedanta and loved and respected all the Swamis and attended their classes in person whenever possible or listened to them from her room. I have no doubt that she is free from the cycle of birth and death and established in eternal peace and tranquillity. We seek her silent blessings.

With best wishes and love,
Swami Viditatmananda

Message from Swami Tattvavidanandaji

I felt sad to know about Swamini Sumanandaji dropping the mortal frame. She was not only a great devotee of Pujya Swamiji but also helped and encouraged a few younger Swamis like myself. She just merged in *Īśvara* and I pray that *Īśvara* bestow blessings on all of us that are left behind.

- Swami Tattvavidanandaji

We immensely thank our Board member and treasurer Sri. Piyush and Smt. Abantika Shah for being there always to take care of Swamini amma with love and concern. We also thank Dr.Muttiah and Mrs.Devayani for all the help and support. We extend our thanks and appreciations to one and all for their love and time.

In Pujya Swamiji's words "Amma, your life has been a blessing to yourself and all others connected to you".



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Dakshinamurti Temple during last Kumbhabishekam

