

DRG-DRSYA VIVEKA RETREAT AT AVG ANAIKATTI

Dr̥k Dr̥śya Viveka retreat at Anaikatti indeed presented a great opportunity to rest the mind and soul from the day to day activities and spend time contemplating upon the nature of self and non-self. The positive vibrations of the temple, the chanting, and the whole premises provided just the right environment for assimilating the teachings of this *Prakaraṇagrantha*.



The morning and evening puja, prayers and chantings at the temple filled the mind with a sense of gratitude and devotion towards the Lord. The quietude of mind in the morning was further elevated during the guided meditation. The beauty of the meditation was that it always started with a mental worship of the Ishta Devata or Sadguru followed by a step by step contemplation on the body, prāṇa and ultimately the nature of the self, and thus left us with an intimate connection with the self. The day proceeded with the profound teachings of the *Dr̥k Dr̥śya Viveka*.

Each moment of the lecture was very valuably utilized to convey the message of Vedanta. Even before entering the text, Swamiji firmly laid out the fundamental facts of Vedanta in all our minds. Ensuring the teachings are meaningful in our practical life, Swamiji brought to our attention the principle quest of life and the means to attain it.

The vision of Vedanta and its mechanism were clearly communicated through the discussion on the 3 main topics of Vedanta: Tat, Tvam, Asi, the analysis of Tat pada and Tvam pada, and 'Asi' the relationship between the two to ultimately discover their oneness. *Dṛk Dṛśya Viveka* being one of the methods of differentiating the self and non-self, focusing on Tvam pada analysis, how it fits in the whole scheme of analysis and discovery of 'Tat Tvam Asi', was thus clearly conveyed.

The text itself was explained in a very structured manner by grouping the verses of the text into 5 main topics, in keeping with the vision of the text, to enable us to dwell on the content and context of the text, and retain the teachings for long. Certain sections of the text like the 6 kinds of Samadhi meant for Tat pada and Tvam pada chintanam/contemplation were explained very meticulously clearing any doubts in our minds, with lot of examples and answering to everyone's personal doubts for further clarity during Satsang. In a very simplified manner, the subtle connections between the first and last sections of the text were highlighted to point out the similarities involved. The Satsang at night was a Sadhana in itself. Apart from clearing the seekers' doubts and questions, Swamiji made the Satsang very lively by asking us questions on the teachings through the day. Swamiji insisted on precise answers, and this trained our minds to think and answer to the point. The Satsang enabled us to deliberate upon the teachings, and check any glossing over, and thus firm up our understanding.

The icing on the cake was of course the three take home messages, which we will be able to use in our practical life not only to solve the social problems, but also to uplift ourselves for our spiritual growth. The first message emphasized *Viveka*, 'Let *Viveka* pervade our life so that we don't get carried away by superficial appearance, let there be *Viveka* at the level of permanent and what appears to be permanent, let there be *Viveka* at the level of seer and seen (*Dṛk - Dṛśya*) and at the level of *Satya - Mithyā*. That may one start with the *Vyāvahārik Viveka* and then apply it at *Pāramārthika* level as well.' The second message emphasized our attitude towards problem, 'That may one analyze the problem, find the solution, and work for it, rather than remaining stuck in that problem, rather than reacting to the problem, rather than thinking all the time about the problem.' The third message emphasized *Śraddhā* in *Iśvar*, 'Have confidence that I'm blessed enough to pursue *Mokṣa*, that whatever I need for *Mokṣa* I have, and appreciate *Iśvar* in our life.'

The whole package of meditation, teachings, chanting, Sanskrit, and Satsang, enhanced by the in-between tea breaks, nutritious and delicious breakfast, lunch and dinner, and adorned by the temple puja and chantings, the clean and serene environment, and a welcoming attitude from everyone within the premises were more than anyone could ever ask for in one place at one time.

Report by Ms Prachi Patel.