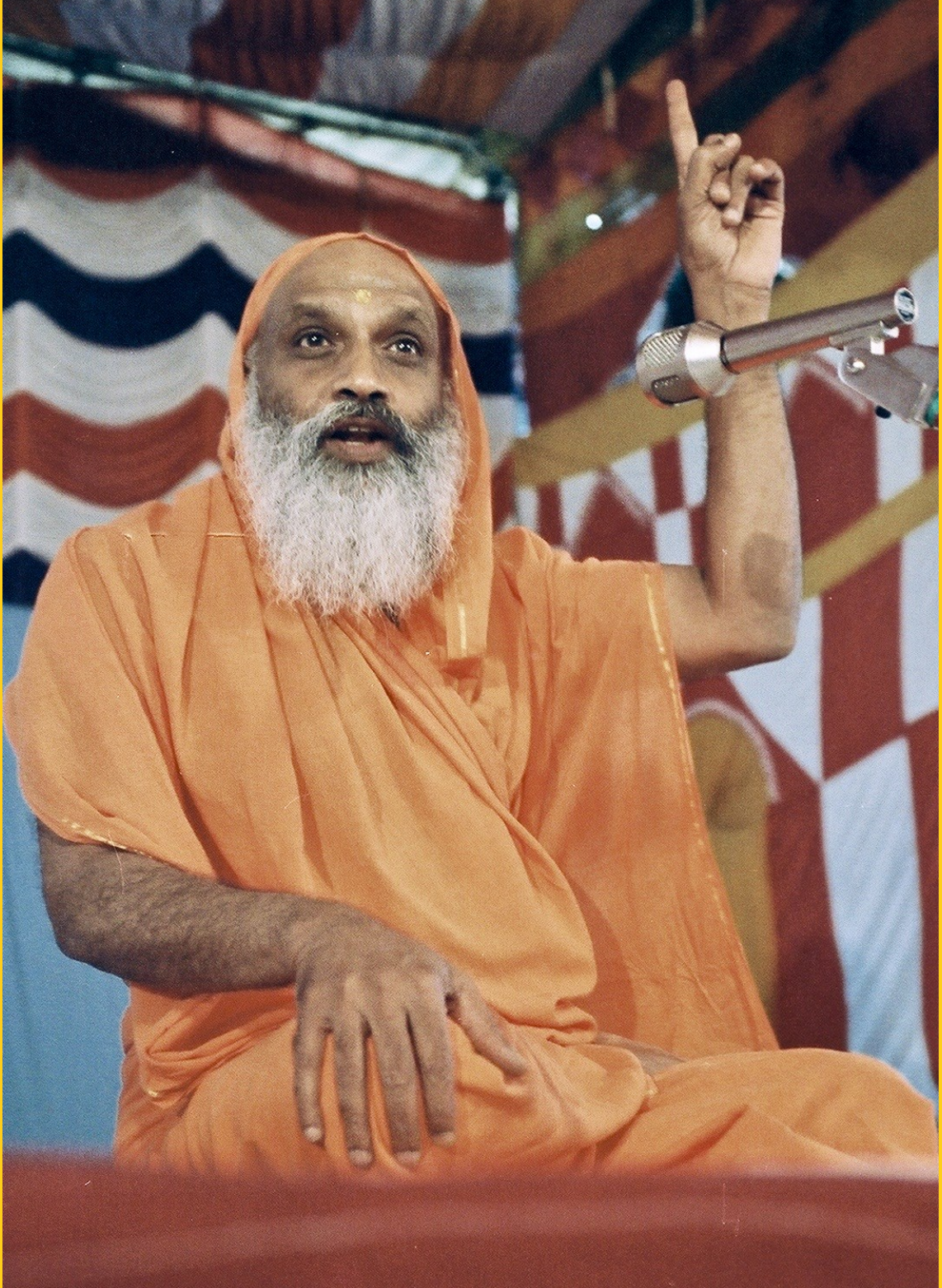




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Kaivalyopaniṣad
Swami Vidadatmananda Saraswati's transcribed talk

This is the twenty sixth part of the serial article, continuation from July 2023 newsletter.

Mahā-vākya Vicāra

The need for constant exposure to the knowledge

To create the right *saṁskāras* in the mind, the *śāstras* say, *paunaḥ punyena śravaṇam kuryāt*, listen to it again and again. There are actually two types of *saṁskāras*. *Saṁskāras* in terms of the mind becoming pure or free from the impulses of likes and dislikes are of one type, and *saṁskāras* in terms of the orientation of the mind toward nonduality are the other type. Since the mind is conditioned with the idea of duality, the idea of nonduality doesn't have much effect on it, and, therefore, we listen to the Upaniṣads or the teachings of Vedānta again and again. Day in and day out, we are told, 'You are *brahman*, you are nondual, duality is false, and the *jagat* is *mithyā*.' The *śāstra* conveys the same message in different ways, using different models, different arguments, and different methods. Then, even a relatively resistant mind starts absorbing it. However, all this works only when there is also *śraddhā*, *bhakti*, and *dhyāna*, which stand for purity of mind; as the Upaniṣadsaid in the beginning, may you have *śraddhā*, *bhakti* and *dhyāna*. One should keep on accumulating impressions or *saṁskāras* of nonduality with a mind that has *śraddhā*, *bhakti*, and *dhyāna*.

In the beginning, these impressions of nonduality don't last. It is like writing on water; even as you write it disappears. Slowly, however, it becomes more like writing on sand; it remains for a while, but when the wave comes in, the writing is swept away. However, a time comes when it becomes like writing on a rock; regardless of what storms come, the writing remains etched. That is what we call abiding knowledge. What in the beginning is easily forgotten, is, upon greater exposure, present for a longer while, but is still impacted by some strong forces, like identification with the body. Only when it becomes like writing on a rock does it

become permanent and abiding. Therefore, we have to keep on exposing ourselves to the teaching, meaning that a constant orientation towards nonduality is required, because of our deeply ingrained *samskāras* of duality.

As Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the 15th chapter of the Gita¹, like the deep-rooted *aśvattha* tree, the sense of duality is so deeply rooted that it takes time to uproot it. So we should have patience and perseverance, and put in constant effort with dedication. The words of the *śāstra* will then create the desired effect and the job will be done. Until then, we should remain devoted to listening and contemplating.

Repeating the name of the Lord is effective and works in two stages. First we choose the name, Om, Rāma, Hari, or some other name of the Lord, and repeat it with devotion. Here devotion becomes important. If someone asks about how to cultivate devotion, we say that if you want to discover devotion for any given deity, chant Lord Rāma's name, keep on reading the Rāmayaṇa, listen to the glories of Rāma, listen to his greatness. If Kṛṣṇa is your deity of choice, listen to the Bhāgavata, listen to his glories, his greatness. That's how one discovers reverence and devotion for the Lord. When repeated with an attitude of devotion, the name becomes more effective. Repeating the name first brings about purification of the mind, and then knowledge.

Having seen how a word and its meaning are connected, let us go back to the verse, which states, *praṇavaṁ ca uttarāraṇim*, let *praṇava* be the upper *araṇi*. *Praṇava* means *omkāra*. The sound *om* emerges from silence, it remains in silence, and merges back into silence. Silence is formless, free of attributes or qualifications; it is called *amātrā*. The transcendent, unqualified, unconditioned *brahman*, which is the truth, is represented by the *amātrā*, the silence obtaining between two utterances. As the mind becomes contemplative, the *omkāra* becomes the means of knowledge. So far one has been repeating "Om, Om" with devotion; now one begins to analyze the *omkāra*.

¹ BG 15.3

The *omkāra* is composed of an *akāra*, the syllable 'a,' an *ukāra* or 'u,' and a *makāra*, the final 'm.' The three syllables can be seen to represent the three states of waking, dream, and deep sleep, the three acts of creation, sustenance, and dissolution, the three worlds of earth, the intermediate world, and heaven, the three deities of fire, the air, and the sun, or stand for the creator, the sustainer, and the destroyer. Amongst them, the three *mātrās* of the *omkāra* represent everything that is manifest, which ultimately resolves into the unmanifest or *amātrā*. The *akāra* resolves into the *ukāra*, which then resolves into the *makāra*, and finally, the *makāra* resolves into the *amātrā*. This is the method of representation that the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad employs, and the *omkāra* or *praṇava* thus becomes the means of knowledge.

At the first stage, the *omkāra* becomes the means to purify the mind. At the second stage, it becomes the means to selfknowledge. This is what is intended even here in the Kaivalya Upaniṣad, because it belongs to the Atharva Veda, as do the Māṇḍūkya and the Muṇḍaka. Therefore, we find a similarity of ideas in these three Upaniṣads. In the subsequent *mantras*, there is an analysis of the three states of consciousness, waking, dreaming, and deep sleep, which are also described in the Māṇḍūkya.

Jñānanirmathanābhyāsāt means repeatedly contemplating upon the nature of the self with the help of the *mahā-vākya* or great statement, such as *aham brahmāsmi*, 'I am *brahman*.' What is the nature of the individual self? What is the abiding reality of the self? Now one is a waker, then one is a dreamer, and, later, a deep sleeper. When the waker is, the other two are not. When the dreamer is, the other two are not. Each one excludes the other two. Is there something that these three do not exclude? For example, the form of a bangle excludes that of an earring, because the bangle is not an earring. Similarly, the form of the earring excludes the form of a chain, because the earring is not a chain. All three forms exclude one another. Yet is there something that they do not exclude? Yes, there is, and that is the element of gold.

While every name and form excludes every other name and form, the very es-

sence that is the underlying self is not excluded. What is it that is not excluded by the waker, dreamer, and deep-sleeper? That is the essence, the true nature of the self, which one arrives at by letting go of all the changing aspects and focusing on that alone which does not change. What is it that is changing? It is the waking experience, the dream experience and the sleep experience. Yet what is it that sustains these changes? What is it that connects the changes? What is the connecting thread? As Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the Bhagavad Gita², the essential underlying reality is like an invisible thread that holds a garland of flowers together. Each flower is different from the others, but the same *sūtra* or thread holds all the flowers together. What is the thread that connects all the changing states? That thread is the very essence, the self. *Jñānanirmathanābhāysāt*. In this repeated ‘churning,’ the intellect is the rod and the *aupaniṣad-mahāvākya*, *aham brahmāsmi*, I am *brahman*, is the rope, using which deliberation or *vicāra* is performed by the intellect. On the one hand, we have the *jīva-ātmā*, the individual self, and, on the other hand, we have *brahman*, the *parama-ātmā*. The Upaniṣad reveals that the *jīvātma* is none other than the *paramātma*. The *jīva* is none other than *brahman*, *tat tvam asi*. It reveals that the *aham* is none other than *brahman*; *aham brahma asmi*.

***Vicāra* ensures that we do not take our conclusions for granted**

‘I am *brahman*.’ This is the vision of the scriptures. One who takes himself to be a limited being is, in fact, *brahman*, the limitless. This is what the scriptures reveal. The deliberation is upon whether we are really what we take ourselves to be. Are we really the *ahaṅkāra* or ego that we take ourselves to be? Is one justified in taking himself or herself to be a small, limited being? We have taken for granted that we are small, limited, and insignificant without ever subjecting these conclusions to the scrutiny of inquiry. We have never really looked into the validity of such conclusions about ourselves. Has anybody seen the ‘I’ to claim that the ‘I’ is a

^२मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव ।

mayi sarvamidam protam sūtre maṇigaṇā iva (BG 7.7)

All this is strung on me like pearls on a string.

limited being? No. What we see is the body, what we see is the mind, and what we see are our thoughts. Yet, looking at the limited personality of this body, mind, intellect, and so on, we draw conclusions about ourselves. Isn't that strange?

Drawing conclusions about the self based on the misconception that it is the body or the mind is like looking at our reflections in a distorted mirror and drawing conclusions about how we look. Just because the mirror distorts the reflection, can you conclude that your face is distorted? Or just because the reflection looks fat, conclude that you are fat? Yet we look at the body and conclude that we are human beings, that one is a man or woman, tall or short. We derive these conclusions merely by looking at the body. This means that one takes for granted that the body is oneself. We look at the mind; when the mind is happy, we conclude that we are happy, and, when the mind is unhappy, we conclude that we are unhappy. Thus, we keep on drawing a variety of conclusions about ourselves, not by looking at ourselves, but by looking at something other than ourselves. This is called *tādātmya*, identification.

We identify with something that we see, such as the body, even though we are only the witness of the body. We are quite clear that this table we are not, this flower we are not, or this book we are not. All of these things we are not. We know that they are all objects of our knowledge and we know that we are different from what we know. But somehow this *viveka* or discrimination seems to fail us when it comes to the body, even though the body also falls in the category of something external to us and known to us. Lord Kṛṣṇa says, *idaṁ śarīraṁ kaunteya kṣetram-ityabhidhīyate*, 'Hey Arjuna, this body, the *śarīra*, is called a *kṣetra* or field,¹ meaning that it falls in the category of that which is known to us.

In the same manner as *viveka* or discrimination leaves us when it comes to the body, it does not remain even when it comes to the mind. We become one with the mind; we identify with the mind and take ourselves to be only as good as the mind. It is like watching a movie and becoming so identified with it that we start crying because some character in the movie is crying or start laughing because

somebody there is laughing. This fellow in the movie wins a million-dollar lottery, and even if we haven't a single penny in our pockets, we still seem to experience the joy of winning a million dollars, however momentarily! This is called identification. There is self-forgetfulness on the one hand and becoming something that one is not, on the other. Something like that happens in identification with the body-mind-intellect complex. Even though we are not the personality, there is identification with it and, hence, the conscious person as though becomes as small as the personality.

The three-fold limitation of all things, including the personality

The personality is limited in every way. It is limited in time, because it has birth and death; it is limited in place, because, at any given time, it is in one place and not in any other; it is limited in attributes, because it possesses some attributes and not some others. Therefore, the person who identifies with the personality feels the same sense of limitation. He feels the sense of limitation and, at the same time, cannot accept it. Naturally, he struggles constantly to become free from that sense of limitation. This is *saṁsāra*. It is a struggle that can never end, because we can never get rid of the limitations as long as we identify with the personality. The way to become free from limitations is not to try to *become* limitless, but to *understand* that every limitation is but a notion. *Viveka* is required to discriminate between the self and the non-self. This is the *jñānanirmathana*, the 'churning' with the rod of knowledge or the rod of inquiry.

¹ BG 13.1

Pāśaṁ dahati paṇḍitaḥ, the wise burns all bondage. *Paṇḍā* is the knowledge that one is *brahman*, and the one who has gained that knowledge is called a *paṇḍita*, a wise person. Just as the fire generated from the friction between the two wooden blocks burns all the combustible wood, so also, this 'fire' of knowledge, which is generated by churning the rod of *viveka* or *vicāra*, inquiry or deliberation, burns all the *pāśas*, fetters or bondages.

In the next few *mantras*, there is an analysis of the three states of consciousness

and of that which is the substratum of all three. It is called the *avasthātraya-viveka* or discrimination based on the three states of experience, namely, *jāgrat*, *svapna*, and *suṣupti*, the states of waking, dream, and deep sleep. The question that may occur here is, “If you say that *ātmā* is the self of all and that I am *brahman* and non-dual, how did I become a *saṁsāri*?” The inquiry being performed in the subsequent *mantras* pertains to how the limitless self becomes a limited being, subject to birth and death and sorrow. How does it happen?

स एव मायापरिमोहितात्मा

शरीरमास्थाय करोति सर्वम् ।

स्त्रियन्नपानादिविचित्रभोगैः

स एव जाग्रत्परितृप्तिमेति ॥ १२ ॥

sa eva māyāparimohitātmā

śarīramāsthāya karoti sarvam

striyannapānādivicitrabhogaiḥ

sa eva jāgratparitr̥ptimeti

सः - he ए - alone मायापरिमोहितात्मा - one who is very well deluded by *māyā* शरीरम् - body आस्थाय - identified with करोति - does सर्वम् - everything स्त्रि-अन्नपानादि-विचित्र-भोगैः - through varied objects of pleasure, such as woman, food, drink etc. सः एव - he alone जाग्रत् - waking state परितृप्तिम् - full gratification एति - obtains

The self alone, being very well deluded by *māyā*, is the one who, identified with the body, performs all the actions in the waking state and obtains full gratification through the varied objects of pleasure, such as woman, food, drink etc. (12)

To be continued...

Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa
As Taught by Swami Dayananda Saraswati

This is the twenty fourth part of the serial article, continuation from July 2023 newsletter.

Vishvamitra came to the gates of Ayodhya and told the gatekeepers to inform the king that Vishvamitra had come. Everybody knew Vishvamitra's name, and the keepers ran to Dasharatha. Dasharatha hurried to the gate with all the ministers and received the great *ṛṣi*. Vishvamitra, as though concerned, asked questions about the state of the kingdom and of the people and of the activities and rituals that were going on, all the customary questions. Dasharatha told him of the blessing his family had received. Then, uncustomarily, Vishvamitra turned and greeted Vasishtha and the other sages and the ministers in Dasharatha's court. Dasharatha expressed his great pleasure at the arrival of his distinguished guest. He said it was a great fulfillment that the *brahmaṛṣi* would come to his palace. Dasharatha asked the purpose of the visit. He asked if he could be of any help. He said he would take on his head whatever order Vishvamitra gave and carry it out. Dasharatha compared Vishvamitra's visit with a sickly man getting *amṛta*, that elixir which will immortalize this body. He was that happy. It was like a dry land receiving a thorough rainfall, like a woman who prayed for a child receiving the blessing of a pregnancy, like the sudden reappearance of something dear that had been irretrievably lost. The king was that happy. It was the important day in his life. He spoke of the renown of the great sage, and remarked at the great achievement of *brahmaṛṣitvam*. "Seeing you is for me no less than the pilgrimage to all the great *punya*kṣetras. Please let me know why you have come."

तच्छ्रुत्वा राजसिंहस्य वाक्यमद्भुतविस्तरम् । हृष्टरोमा महातेजा विश्वामित्रोऽभ्यभाषत ॥ १-१९-१

सदृशं राजशार्दूलं तवैव भुवि नान्यतः । महावंशप्रसूतस्य वसिष्ठव्यपदेशिनः ॥ १-१९-२

यत् तु मे हृद्गतं वाक्यं तस्य कार्यस्य निश्चयम् । कुरुष्व राजशार्दूल भव सत्यप्रतिश्रवः ॥ १-१९-३

अहं नियममातिष्ठे सिद्ध्यर्थं पुरुषर्षभ । तस्य विघ्नकरौ द्वौ तु राक्षसौ कामरूपिणौ ॥ १-१९-४

व्रते तु बहुशस्त्रीर्णे समास्यां राक्षसाविमौ । मारीचश्च सुबाहुश्च वीर्यवन्तौ सुशिक्षितौ ॥ १-१९-५

तौ मांसरुधिरौघेण वेदिं तामभ्यवर्षताम् । अवधूते तथाभूते तस्मिन् नियमनिश्चये ॥ १-१९-६

कृतश्रमो निरुत्साहस्तस्मादœ देशादपाक्रमे । न च मे क्रोधमुत्सृष्टं बुद्धिर्भवति पार्थिव ॥ १-१९-७
तथाभूता हि सा चर्या न शापस्तत्र मुच्यते । स्वपुत्रं राजशार्दूलं रामं सत्यपराक्रमम् ॥ १-१९-८
काकपक्षधरं वीरं ज्येष्ठं मे दातुमर्हसि । शक्तो ह्येष मया गुप्तो दिव्येन स्वेन तेजसा ॥ १-१९-९
राक्षसा ये विकर्तारस्तेषामपि विनाशने । श्रेयश्चास्मै प्रदास्यामि बहुरूपं न संशयः ॥ १-१९-१०
त्रयाणामपि लोकानां येन ख्यातिं गमिष्यति । न च तौ राममासाद्य शक्तौ स्थातुं कथंचन ॥ १-१९-११

*tacchrutvā rājasinhasya vākyaamadbhutavistaram ।
hr̥ṣṭaromā mahātejā viśvāmitro'bhyabhāṣata ॥ 1-19-1
sadṛśaṁ rājaśārdūla tavaiva bhuvi nānyataḥ ।
mahāvaṁśaprasūtasya vasiṣṭhavyapadeśinaḥ ॥ 1-19-2
yat tu me hr̥dgataṁ vākyaṁ tasya kāryasya niścayam ।
kuruṣva rājaśārdūla bhava satyapratiśravaḥ ॥ 1-19-3
ahaṁ niyamamātiṣṭhe siddhyartham puruṣarṣabha ।
tasya vighnakarau dvau tu rākṣasau kāmarūpiṇau ॥ 1-19-4
vrate tu bahuśāścīrṇe samāptyāṁ rākṣasāvimau ।
mārīcaśca subāhuśca vīryavantau suśikṣitau ॥ 1-19-5
tau māṁsarudhiraugheṇa vedaṁ tāmabhyavarṣatām ।
avadhūte tathābhūte tasmīn niyamaniścaye ॥ 1-19-6
kr̥taśramo nirutsāhastasmād deśādapākrame ।
na ca me krodhamutsraṣṭuṁ buddhirbhavati pārthiva ॥ 1-19-7
tathābhūtā hi sā caryā na śāpastatra mucyate ।
svaputraṁ rājaśārdūla rāmaṁ satyaparākramam ॥ 1-19-8
kākapakṣadharaṁ vīraṁ jyeṣṭhaṁ me dātumarhasi ।
śakto hyeṣa mayā gupto divyena svena tejasā ॥ 1-19-9
rākṣasā ye vikartāraṣṭeṣāmapī vināśane ।
śreyaścāsmāi pradāsyāmi bahurūpaṁ na saṁśayaḥ ॥ 1-19-10
trayaṇāmapi lokānāṁ yena khyātiṁ gamiṣyati ।
na ca tau rāmamāsādyā śaktau sthātum kathaṁcana ॥ 1-19-11*

The great Vishvamitra was obviously in a good mood. Hearing Dasharatha's fine words of praise and promise, he knew he could ask for what he wanted.

Vishvamitra said, “Oh, you are the great lion among kings, exalted among all rulers, born into this foremost royal family on this earth. Indeed, you have been taught by Vasishtha.” Vishvamitra takes Vasishtha into account as a friend now. Although at one time Vasishtha was an object of his envy.

“There is no one on earth like you,” said Vishvamitra to Dasharatha, “I will tell you now what is in my heart, and you must do it. You must live up to the words you have spoken.” Dasharatha was all ears now; his buildup had been very big, and he waited for the other shoe to drop.

Vishvamitra said, “A number of times I have started a ritual to achieve a certain end. But there are two fellows, *rākṣasas*, Marica and Subahu, who come and disturb the ritual. Last time they destroyed it. They brought bleeding meat and poured it into the ritual and spoiled it. They have done this same thing to other fellows. O King, if I were to get angry I could finish off these two demons. But I cannot afford to get angry nowadays. This particular ritual that I am trying to complete does not allow me to get angry with anyone. I really am in a corner. Therefore, O *rāja*, that Rama, that powerful one, that one with the hair tied to one side, your eldest son, should be given to me for a few days. He can take care of the *rākṣasas* and protect the ritual. Then I will bring him back again. Lakshmana can come along with him.”

Dasharatha was stunned, “You ask for Rama? He is not even sixteen. He may be great, but he has never been in a real battle. He has not even seen one. These two *rākṣasas* are tricksters, *māyāvīs*. They do not just stand there and fight, they have all kinds of magic. They are *tapasvins*: their powers are extraordinary. They go like devotees to the gods, learn and gain the powers, and they come back and wreck things. They did *tapas* just for *karmaphala*. I will come instead. Until my last breath I will fight, and you know I am no mean fighter. I will protect your ritual. I will bring my armies. What can a single Rama do?” The king went on and on. He was confused, unsure. He did not even know if he could defeat the two *rākṣasas*. “I will come with Rama; just do not take him away from me. What can be gained by sending him alone to the forest? He is just a growing boy. Please do not ask me to send Rama.”

अहं ते प्रतिजानामि हतौ तौ विद्धि राक्षसौ । अहं वेद्मि महात्मानं रामं सत्य पराक्रमम् ॥ १-१९-१४
वसिष्ठोऽपि महातेजा ये चेमे तपसि स्थिताः । यदि ते धर्मलाभं तु यशश्च परमं भुवि ॥ १-१९-१५
स तु वीर्यवतां वीर्यमादत्ते युधि रावणः । तेन चाहं न शक्तोऽस्मि संयोद्धुं तस्य वा बलैः ॥ १-२०-२३
सबलो वा मुनिश्रेष्ठ सहितो वा ममात्मजैः । कथमप्यमरप्रख्यं संग्रामाणामकोविदम् ॥ १-२०-२४
इति नरपतिजल्पनादœ द्विजेन्द्रं कुशिकसुतं सुमहान् विवेश मन्युः ।

सुहुत इव मखेऽग्निराज्यसिक्तः समभवदुज्ज्वलितो महर्षिवह्निः ॥ १-२०-२८

aham te pratijānāmi hatau tau viddhi rākṣasau |

aham vedmi mahātmānaṁ rāmaṁ satya parākramam || 1-19-14

vasiṣṭho'pi mahātejā ye ceme tapasi sthitāḥ |

yadi te dharmalābhaṁ tu yaśaśca paramaṁ bhuvi || 1-19-15

sa tu vīryavatāṁ vīryamādatte yudhi rāvaṇaḥ |

tena cāhaṁ na śakto'smi saṁyoddhuraṁ tasya vā balaiḥ || 1-20-23

sabalo vā munīśreṣṭha sahito vā mamātmajaiḥ |

kathamapyamaraprakhyāṁ saṅgrāmāṇāmakovidam || 1-20-24

iti narapatijalpanād dvijendraṁkuśikasutaṁ sumahān viveśa manyuḥ |

suhuta iva makhe'gnirājyasiktaḥsamabhavadujjvalito maharṣivahniḥ || 1-20-28

Vishvamitra replied, “I know, Vasishtha knows, all *tapasvins* know who this Rama is. They do not take Rama as a boy or anything ordinary. I promise these two demons will be destroyed.” But Dasharatha was not swayed, he would not send Rama alone. Vishvamitra was highly disappointed. Valmiki’s verses show here that Dasharatha’s rejection of the request was contradictory and confused. Dasharatha had lost his wisdom for the time being out of sheer attachment to Rama and sheer fear of losing his son. After this stammering by the *mahārāja* Dasharatha, *manyuḥ* entered. Anger entered the great Brahman, the great *ṛṣi* Vishvamitra. In a fire ritual, if you offer oblations of ghee and the fire is very well fed, the flames become brilliant and reach out. The *mahārṣi* was *vani*; he looked like fire. Everyone in the assembly became frightened, wondering what this *ṛṣi* would do.

तच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं तस्य स्नेहपर्याकुलाक्षरम् । समन्युः कौशिको वाक्यं प्रत्युवाच महीपतिम् ॥ १-२१-१

पूर्वमर्थं प्रतिश्रुत्य प्रतिज्ञां हातुमिच्छसि । राघवाणामयुक्तोऽयं कुलस्यास्य विपर्ययः ॥ १-२१-२

यदिदं ते क्षमं राजन् गमिष्यामि यथागतम् । मिथ्याप्रतिज्ञः काकुत्स्थ सुखी भव सुहृदः ॥ १-२१-३

तस्य रोषपरीतस्य विश्वामित्रस्य धीमतः । चचाल वसुधा कृत्स्ना देवानां च भयं महत् ॥ १-२१-४

tacchrutvā vacanam tasya snehaparyākulākṣaram |

samanyuḥ kauśiko vākyaṁ pratyuvāca mahīpatim || 1-21-1

pūrvamarthaṁ pratiśrutya pratijñāṁ hātumicchasi |

rāghavāṇāmayaṁkto'yaṁ kulasyāśya viparyayaḥ || 1-21-2

yadidaṁ te kṣamaṁ rājan gamiṣyāmi yathāgatam |

mithyāpratijñāḥ kākutstha sukhī bhava suhṛd vṛtaḥ || 1-21-3

tasya roṣaparītasya viśvāmitrasya dhīmataḥ |

cacāla vasudhā kṛtsnā devānāṁ ca bhayaṁ mahat || 1-21-4

Vishvamitra turned angrily to Dasharatha, “At first you gave me your word; you said you would do whatever I wanted. Now you want to destroy your own words. I never thought you would be hungry enough to eat your own words. In the *kula* of Raghu, this is not proper. No king in this dynasty has ever contradicted or gone back on his word. It is unheard of. It is improper. If this is what you choose, if it fits you well, okay. Okay. I will return the same way I came. It does not matter. You, *mithyāpratijñā*, who gives a false promise, can be happy here with your kind.” Having heard these words, the earth and the *devas* themselves were shaking. Nevertheless Vishvamitra had not actually cursed anyone. This was not the Vishvamitra of old. Perhaps he hoped that everything would work out in the end. What’s more, Vasishtha would not let it stand like this.

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the end. What's more, Vasishtha would not let it stand like this.

त्रस्तरूपं तु विज्ञाय जगदœ सर्वं महानृषिः । नृपतिं सुव्रतो धीरो वसिष्ठो वाक्यमब्रवीत् ॥ १-२१-५
इक्ष्वाकूणां कुले जातः साक्षादœ धर्म इवापरः । धृतिमान् सुव्रतः श्रीमान् न धर्मं हातुमर्हसि ॥ १-२१-६
त्रिषु लोकेषु विख्यातो धर्मात्मा इति राघव । स्वधर्मं प्रतिपद्यस्व नाधर्मं वोढुमर्हसि ॥ १-२१-७
प्रतिश्रुत्य करिष्येति उक्तं वाक्यमकुर्वतः । इष्टापूर्तवधो भूयात् तस्मादœ रामं विसर्जय ॥ १-२१-८
कृतास्त्रमकृतास्त्रं वा नैवं शक्यन्ति राक्षसाः । गुप्तं कुशिकपुत्रेण ज्वलनेनामृतं यथा ॥ १-२१-९
एष विग्रहवान् धर्म एष वीर्यवतां वरः । एष विद्याधिको लोके तपसश्च परायणम् ॥ १-२१-१०
एषोऽस्त्रान् विविधान् वेत्ति त्रैलोक्ये सचराचरे । नैनमन्यः पुमान् वेत्ति न च वेत्स्यन्ति केचन ॥ १-२१-११
न देवा नर्षयः केचिन्नासुरा न च राक्षसाः । गन्धर्वयक्षप्रवराः सकिन्नरमहोरगाः ॥ १-२१-१२
सर्वास्त्राणि कृशाश्वस्य पुत्राः परमधार्मिकाः । कौशिकाय पुरा दत्ता यदा राज्यं प्रशासति ॥ १-२१-१३

trastarūpaṁ tu vijñāya jagad sarvaṁ mahānṛṣiḥ ।
nṛpatiṁ suvrato dhīro vasiṣṭho vākyaṁ abravīt ॥ 1-21-5
ikṣvākūṇāṁ kule jātaḥ sāksād dharma ivāparaḥ ।
dhṛtimān suvrataḥ śrīmān na dharmāṁ hātumarhasi ॥ 1-21-6
triṣu lokeṣu vikhyāto dharmātmā iti rāghava ।
svadharmaṁ pratipadyasva nādharmāṁ voḍhumarhasi ॥ 1-21-7
pratiśrutya kariṣyeti uktaṁ vākyaṁ akurvataḥ ।
iṣṭāpūrtavadhō bhūyāt tasmād rāmaṁ visarjaya ॥ 1-21-8
kṛtāstramakṛtāstraṁ vā naivaṁ śakṣyanti rākṣasāḥ ।
guptaṁ kuśikaputrena jvalanena mṛtaṁ yathā ॥ 1-21-9
eṣa vighrahaṁ dharma eṣa vīryavataṁ varaḥ ।
eṣa vidyādhiko loke tapasaśca parāyaṇam ॥ 1-21-10
eṣo' strān vividhān veti trailokye sacarācare ।
nainamanyāḥ pumān veti na ca vetsyanti kecana ॥ 1-21-11
na devā narṣayaḥ kecinnāsurā na ca rākṣasāḥ ।
gandharvayakṣaprarāḥ sakinnaramahoragāḥ ॥ 1-21-12
sarvāstrāṇi kṛśāśvasya putrāḥ paramadharmikāḥ ।
kauśikāya purā dattā yadā rājyaṁ praśāsati ॥ 1-21-13

Vasishtha, *guru* to the king, said, “O king, you are born in the line of the Ikshvaku, a Raghava, if there were a *devatā* for *dharma* you would be another. People look to you for guidance. You are man of fortitude and resolve, generous and forgiving; you are no threat to *dharma*. You are praised throughout all the three worlds and are not qualified to follow *adharma*. Having given your word, if now you go against that, all your good actions will be destroyed. Better to give up Rama. When Vishvamitra is around, no *rākṣasa*, with or without weapons, can touch Rama. Vishvamitra is a man of power, wisdom, and *dharma*. There is no one greater in *tapas*, and being a king, he knows well the ways of battle. He has the tricks and the *mantras* that make the best missiles. Better send Rama. It will be his blessing. No one really knows the true greatness of this Vishvamitra, nor knows his power. Rama will be in safe hands. There could be no one better able to protect Rama. There is no *rākṣasa* that Vishvamitra himself could not finish off. Hear me, it is not just to protect his ritual that he has come, it is to bless Rama and Lakshmana. He has come and asked you for your son; this is the time to send Rama. Do not delay.”

तेषां निग्रहणे शक्तः स्वयं च कुशिकात्मजः । तव पुत्रहितार्थाय त्वामुपेत्याभियाचते ॥ १-२१-२१

इति मुनिवचनात् प्रसन्नचित्तो रघुवृषभश्च मुमोद पार्थिवाग्र्यः ।

गमनमभिरुचि राघवस्य प्रथितयशाः कुशिकात्मजाय बुध्या ॥ १-२१-२२

तथा वसिष्ठे ब्रुवति राजा दशरथः स्वयम् । प्रहृष्टवदनो राममाजुहाव सलक्ष्मणम् ॥ १-२२-१

teṣāṁ nigrahaṇe śaktaḥ svayaṁ ca kuśikātmajāḥ ।

tava putrahitārthāya tvāmupetyābhiyācate ॥ 1-21-21

iti munivacanāt prasannacitto raghuvṛṣabhaśca mumoda pārthivāgryaḥ ।

gamanamabhiruroca rāghavasya prathitayaśāḥ kuśikātmajāya budhyā ॥ 1-21-22

tathā vasiṣṭhe bruvati rājā daśarathaḥ svayam ।

prahrṣṭavadano rāmamājuhāva salakṣmaṇam ॥ 1-22-1

By these words of Vasishtha, the great King Dasharatha, reassured, freed from concerns and sadness and confusion, regained his demeanor and his brilliance. Gradually his mind became resigned to sending Rama along with Vishvamitra

To be continued...

Mahābhārata
As Taught by Swami Dayananda Saraswati

Edited by Sri. John Warne
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given by Pujya Swamiji .

ॐ नारायणं नमस्कृत्य नरं चैव नरोत्तमं

देविं सरस्वतिं व्यासं ततो जयमुदीरयेत्

*om nārāyaṇaṁ namaskṛtya naraṁ caiva narottamaṁ
deviṁ sarasvatiṁ vyāsaṁ tato jayamudīrayet*

The epic Mahabharata is also called Jaya. May one begin one's study of Mahabharata. How may one begin this epic Jaya, which is a *kāvya*, poetry, and which is also *itihāsa*, historical? Having offered one's salutation, *namaskṛtya*, to Lord Narayana, may one begin.

Narayana itself, that word, the name, indicates the one who is the ultimate end of a *nara*. *Naraḥ* is a human being, the one who has the freedom to do - to do wrongly and to do rightly. He has that freedom. Therefore, the human being, or anyone who is like a human being, who enjoys that freedom, the individual *jīva*, in that incarnation, gathers new *karma*. Thereby the life of the *jīva*, through varieties of incarnations caused by different sets of *karma*, perpetuates his or her own life. *Jīva* is not a he or she, understand. The *jīva's* life gets perpetuated. Therefore the *jīva* is called *naraḥ*.

The human being, being the predominant being, as a result of the various incarnations responsible for the perpetuation of the *jīva*, by gathering *adṛṣṭa karma*, *pun̄yapāpa*, is called the *nara*. *Na rīyate iti naraḥ*: he is the one who never comes to an end. If the person, the *jīva*, comes to know about himself, comes to realize the self, then also *naraḥ*, *na rīyate*. Then he is *nitya*. So either way there is no end for this fellow. He is *narasya ayanam*, *narāyaṇam*. *Ayanam* means that which is the end, and it also is the path, the *gati*, the way, *uttarāyaṇa*. The Northern Solstice is also called *uttarāyaṇa*. Southern Solstice is called *dakṣiṇāyaṇa*. Both the path and the goal are called

ayanam. Thus there are different ways they give meaning for *narāyaṇa*. We can look into the etymological meaning of these words.

Nārāyaṇa is the Lord's name, the one who is the ultimate end of a human being. It is a very beautiful word. This Narayana himself *namaskṛtya*. Narayana in the Mahabharata is in the form of a *nara* and also as Krishna, *narottama*. *Narottama* means the most exalted of all men. Krishna was in the form of a human being. He was born and brought up with a lot of difficulties. He never really had anything to boast about in his life. Honestly. If he had been merely a human being, he might have had a lot of core issues. Core issues here means he was deprived of his mother and father. He grew up in a cowherd village, and there were all kinds of problems – he was not an ordinary boy. But he was an extraordinary person – therefore no core issues. Understand, he was an *avatāra*. There will be more about this later; I will definitely talk about the meaning of *avatāra*.

This *narottama*, *śreṣṭha*, the one who is most exalted, walked like any human being, like any mortal, but was at the same time different. Lord Narayana himself, in the form of Krishna, is presented in the Mahabharata by the author Vyasa. Narayana is called by saying *naranārāyaṇa*. When you do *namaskāra* to Narayana you do it to all, but you also do it particularly to Narayana who is in the form of blessing, in the form of Krishna. Then, again, to *naraḥ*, to Narayana in the form of Arjuna. Arjuna and Krishna go together. They achieve a lot of things together. The combination is very important because the *nara*, Arjuna, is taught by the Lord Narayana that the *narottama*, the Lord, is not separate from me. In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna says, "The one who knows me is non-separate from me." All the *naras* have to relate to *narottama* and then to discover the identity, and that is the topic of the Vedic teaching. *Nara narottama* is the topic here. Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita says to Arjuna, "Hey, Arjuna, know that I am the *kṣetrajña* in all the *kṣetra*." The physical body and the entire field of objects, anything you objectify, can be taken as *kṣetra*. That one who knows the *kṣetra*, who is conscious of the *kṣetra*, is called the self, the *ātmā*, the *kṣetrajña*.

This is the setup. Narayana says, "The one who knows this body is called *kṣetrajña*, the *jīva* who is a *naraḥ*." And who is he? *Narottama*. "Hey, Bharata, Arju-

na, understand that the *kṣetrajñā* is not separate from me. He is in fact me. *Kṣetrajñāṁ māṁ viddhi*; Understand the *kṣetrajñā* as myself." What a thing to say, that in the *kṣetrajñā* there is no difference because the *kṣetrajñā* is myself. There is only one *kṣetrajñā*. And all other, all *kṣetras*, are objects of knowledge. Consciousness is the nature of *ātmā*, and there is no second consciousness. That *ātmā*, *kṣetrajñā*, is non-separate and is only one.

This is the *aikyam*, but it does not mean joining together. This *aikyam* means all that is there is one, one without a second. This *aikyam* is what is revealed in the *śāstra*, in the Mahabharata, all over. Even in the beginning we will see Vyasa talks about this *aikyam* everywhere.

Until this *aikyam* is known and assimilated, life is a drama. All the dramatics you see in life - what drama life is. Until one knows, life is a big drama, a play. There are any number of people in the cast. The world becomes a stage, and we all play roles, and for each there is a confusion as to which is the person and which is the role. The role and the person are rolled into one. Therefore in the drama of life you will find all this: wars, battles, problems, egos, attachment, pride, humiliation and more. But then finally, "all's well that ends well" if through all this drama we are able to recognize that *nara* and *narottama* are one.

Arjuna is an accomplished *nara*, a man of *dharma* and of success. There are two types of dharmic people. Some are good because they are not courageous enough to be bad. These are basic, simple people. In common language and in fact, some of them may be called *sādhus*. They are incapable of committing a mistake: even if he wants to do it he cannot do it. They are cowards, too timid to cross the borders. Then there are those who do all those things. We are talking about one who is well-accomplished, successful in life, adored by people, whose entire Kuru family was adorned by the presence of Arjuna. Because of that one person the whole family gains a name. We will see that at one point in the epic, Duryodhana goes away thinking that he is better off having Krishna's fierce army on his side rather than having a non-combatant Krishna. Duryodhana thinks he has gotten the better of Arjuna by choosing the support of Krishna's army. There is a mischievous smile on Krishna's lips that only Krishna knew. With that smile,

of course, Krishna turned to Arjuna and said, "Hey, you had the chance to choose, to gain victory. Why did you choose me? You are the loser in this." Arjuna smiled, he laughed and said, "What are you saying? I know what I have got. All that I want is you. This is enough. I have chosen you because I know victory is mine. I know when you are there, where *nara* is there, where the *narottama* is there, victory will be there. I do not care whether I win or lose as long as you are with me. People through history will of course remember you, because you are Lord Krishna, but I will go along with you. People will remember me as well. In fact, as *pārtha*, as *nara*, and you as *pārthasārathi*, my charioteer, they will have to remember me first."

The Lord and the *jīva* have to be remembered here. Arjuna is to be remembered but for whom we would not have the Bhagavad Gita. The Gita is the pendant in the necklace of Mahabharata's one hundred thousand verses. It is in the middle of the Mahabharata. It is because of the Gita that *nara* and *narottama* is so important. Arjuna is remembered here as the symbol of the human being - a fine, versatile, accomplished human being committed to *dharma*. He had his own weaknesses, but he could not do wrong. He had achieved the level that a human being can accomplish in *saṁsāra*. Just as Arjuna could, everyone who can accomplish that level can thereafter accomplish everything. Therefore let Arjuna be remembered.

The author, Vyasa, is remembered and venerated. Sarasvati is the goddess of knowledge. That effulgent being is to be remembered here, because all that is in Mahabharata is nothing but Sarasvati. There is so much Sarasvati here: it is all knowledge. Whatever knowledge humanity has gathered over generations is all here. In the four Vedas all that is said is, in essence, here. The book itself is knowledge alone. Vyasa is the author, so named because he could expand everything. From one simple value he could create an expansive story. He could expand a topic, and he could also put it briefly. Look at his Brahmasutras: *athāto brahmajijñāsā*; he goes to the next line. *Janmādyasya yataḥ*; almost before you have heard it he goes to the next line: *śāstrayonitvāt. Tattusamanvayāt; īkṣaternāśabdām*; he has gone to the next *sūtra*. He can put everything together in a small *sutra*, or he can present the same thing in the vast tapestry of this epic. That is called mastery. He covers the whole subject matter of the Veda.

Shakespeare was praised for his mind once described as the platform of the world. He understood the human emotions so well. The world of the platform means the world of humanity, the human world. Shakespeare had a grasp of emotions. He had the gift of expressing emotions in his characters and in their words and in his plots and in his places. He was a great plot creator. Everything will be going along well and, in one turn, everything is a mess. That skill with making plots is something amazing. Ramayana too is all plots, all drama. Kaikeyi and Manthara, suddenly the coronation of Rama is stopped, and without that there would be no Ramayana. The drama is all in the story, in the plot, something changes; life has all those twists and turns. One fall and dramatically everything changes; that's the drama of life. It is all plot. Otherwise there is no *masala*. All difficult situations are *masala*. *Masala* is spices. Chop, chop, chop; what would it be without spices? All colorless.

That is Vyasa, the great plotmaker. Through all the plots he has to convey the message. Two things are there, one is *dharma*, the other is *mokṣa*, self-knowledge. *Dharma* and *jñānam*, and as in real life certain things are required – politics, logistics *et cetera*. Whatever in real life happens, that is presented in the verses, sometimes in an exaggerated fashion. That is how poetry is. It has to be exaggerated. In Indian movies there has to be a tree and this fellow has to go around and around it singing, while the girl is singing somewhere nearby in a pitch no human being can sing. In real life no one goes around a tree singing a song. But it has to be there, without that there is no Indian movie. Any Indian movie they make without this loses its shirt. There must be a little bit of exaggeration; they take a leaf from Mahabharata.

All the classical sentiments, humor, everything, is in the verses. All kinds of emotions you can see. Vyasa is the one who can expand. That is his name. Salutations unto him. After that alone one should begin this Jayam. There is some question as to whether Vyasa himself composed this beginning. Did he ask us to do *namaskāra* to him? It is not like that. Therefore this is an introduction to Mahabharata. It tells how this Mahabharata has come into this world. Vyasa wrote Mahabharata, but it is told by Vaishampayana to Janamejaya, who is conducting a major ritual, *yāga*. That is how it begins. Vaishampayana talked to Janamejaya. This great epic written by Vyasa is told by another person. You must remember that

setting for this part of it. It begins like this:

om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya
om namaḥ pitāmahāya
om namaḥ prajāpatebhyaḥ
om namaḥ kṛṣṇadvaipāyana
om namaḥ sarvaviḥnavināyakebhyaḥ

This perhaps came a little later in time. This all came from the palm leaves. You must remember when you are reading anything like this, anything ancient, it was all written on palm leaves. You must imagine how it has all come to us in this form. On palm leaves alone these were all printed. The fellow who is copying writes every stroke, and he wants to see it is all copied before the teacher has a heart attack. There are one hundred thousand verses. To make even one copy is not an ordinary undertaking. That was the only printing available. That is why if you give a book away it is gone for good. It will not come back to you. You give your daughter in marriage and she is gone. That's it. She has gone to that family and all its problems. If things go well, you do not hear anything. If things do not go well, you will of course hear every day. Money is like that too; given money does not come back either. You should never give your money to somebody to make money for you. Nobody is going to do that.

To be continued...

From the EDITOR's desk...

Arsha Vidya Newsletter is regularly publishing various reports from Arsha Vidya related organisations. In order to encourage and accommodate these reports following points are suggested, in view of the fact that **Vedanta related articles** from Arsha Vidya Swamijis and Swaminijis are given prime importance.

- ◇ Reports should reach Editor (Ramachandran) avgnl2014@gmail.com well in advance preferably before 15th of the respective month.
- ◇ Reports, ideally, **should not exceed more than one page**. Accompanying photos, if any, will only be put in the wrapper pages (based on the availability of printing space).
- ◇ Camp reports feedback from participants, if any, also to be accommodated within one page report.
- ◇ Diacritical marks corresponding to Sanskrit terminology should be compatible to ITRANS transliteration scheme.
- ◇ Reports are to be given both in **word as well as in pdf format**.

Introducing Arsha Seva Kendram

(Coimbatore, Mysuru & Kovilpatti)

Drawing inspiration from the teachings of Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati, a non-profit public charitable Trust, Arsha Seva Kendram (ASK), was founded in 2019 by Dr. Jayakumar S. Ammangudi, Srinivasan Krishnasamy, and Sunitha Ramaiah in Coimbatore. The activities of ASK are as follows -

Promoting Advaita Vedanta, Sanskrit, Indian Culture and Heritage -

- ◇ The Vedanta classes focus on Adi Shankara Bhashya, and are conducted in sync with the teachings of Pujya Swamiji.
- ◇ Over a dozen of Sanskrit classes at 4 competency levels by expert teachers.
- ◇ A few heritage courses currently on are Amarakosha (for children and adults separately) and Indian Knowledge Systems (chaturdasha vidyaa sthaanaani).
- ◇ Chanting courses on Bhagavad Gita, Soundarya Lahiri and Vishnu- sahasranaamam (for children).
- ◇ A total of ~300 students world-over are currently enrolled in these courses. We have an alumni strength of ~900.



Cultural Revival -

Cultural Revival is a critical component of Arsha Seva Kendram's outreach. Inspired by the success of a small Vilakku Pooja (Lamp) attended by 10 women in March 2023, another pooja was conducted in Nagalapuram/ Kovilpatti (near EttayaPuram, birthplace of the sage-poet Subramania Bharati) in August. The Pooja was led by a volunteer and ~80 ladies followed in performing the ritual. Our Trustee Srinivasanji gave a talk on the significance of Pooja and emphasised on its daily practice at home.



Government School Programs -

ASK's cultural revival programs captured the attention of a local government

school in Mallankinaru, near Virudhunagar district. ASK conducted competitions, including quiz, drawing, music, and general behaviour for ~120 children from 8 schools in August 2023. This event featured 8 judges from nearby colleges who assessed the students based on the questions on Ramayana, Mahabharata, local history, and dharma. The students, teachers, and principals of these schools were very thrilled after witnessing such a program for the first time in decades.

Supporting Veda Pathashalas and poor Vaidikas -

During Covid, many Vedic Pandits lost their livelihood. ASK provided a subsistence allowance of Rs. 3,000 for 32 families. Hearing about our services, ASK started receiving calls from Vedic families. We also provided medical assistance to the tune of 2 lakhs to about seven families suffering from Covid attacks or road accidents, and financed Antyeshti (last rites) for a family.



Environment: Swami Dayananda Saraswati Vedanta Vanam

ASK was contacted by Swami Paravidyananda Saraswati of Coimbatore, who initiated a local forestation drive. ASK contributed in a very small way towards Swami Dayananda Saraswati Vedanta Vanam for creating 1000 fruit and flower bearing saplings planted at Pedampalli, near Coimbatore last year. The success of this project, executed and monitored by Siruthuli, led to the next phase called Shivoham Vanam.

Arsha Manjari - Children's Heritage Summer Camp, Bengaluru

A Vedic Heritage summer camp was conducted in Apr-May 2023 in the urban locale in Bangalore, for children of 7 to 14 years of age. Values such as strength, righteousness, determination, humility, and disciplined life were highlighted through stories from Ramayana, Mahabharata and Puranas. Children were also introduced to Sanskrit, bhajans, art and craft, etc. The program was fully conducted by a set of dedicated experts volunteering for the cause of loka-kalyana without expecting any monetary or other benefits whatsoever.



Arsha Gokulam - A holistic Tuition and Growth Centre for Empowering the Underprivileged

One of ASK's flagship programs named "Arsha Gokulam" is a full-time activity focussing on the Education and Empowerment of the underprivileged children and youth.

- ◇ At the Civil Track of the Global 2023 **G-20** of which India is the Chair, our program was featured as an 'udaaharan' (role model) for successfully implementing one of the themes – 'Education of the Underprivileged'.
- ◇ Focus on inculcating right academic as well as spiritual education from an early age.
- ◇ From 15 students, the program has organically evolved and has impacted the lives of more than 100 underprivileged students in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.
- ◇ More than 25 volunteer teachers from across the world regularly conduct online and on-site courses for students on various topics ranging from Dharma, soft skills, curriculum subjects, personality development, and career guidance.
- ◇ Extra-curricular activities are Carnatic and Light Music, Bharatanatyam, Literature, Theater Drama, Drawing & Painting.
- ◇ Financial assistance is provided to cover their education fees and other related expenditures. Support is also extended to immediate family members of students during any crisis.
- ◇ Many success stories from academic excellence, arts and sports.
- ◇ Few graduates have started working and adding to the income of their families.
- ◇ Facilities at the Arsha Gokulam include laptops for the students, 30 bicycles, a high-speed internet connection, a well-equipped library, an Electrical & Electronics lab, a projector system, a scanner, CCTV, wall-mounted TVs, STEM-based educational kits, etc.
- ◇ Healthy home cooked snacks are given every evening when youth return from institutions hungry, and annadaanams are organised on festivals and on special days.

Our Seva projects are fully supported by dakshina from students and well wishers. We welcome all to be part of our journey of self-discovery, as well as monetary and other forms of support.

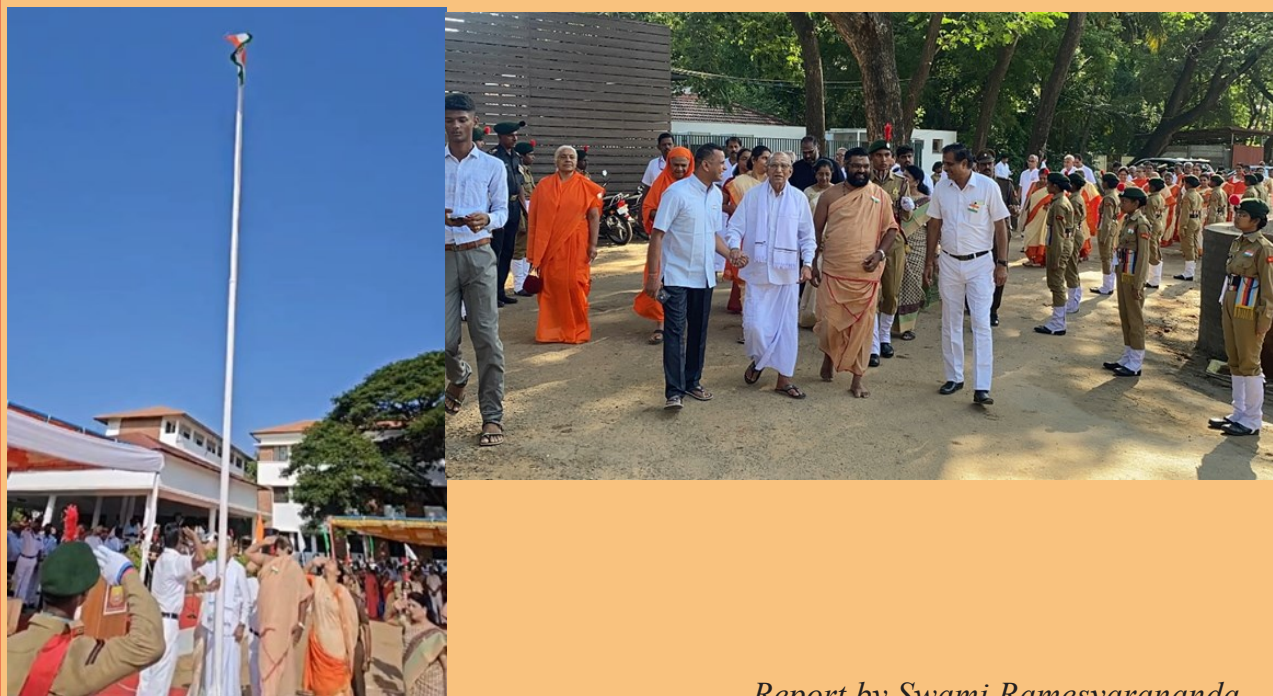
For more details contact Dr. Jayakumar, jayakum108@gmail.com, +91 89033-02805

Website : www.arshasevakendram.org

- Report by Dr. Jayakumar

INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS at MANJAKUDI

The 76th Independence Day celebrations were conducted by the Schools and College of Swami Dayananda Saraswati Educational Trust at their School Playground in Manjakkudi on August 15th 2023. The students of all grades participated in the function. Acharya Shri. Rangaji and Acharya Smt. Suryapriyaji were ceremonially welcomed by the NCC students, teachers and Principal of the School. The function was presided by Acharya Shri. Rangaji and Acharya Smt. Suryapriyaji, hoisting the National Flag. Flag hoisting was followed by a parade marching past the flag by the NCC Students, who did their respects to the Chief guests and Swamijis presiding over the function. Acharya Shri. Rangaji gave his presidential address to Students on the topic of Freedom - as propagated by Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati and enriched them with the idea of Freedom of Oneself. He mentioned even though we have gained independence from foreign rulers, the real Freedom is found in only our sanatana dharma for which Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati is a leading torch-bearer in our generation. The Students participated enthusiastically during Acharyaji's talk. The function ended with Students' Independence day talks in English and Tamil.



- Report by Swami Ramesvarananda

Book Release – Tamil Translation of Action and Reaction

Swami Ramesvaranandaji walked the students through the scintillating journey of AVR&PT. He explained how Swamiji 's life, an epitome of Tapas, started taking shape into random publications and then taking a premium, valued and professional shape through AVRPT, which today is making the publications available to every seeker across the globe through print, Kindle, app and web media. As an additional step, recently AVR&PT has taken up translations of “moments with oneself” series. As a fitting tribute to Pujya Swamiji, செயலும் எதிர்வினையும், the tamil translation of Action and Reaction was released by Swami Ramesvaranandaji. The translation work was taken up by Acharya Suryapriyaji and Acharya Rangaji.

Aradhana – Compositions of Pujya Swamiji

Both the Acharyajis' envisioned that every year, Swamiji's compositions which are loka priyam and deep in their Vedantic content shall be sung for every Jayanthi. Starting with “Bhavaye Paramatmanam” and ending Mangalam with “Bho Shambho” three compositions can be selected on rotation basis every year. This way, Swamiji will be remembered and celebrated as a simple, yet profound teacher. During this 94th Jayanthi, apart from Bhavaye Paramatmanam and Bho Shambho, Vandeham Sharadha, Tyajare Bhava Bhaya Thaapam and Hey Govinda were selected and sung.

Pujya Swamiji – A treasure

Acharya Shri.Rangaji, over the past 4 -5 years, has been rendering a talk as a tribute to Pujya Swamiji capturing very significant, standing out factors that hold him as a Sampradayavit. Acharya Shri. Rangaji often quotes that these are the factors that “modern vedanta teaching have ignored or misrepresented”. Starting with Pramanam, followed by Understanding Ishvara, Adhikaritam, Freedom, this year, Meditation was the topic. Acharyaji, explained the precision with which Pujya Swamiji explained meditation as an inevitable sadhana, yet, not as a direct sadhana for jnanam. Acharyaji's talk was complemented with Swami Ramesvaranandaji's concluding remarks about Pujya Swamiji.

- Report by Swami Ramesvarananda

Jnanapravaha, Manjakudi - Retreat Report August 2023

Advaita Bharati conducted a retreat at Jnanapravaha, Manjakkudi from August 12, 2023 to August 15, 2023. Founder Acharya of Advaita Bharati Smt. Suryapriyaji taught Drg-Dṛśya-Viveka of Swami Vidyaranya to about 50 vidyarthees who had come to Manjakkudi from all around the world, majority from Chennai.

The retreat was blessed and inaugurated by Swami Ramesvaranandaji. As a fitting inauguration Swamiji left the audience contemplative on why one needs to learn Vedanta. Also, present was Swamini Sumatmanandaji, who along with Swamiji and Acharyaji lit the traditional lamp. The session was graced by the presence of Respected Trustee of Swami Dayananda Saraswati Educational Trust – Shri. Srinivasanji.

Camp also included meditation session conducted by Acharyaji and Dakshina-murthy Pooja by all students.

Acharyaji's approach to the traditional teaching concluded with students summarizing the entire DDV text divided into pre-assigned portions. This was a unique aspect valued and enjoyed by all.



- Report by Swami Ramesvarananda

Ganga Yoga Retreat

The Ganga Yoga Retreat led by Ishwarya Chaitanya includes asana, pranayama, meditation as well as relaxation.

Swamini Svatmavidyanandaji will be gracing us with her talks on the topic of 'The Yoga of Objectivity

Dates: November 10-15, 2023

Location: Swami Dayananda Ashram, Rishikesh.

Kindly visit www.kulahouseofyoga.com/retreats for more details

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