

# *Arsha Vidya Newsletter*

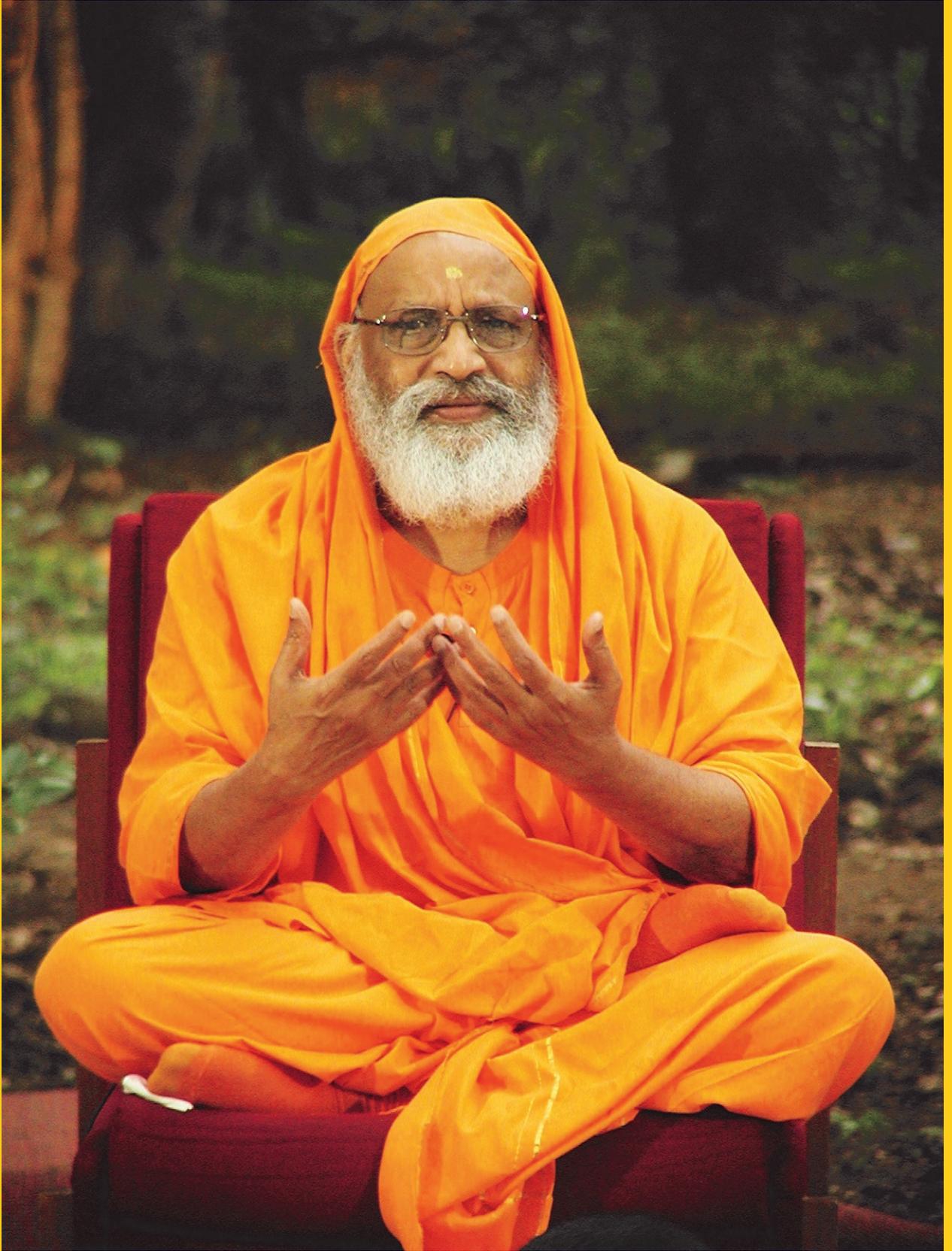
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**Arsha Vidya Pitham  
Swami Dayananda Ashram**

Sri Gangadhareswar Trust  
Purani Jhadi, Rishikesh  
Pin 249 201, Uttarakhanda  
Ph.0135-2431769  
Fax: 0135 2430769  
Website: www.dayananda.org  
Email: dayas1088@gmail.com

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72, Bharat Nagar  
Amaravathi Road, Nagpur  
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Phone: 91-0712-2523768  
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Institute of Vedanta and Sanskrit  
P.O. Box No.1059  
Saylorsburg, PA, 18353, USA  
Tel: 570-992-2339  
Fax: 570-992-7150  
570-992-9617  
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Sruti Seva Trust  
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Fax 91-0422-2657002  
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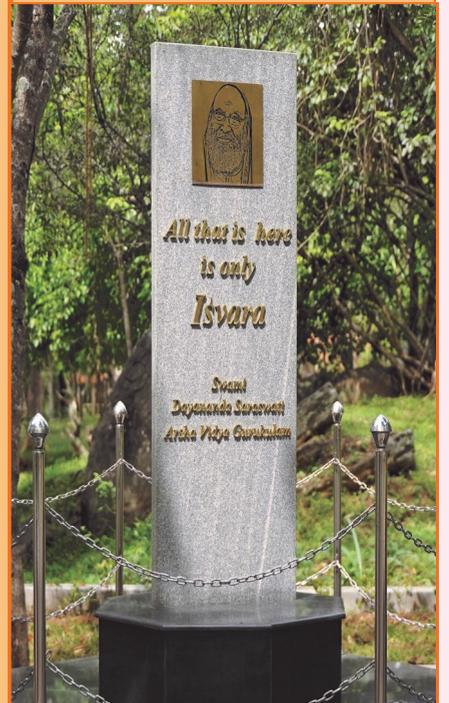
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**Sādhana-pañcakam**  
**Pujya Swamiji's transcribed talk**

*This is the thirteenth part of the serial article, continuation from Feb 2022 newsletter.*

## ṢADLIṄGAS - THE SIX INDICATORS

Resolving this equation to understand the *tātparyā*, vision of the *sāstra* is a problem, however. *Dvaitins*, those who are committed to duality, will torture the sentence and squeeze out some other meaning. They will invoke the Kūrma Purāṇa,<sup>70</sup> or some such text as proof. The Kūrma Purāṇa also does not say what they claim, but they will come up with something to back up their claim. To be clear about the meaning, therefore, you must inquire into the meaning of the sentences. This implies the indicators of *tātparyā*, starting with *upakrama* and *upasaṁhara*.<sup>71</sup> First you have to see the *upakrama*, what is at the beginning, and the *upasaṁhara*, what is at the end. The sixth chapter of Chāndogya Upaniṣad begins with the statement that before creation, the entire world was in the form of *sat* alone. It was and still is non-dually one.<sup>72</sup> Non-dual means *sajātīya-vijātīya-svagata-bheda-rahitam advitīyam*,<sup>73</sup> that which is totally free from all forms of duality. That non-dual Brahman alone was there. Then afterwards, the creation was pointed out. At the end of it, the text says *aitadātmyam idaṁ sarvaṁ*,<sup>74</sup> all that is here is not separate from this *ātmā*. All this exists in *ātmā* alone because everything has come from *ātmā*, is sustained by *ātmā*, and goes back into *ātmā*.

This explanation is preceded by the story of Śvetaketu and his father Uddālaka, in which Uddālaka says, 'If you know *mṛt*, clay, then you have known all that is

<sup>70</sup> *Purāṇas*- texts with stories of the various incarnations of Lord Viṣṇu, Lord Śiva, Lord Kṛṣṇa, etc.

<sup>71</sup> उपक्रमोपसंहारौ अभ्यासोपूर्वता फलम् । अर्थवादोपपत्ती च लिङ्गतात्पर्यनिर्णयि । - Introduction and conclusion, repetition, revelation of something previously unknown, result, praise, and reasoning are known as the six elements that define the *tātparyā* of a text

<sup>72</sup> Chāndogyopaniṣad 6.2.1

<sup>73</sup> *sajātīya-bheda* – difference within a class; *vijātīya-bheda* – difference between classes; *svagata-bheda* – internal differences; *rahitam* – without; *advitīyam* – non-dual.

<sup>74</sup> Chāndogyopaniṣad 6.8.7

made of clay.' In the example, clay is the *svarūpa*. Word and meaning alone account for differences, but what is there is only one clay. That is the *mahā-upakrama*, the first *upakrama*.

Afterwards, when the teaching takes place, the statement that, 'Before this creation the entire world was in the form of *sat* alone, and it was and still is non-dually one', is the *upakrama*, the introduction. Therefore you should see the introduction and the conclusion in order to find out the meaning of the sentence and the *tātparyā*. If they share a commonality, then the subject matter is only *ekam eva advitīyam vastu*, one non-dual existence, knowing which everything is going to be known. If the world is different from the *ātmā*, then by knowing *ātmā* you will neither know the world nor *Īśvara*. In such a case, *Īśvara* is different from the *jagat*, so you will not know him at all. So how can one say *atat tvam asi*, 'You are not that? Or *tasya tvam asi*, you belong to that. You are a fraction of that?' There is no fraction here, there is only the whole.

Once we have examined *upakrama* and *upasamhāra*, we look at the aspect of *apūrvatā*, something that is not previously known. What is taught in the *śāstra* is something that is not already known to you by other *pramāṇas*, other means of knowledge. If *śabda*, words of the *śruti* are *pramāṇa*, then what is taught by the *śāstra* should not be available for your experience, sense perception or witness perception. It will not even be available for different types of inference such as *anumāna*, *arthāpatti*, *anupalabधि*, or *upamāna*.<sup>77</sup>

Only then does it become the subject matter of the Veda. So we have to see whether or not the subject matter is already known to you. If the *śāstra* repeats something that is known to you, then it is only *anuvāda*, a restatement. It has no *apūrvatā*. Here, however, *apūrvatā* is there, since the fact that *ātmā* is Brahman as the cause of the *jagat* is not known to you. This knowledge is not available for an other *pramāṇa*, *anadhigata-viśaya*. No experience is going to give you the

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<sup>77</sup> The four inferences - One-step inference, two-step inference, cognition of absence, or illustration.

knowledge, 'I am Brahman, *aham idam sarvam*, I am the whole.' It is something that has to be revealed by the *śāstra*.

The third element is *upapatti*, which means logic, reasoning. This is necessary because what is unfolded by the *śruti* has to be supported by logic. It is not available for corroboration, however. What we are doing is pointing out the fallacies in the reasoning behind any other contention presented either by my intellect or by any other intellect in the world. If what is said by the *śruti* is true, then any other contention is going to be wrong. When determining the vision, we also use *upapatti* to see what is said before and what is said later, thus clearly discern how the other person's interpretation falls short. For example, when you look at *tat tvam asi* from a purely linguistic perspective, the phrase *tvam asi*, 'you are,' creates an *ākāṅkṣā*, expectation. As we saw previously, I have to tell you something that you do not already know. I need not say *atat tvam asi* because you already know that you are not that! So this is *upapatti*. We use reasoning to eliminate all other schools of thought, schools propounded by *ācāryas* who accept the Veda as a *pramāṇa*.

Then there are others, such as the Buddhists and so on, who do not accept the Veda as a *pramāṇa*. We have to deal with them also. In fact, it is easy to deal with them because all we have to do is meet them on their own ground. Their arguments are based solely on reason, and therefore we have to point out the fallacies in their reasoning. That is not difficult at all. Even if they present an argument by quoting from *smṛti*<sup>78</sup> texts, if it contradicts *śruti*, then we should go by *śruti* alone. Only *śruti* is *pramāṇa*, *smṛti* is not *pramāṇa*. If *smṛti* conforms to the *śruti*, then *smṛti* is acceptable, like the Bhagavad Gītā for example. But if you find a *smṛti* contradicting *śruti*, we should only go by *śruti*. As long as *smṛti* dovetails *śruti*, it is okay. Thus fallacious arguments must be understood as fallacious. Thereby, you must understand what *śruti* has to say. Here we use linguistics, logic, semantics, and so on in order to ascertain the meaning. First *upakrama-upasamhārau*, then *apūrvatā*

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<sup>78</sup> Smṛti – literally 'that which is remembered', a class of *śāstra* literature derived from Veda, and including purāṇas, Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata, etc

and *upapatti*. Another helpful aspect is *arthavāda*, praise, such as *ātmavit śokam tarati*, the one who knows *ātmā* crosses sorrow. The *phala*, result, is there, and praise is also there. There, the one who has gained this knowledge is said to be a *jīvanmukta*, one who does not come back later. That is the *phala*. And it is praise to say, 'he crosses sorrow.'

Then there is *abhyāsa*, repetition. Even if there is only one stray statement somewhere in the whole Veda that says *ayam ātmā brahma*,<sup>79</sup> this *ātmā* is Brahman, that would be enough. But the question is whether it is the *tātparyā*. When there is a *tātparyā* there will be repetition, because you generally repeat what is important. For example, if you are giving someone directions from one place to another, you repeat only the directions where there may be some confusion, some deviation. Wherever there is repetition, that is where the emphasis is. In Chāndogya Upaniṣad, for example, *tat tvam asi* is repeated nine times for Śvetaketu, from different standpoints. The *śāstra* says that before the creation there was one *sadātmā*, and only after the creation came the elements, which then underwent *pañcīkaraṇa*, grossification. From these come the physical world, including your physical body as well as your mind and senses, made of subtle elements. All of them have come from Brahman alone. That Brahman is *sat-cit-ānanda ātmā*. What is created is only your physical body and the *sūkṣma-śarīra*, the subtle body. The subtle and gross universe all come from Brahman. Therefore you are that Brahman, that is *ātmā*, you.

The *śāstra* also teaches this in another way, saying that anything created is not separate from its cause. The created is *nāma* and *rūpa*, word and meaning, it is *mithyā*. The *kāraṇam*, cause, is *satya*. The *kāraṇam* is *ātmā*, which is Brahman and therefore *tat tvam asi*. It is very clear. You cannot find any other meaning, unless you have some prejudice already. Even though it is so clear, some *ācāryas* still miss this. But at least all of them look upon Veda as a *pramāṇa*, which is a great

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<sup>79</sup> Māṇḍukya Upaniṣad 1.2 of Atharva Veda.

thing. There is no contention there at all. They are all *vaidikas*, followers of the Veda. Because they say Veda is a *pramāṇa*, we can argue with them and make them look at the whole thing, using *upakrama-upsamhārau*, *apūrvatā*, *upapatti*, *arthavāda*, *abhyāsa*, and *phala*. The *phala* is *mokṣa*.

The teaching of Śvetaketu is in the sixth chapter of Chāndogya Upaniṣad and the same teaching is in the seventh chapter. In that chapter, Nārada comes to Sanatkumāra and says, 'I am in sorrow, please get me across this ocean of sorrow.'<sup>80</sup> So Sanatkumāra has to teach him. Before teaching, he wants to know how much Nārada knows, so he asks him, 'What do you know?' Nārada says, 'I know the *R̥gveda*, the *Sāmaveda*, *Yajurveda*...' He rattles off a big list. Then, Sanatkumāra says, 'So what? You know everything, except one thing.' It is like the person who performed a marriage ceremony for four days, forgetting one small thing, namely to tie the knot!

Similarly, Nārada knows everything, all the *aparā-vidyā*, except for the one knowledge by which one knows Brahman. And therefore he has to ask, 'Please help me to cross the ocean of sorrow.' Then Sanatkumāra teaches him that knowledge, called *bhūma-vidyā*. He says that which is not *alpam*, limited, is *bhūma*. Sanatkumāra tells him that *bhūma* means Brahman.

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<sup>80</sup> सोऽहं भगवो... शोचामि तं मा भगवाञ्छोकस्य पारं तारयतु (Chāndogyopaniṣad 7.1.3)

*To be continued...*

“Even while thinking any thought, you are free; just as the actor remains free while playing the role of the beggar. If this is clear, then the world cannot cause a problem for you. *Vēdānta* doesn't remove any limitations, it only makes you understand that you are already free from all of them.”

- Swami Dayananda Saraswati

**Kaivalyopaniṣad**  
**Swami Viditatmananda Saraswati's transcribed talk**

*This is the tenth part of the serial article, continuation from Feb 2022 newsletter.*

***Sādhana and Sādhyā: Means and End***

**Now the teacher responds to the request of the student.**

तस्मै स होवाच पितामहश्च  
श्रद्धाभक्तिध्यानयोगादवेहि ॥ २ ॥  
*tasmai sa hovāca pitāmahaśca*  
*śraddhābhaktidhyānayogādavehi*

तस्मै - to him सः - he ह - indeed उवाच - said पितामहः - the grandsire च - and श्रद्धा-भक्ति-  
ध्यानयोगात्स्वे - by trust (in the teaching), commitment and meditation अवेहि - may  
you know

To him the grandsire said, “May you know through *śraddhā*, trust in the teaching, *bhakti*, commitment, and *dhyāna*, meditation.” (2)

*Pitāmaha* means grandfather. This is another name of Brahmājī, because, as the creator, all the creatures are his progeny. He is the grandfather also because he created the Prajāpatis, who then created this world. Prajāpati is our creator and father, and his father, Brahmājī, is, therefore, our grandfather or grandsire.

To Āśvalāyana, who thus requested, the grandsire responded.

The fact that the teacher responded to the student's request means that the teacher must have been convinced that the student was sincere and eligible, along the lines we mentioned before. It is just as possible that the teacher may ignore or postpone granting the request. There are instances described in the *śāstra* where the teacher did not respond right away. In the Praśnopaniṣad<sup>1</sup>, six learned aspirants go to the *guru*, called Pippalāda. The teacher welcomes them but says, “Live here the life of austerity, self-control, and faith for one year and at the end of the year, ask me whatever questions you have. If I know the answers to your

<sup>1</sup> Pr.Up. 1.2

questions I will explain them to you.” It means that they were asked to live with the teacher for one year to prepare themselves. Here *pitāmaha* Parameṣṭhī replies to the student right away. However, even though the request is for *brahma-vidyā*, Brahmājī does not start teaching it right away. He first teaches the requisite preparedness or the means to gain *brahma-vidyā*.

### ***Sraddhā*, implicit trust and understanding**

There are two steps in the *sādhana* or means to prepare for this subtle knowledge. The first is called the *bahiraṅga-sādhana* or external means and the second is the *antaraṅga-sādhana* or inner means. *Karma-yoga* or performing actions in the spirit of worship constitutes the *bahiraṅga-sādhana*. Here, however, *pitāmaha* skips this step and prescribes instead, only the threefold *antaraṅga-sādhana*. He says, “*śraddhā-bhakti-dhyānayogād avehi.*” ‘May you know *brahman* through *śraddhā*, *bhakti*, and *dhyāna*, may you cultivate these three qualities, may your mind enjoy these three dispositions.’

The first quality is *śraddhā*. This is not quite the same as faith. We often find *śraddhā* being translated as faith and it seems to create an impression that it is like the faith that is required by other religions. Here the meaning is somewhat different. As Pūjya Swamiji would say, faith is of two kinds: one is believing in something that is unverifiable and the other is believing in something that is verifiable. The first kind of belief is believing in something that you can never verify in your lifetime. Take heaven, for instance. We have to accept the existence of heaven on trust, because we can never see it. As long as we are in a human body, we can never see heaven. For that matter, that there is a God in heaven also becomes a matter of unverifiable belief. Vedānta does not demand that kind of belief or that kind of faith. Vedānta teaches something that we can discover here and now in our own lives. We can verify the truth of what Vedānta teaches. If not now, it can be verified at some later date in this life itself. We can keep on verifying as we proceed, because there are landmarks and we can keep on discovering those landmarks; that is how one’s faith becomes more and more firm. This faith or *śraddhā* or trust is based on understanding, rather than simply on blind belief.

The same principle of trust applies even in the discipline of science. The fact that  $e = mc^2$  is not a matter of belief for a student of physics. He has to equip himself with the proper courses, as well as continuous study, so that he may understand the equation one day; until then he has to have *śraddhā* in a verifiable belief.

A Vedāntin has no need for a faith that is blind or without understanding. Sometimes, it is very convenient for people to have blind faith, "I trust you, so I need not take any responsibility. I am at your disposal so just tell me what to do." Vedāntins do not tell us what to do; they only ask us to understand. If we do something because someone tells us to, it is an obligation we are fulfilling. If our attitude is, "This is how it is said in the Bhagavad Gita, so I should speak the truth," or "Swamiji says I should speak the truth, so I should speak the truth," how long can we oblige this way? We cannot oblige even the teacher forever. We can only oblige him as long as it is convenient and then, at some point, stop obliging. However, when the teacher's value becomes our own value, following the value is no more an obligation. Similarly, here, our trust is based on our convictions.

The Vivekacūḍāmaṇi<sup>2</sup> describes *śraddhā* as *śāstrasya guruvākyasya satyabuddhyāvadhāraṇā*, "the conviction that the words of the *śāstra* and the teacher are true is called *śraddhā*." What is the response of the mind when one listens to the words of the teacher unfolding the scriptures? If the mind resists or if the mind questions, it is not a learning mind; it is not favorably disposed to understand what the teacher is unfolding. The mind should be favorably disposed to the unfoldment or instructions of the teacher. That favorable disposition is called *śraddhā*. As Pūjya Swamiji would say, *śraddhā* is giving the teaching the benefit of the doubt. The *śraddhā* that Vedānta calls for is not simply accepting whatever the teacher says. Having *śraddhā* implies giving fair and due consideration to what the teacher says, because, in the end, it is possible that one may not agree with what is said.

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<sup>2</sup> VC 25

The 'I' is the subject matter of this teaching and yet we already have conclusions about ourselves. The ego is a bunch of conclusions and the ego usually wants to perpetuate itself. Therefore, whenever something is said that goes against the perception of the ego, there is a tendency to resist or reject. One cannot learn as long as this tendency prevails. Having both *śraddhā* and *bhakti* or devotion, the second quality mentioned by Brahmājī, enables the student to identify with the teacher and with the scriptures. It is important for the student to develop identification with the teacher and, through the teacher, identification with the scriptures. Only then can he become objective to his own self.

The learning requires that we scrutinize the various notions and conclusions we have about ourselves. The individual or 'I' is the subject matter of the scriptures and the only obstruction to the right perception of the self is the fact that we entertain various misconceptions or misperceptions about ourselves. It is possible to recognize a misconception only when one is objective with reference to that idea. Therefore, we need to become objective with reference to ourselves and with reference to our conclusions, by creating a distance with them. How do we create such a distance? It can be done by identifying with the teacher and then scrutinizing or examining our own conclusions about ourselves from the standpoint of the teacher and the scriptures.

Traditionally, we do not see a difference between the teacher and the scriptures. We believe that the teacher is identified with the scriptures and, therefore, becomes our gateway to the scriptures. What we really want to learn is the teaching of the scripture, the Upaniṣad. But inasmuch as we do not have the direct access to the Upaniṣad, the teacher becomes our gateway to the Upaniṣad. Because we accept that the teacher is identified with the scripture, our identification with the teacher also becomes identification with the scripture. It is then that we can examine our own conclusions about ourselves, about the world, and about God from the standpoint of the scripture, and whenever we find that our conclusions need to be changed, we are willing to change them. That degree of preparedness is all

that is required.

It is necessary that we understand and realize the fallacy of our own notions about ourselves because it is in that understanding that the notions can be dropped. This is the process of letting go of our notions, called the letting go of ignorance. It is possible to let go of one's notions only when there is *śraddhā*, the implicit trust that what the teacher is saying is right. We see him as a well-wisher and recognize that he has no agenda. We know that there is no reason why the scriptures or teacher should wish ill of us or misguide us. That person alone is ideally suited to be a teacher who has no personal agenda and no agenda for the student. Other than a commitment to make the student see the self the teacher doesn't want anything, so when the student is convinced of this, it is very easy for him to surrender to the teacher. *Tadviddhi praṇipātena*, "Know that by prostration (to the wise)."<sup>3</sup> Such *praṇipāta* or long prostration is nothing but the student's expression of faith and trust. Lord Kṛṣṇa says, *śraddhāvān labhate jñānam*, "One who has *śraddhā* indeed gains the knowledge."<sup>4</sup> So having *śraddhā* is required as an *antaraṅga-sādhana* or internal means. It is not possible to will *śraddhā*, just as it is not possible to will love. One cannot will to have trust in somebody; it just has to happen.

I often come across the question, "How does one find a *guru*?" Well, somehow it has to click. When one discovers *śraddhā* and *bhakti* for a teacher, I would say it has clicked. It is nothing but the grace of God; it is the grace of our virtuous deeds or *punya-karma*. If we find that we lack *śraddhā* and *bhakti*, we can pray to the Lord to grant us *śraddhā* and *bhakti*.

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<sup>3</sup> BG 4.34

<sup>3</sup> BG 4.39

*To be continued...*

**Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa**  
**As Taught by Swami Dayananda Saraswati**

*This is the ninth part of the serial article, continuation from Feb 2022 newsletter.*

स जगाम वनं वीरः प्रतिज्ञामनुपालयन् । पितुर्वचननिर्देशात् कैकेय्याः प्रियकारणात् ॥ १-१-२४

*sa jagāma vanam vīraḥ pratijñāmanupālayan ।*

*piturovacananirdeśāt kaikeyyāḥ priyakāraṇāt ॥ 1-1-24*

Brave Rama never delayed one moment. He went to the forest as if that were his place, as though he were born in the woods. He changed his dress, leaving his formal wear behind. He wore rough clothing for this rough life. No longer was he a prince; he lived in the woods as a simple person. Because of the honorable words of his father, and to please his stepmother Kaikeyi, out of sheer love, understanding her anxiety about her own future, appreciating the whole thing and not bearing any ill will toward her, seeing her in a compassionate light, and for her satisfaction, he left happily.

Even if a son's father has died a vow still stands. Even if only after his father has died the son hears that his father has made a vow, it is incumbent on the son to honor his father's words and to fulfill any promise. That is the *dharmasāstra*. Even today, a good son, as his sacred duty, will honor his father's debts, that his father's freedom be assured.

Rama had recently married the princess Janaki, daughter of Janaka. Janaki Sita is her name. When Rama, leaving for the forest, went to take leave of her, he found his other two brothers, Lakshmana and Shatrughna, with her. When he told them of the boon and his plans, they all wanted to go with him. Lakshmana was furious and wanted them all to leave Kaikeyi behind. Soon, Shatrughna had come to know all that had happened between the old maid and Kaikeyi, and he had the old woman by the hair.

Lakshmana said, "How could Dasharatha do this? Out of infatuation for his appealing wife he gave this woman this boon. As princes, should we accept what he has done? We should do away with all of them." His anger carried him away.

Then Rama asked Lakshmana, "What are you saying? You sound like a

street boy.” Lakshmana settled down. But then he started up again. He could not contain himself. Only his love and respect and devotion for Rama, his eldest brother, allowed Lakshmana to compose himself. But Shatrughna, Lakshmana’s twin, was equally infuriated; he was uncontrollable and wanted to take action. Only Rama could control them. He calmed his brothers and made them realize their responsibilities.

When Rama said he was going, they all wanted to go. Somehow Rama convinced Shatrughna to stay and agreed that Lakshmana would accompany him to the forest. He could not leave Lakshmana behind because Lakshmana would not hear of it. To avoid any more havoc in the palace, Rama consented that one brother would go with him.

Rama wanted to leave Sita. Sita said, “What would I do here?”

“There will be danger, tigers, in the jungle.” said Rama.

“I am not worried, you will be there. What happens to you will happen to me. You will take care of the dangers, and I will come and be useful to you.” She did everything she could to convince Rama. She dressed herself exactly like Rama, in clothes suitable for the forest life. She left behind silk and saris and ornaments. She dropped everything and wore the dress of a female ascetic. Finally, Rama knew that arguing was useless; after all the negotiations, he allowed his two friends to accompany him. Lakshmana and Sita were to follow Rama to the forest.

तं व्रजन्तं प्रियो भ्राता लक्ष्मणोऽनुजगाम ह । स्नेहादœ विनयसम्पन्नः सुमित्रानन्दवर्धनः ॥ १-१-२५

भ्रातरं दयितो भ्रातुः सौभ्रात्रमनुदर्शयन् । १-१-२६

*taṁ vrajantaṁ priyo bhrātā lakṣmaṇo ’nujagāma ha |*

*snehād vinayasampannaḥ sumitrānandavardhanaḥ || 1-1-25*

*bhrātaraṁ dayito bhrātuḥ saubhrātramanudarśayan |1-1-26*

Rama went to the forest to fulfill the words of his father and to please his step-mother, Kaikeyi. Lakshmana, who was to go with him, was he who made Sumitra’s happiness grow; as her son grew, her happiness grew. More often a mother becomes concerned as her child grows. When he starts shaving, she worries. But the mothers of both Lakshmana and Rama felt their joy increase, because their sons grew according to the ideal of all that was good. In every way they were a source of joy. Day by day, all their mothers’ hopes and prayers were more

than fulfilled.

Lakshmana was the beloved brother of Rama. He was humble only with respect to his brother Rama. Lakshmana was highly disciplined, yet intolerant of injustice. Rama was endlessly accommodating; he could put himself into the shoes of another person and look at the situation. The magnitude of his accommodation was like the ocean. His compassion was such that he could never hurt a person. That was Rama's extraordinary virtue. Whereas Lakshmana was always in his own shoes. If he felt that another person had done something wrong, he was not burdened by accommodation. It was only his own discipline kept him from doing wrong. That is Lakshmana. Strong, brave, and righteous, he is a little less. Only Rama was like Rama in terms of empathy. Out of sheer devotion, love, and respect born of their lives lived together since their births moments apart, showing his brotherly affection, Lakshmana followed Rama.

रामस्य दयिता भार्या नित्यं प्राणसमा हिता ॥ १-१-२६

जनकस्य कुले जाता देवमायेव निर्मिता । सर्वलक्षणसम्पन्ना नारीणामुत्तमा वधूः ॥ १-१-२७

सीताप्यनुगता रामं शशिनं रोहिणी यथा । १-१-२८

*rāmasya dayitā bhāryā nityaṁ prāṇasamā hitā ॥ 1-1-26*

*janakasya kule jātā devamāyeva nirmitā ।*

*sarvalakṣaṇasampannā nārīṇāmuttamā vadhūḥ ॥ 1-1-27*

*sītāpyanugatā rāmaṁ śaśinaṁ rohiṇī yathā ॥ 1-1-28*

Sita, the beloved wife of Rama, as inseparable as his very breath, always pleasing to him and always doing good for him, whom he wanted always by his side, who did what was to be done and would not do what was not to be done, who was found as a baby and raised by Janaka, whose body was like the body that Goddess Maya would assume, who was embellished with all the characteristics of the most virtuous woman, who was exactly as a woman should be according to the *sāstra*, who was the woman that all women would emulate, followed her husband all the way like the star Rohini that is always found with the moon.

*To be continued ...*

## The Wholeness of You by Swamini Saralananda

*This is the tenth part of the serial article, continuation from Feb 2022 newsletter.*

### Happiness Is 'I' The Beingness

We have not had any understanding of this so we don't know that the peaceful happiness there is the essence, the essential beingness, the very content of my mind. It is like how water is the content essence, of every wave. If there is nothing there to disturb the mind then that natural state is just I-one-in-being-happiness.

So, when there is no agitation to disturb and as though cover it, my happiness-nature will just be as it is, uncaused and free. Therefore, it is not really objects that I love- it is my pleased mind that I love, because it allows the happy Being, to just shine there. And that is the unconditional love. It is never not there. Could this be what my creator wants me to discover, or is it intended that I have come to this earth to suffer and stay confused about the meaning of life and love?

### 'The Peace That Passeth All Understanding' Is Myself

The nature of self is peace. "The peace that passeth all understanding", this means it is beyond my usual way of understanding things. Call it Happiness, Peace, Wholeness, Fullness, Infinite Oneness, Unity Consciousness, Unconditional Love. All these are just different words trying to make us understand the one same Self.

When I can be centered and well rooted in this Self which is the deepest profoundest being that I am, the Ultimate Happiness, then I no longer have to chase after happiness. This is when I can say I have 'made it' in life. There is nothing more desirable, more precious and lovable, than the non-wanting-free-from-lack-happy-Self. And that self is saintly because only out of that kind of absolute security in Fullness there is never any fear or need to compete with or hurt anyone. This fullness of Happiness is the ultimate wholeness-oneness of myself, the fullness and wholeness of oneness, which we all long for.

### Gaining Self-Knowledge

In the ancient eastern teaching tradition called Vedanta, which is a collective name for all the Upanishads, there are two excellent metaphors which clearly show how there is a unique teaching method to gain self-knowledge. If the teaching method is understood clearly, the student can better facilitate his/her own learning; the student can actually observe the how and why of the teaching methods. Otherwise there can always be some

subtle doubt and distrust about 'why is this supposed master teaching like this'. These examples make the topic transparent and we will closely look at them.

### Self-Evident Validity

The ignorance, as we have seen, is not any ordinary ignorance, it is a spell of all the erroneous trappings in which everyone is caught up in just naturally since birth. In order to dispel this unique ignorance, there should be an appropriately unique knowledge and teaching method. This Eastern wisdom, and from whatever part of the world it may come does not matter, when properly taught will stand on its own 'legs' i.e. it will reveal its own validity. It should not depend on any cultural trappings, no personal interpretations, it must reveal and hold its own self-evident truth.

What is meant by this is, for instance, "fire is hot"; this is only determined by what fire itself is and not any human, cultural, or scientific conceptualization. There is no English fire, Russian or Japanese fire; it's just fire. There should be finally one simple Truth, not 'many different truths': 'my truth, your truth, his truth, Bible truth, Koran truth, New Age truth, etc.'. These cannot be 'Truth' unless as we said, they stand on their own self-validating, self-evident 'legs'. Exactly the way 'fire is hot' is not something that can be negated, i.e. proven wrong. It is not a matter for belief, or creativity nor any kind of projection or opinion. Fire just is what it is, to be known as it is and not differently. We have a choice over whether we want to know it or not know it but no choice over how it is to be known, no interpretations here.

### The Non-negotable Truth Of The Self

In the previous chapters we talked about an ultimate truth of the Self and that it is a fact of my already accomplished Being-ness. It does not need to be created, hauled up, developed in anyway shape or form; it just is the very nature of who I am, a self-evident, self-revealing, existent being. Even as I am right now, I am that being. "I am" means I exist, this is not something you can negate and nor does it even ask my permission to be. The 'am' equals 'is', it exists, it cannot be denied and negated. And the 'I' is the witnessing subject, the knowing principle that knows the is-ness which is the 'am' .

Nor do I need to be improved or purified before I can know the fact of my being. Hence the effort would not be one of actually doing something to get it, but one of recognizing a mistaken identity. An imposter we call 'ego' has stepped in to take residency in my mind. And in fact, what we will see ultimately is that it is not a matter of gaining some knowledge in the way we have always done, as it is the correction, the removal, of the

MISTAKE. The teacher would be the one to remove my ignorance; she's the one to dispel the darkness and actually that is what the word "guru" means, the one who removes darkness.

### An Irreplaceable, Invaluable Story

A story: In a rural ashram there was a small group of young students, getting ready to set out on a pilgrimage; the teacher appointed the oldest one to lead and keep the group safely together. After some hours, they came to a river, and even though it was in spate, it did not look formidable and the leader asked all of them if they were sure they could swim well enough to get across. They all were sure they could and so they all entered the water; the water was so cold and the current stronger than what they had thought it would be. The leader is the first one across and now he needs to make sure they have all gotten across safely. So, he counts them as they each come up onto the bank. He knows for sure that they were 10 when they left the ashram. So, he is counting 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8, 9, .....oh my God the 10th man is missing!! He counts again and still only gets 9; lines them up differently counts again still only 9. He asks the other boys also to count and they all get 9. They had probably had a heightened level of anxiety when in the river, so all are doing the same, discounting themselves. And what made it worse, none of them could even remember who the 10th one was because a good number of students stayed back in the ashram. So, they are all now in extreme despair, especially the leader; they had checked down river; nothing; most of them are weeping.

By chance there was an old man sitting under a tree here on this side of the bank; he had seen them when they were on the other side all happy and excited; now he sees they are all just the opposite. Curious, he goes over to them and asks what the trouble is. The leader explains how ten of them left the ashram and when they came to this river and they all swam across the river, but now on this side of the bank, one is missing. And they could not even think who is the missing one. The old man, hiding a smile, seeing the real problem, he is calm and wise, a 'seer ', says to the leader, "So you're sure you are only 9 now? "Yes", the boy says. Then the man tells him, in a thoughtful, caring way, "Be at peace, all is well, I know where the 10th man is". The leader excited: "You do, oh thank god,...where, where is he". "Be calm...be patient". Since the boy is anxious for everything to be ok and since this old man seems to have nothing to gain, he's not asking for anything, there seems to be no reason not to trust what he is saying.... the boy relaxes and waits.

The old man now tells him to count again and the boy thinks.... 'what is this' and says...

“But I’ve counted so many times” .... and the old man just says, “I know, but just do it anyway, but now do it slowly”. So, the boy, managing to have a trusting attitude, begins to count again slowly. He counts out all the nine boys and then turns to the man and says “You see, only 9....”. The old man without pause then says.... “and the tenth is you. If ten of you left the ashram .... well then you have forgotten to count yourself.” So, this leader and all the other boys are of course more than relieved; in fact, the leader now feels very sheepish, has an embarrassing smile on his face to think that he could make such a silly mistake. The mistake was a temporary spell due to the over-excitement of the moment, during the spell the 10th was never lost and all it took was someone who was calm and objectively outside the problem and was able to win the boys’ trust in order to make the boy see and discover the mistake. The boy did not do something to get the 10th man, except to listen to the old man. The old man was in the right place at the right time so that he became the ‘10th man’s guru.’ So, they all got ‘enlightened’, not about how to get or where to find the 10<sup>th</sup> man.....they only needed the mistake to be pointed out and therefore corrected.... their vision was temporarily but totally clouded.

### The Salient Points And Symbology Of The Story

The boys have innocently entered the river thinking it was “all’s well and good.” Like that we have entered an ocean of ignorant ‘becoming, doing, getting and suffering’. It is a spell we are born under, and not knowing any better we discount, hardly the word, ourselves, believing just the opposite of who we really are, to be the only truth. Because it is a spell, we cannot see out from under it and neither can anyone else around us. It is a universal error. And no matter how brilliant an un-enlightened person is, it will always be the blind leading the blind.

Because of the conditions in the river, which almost overwhelmed the boys, they were all shaken up, when reaching the other side. And so, they slipped under a spell. The old man’s simple, compassionate, patient, curiosity made him approach the leader. Then he was wise enough to know (he had a teaching method) that he could not just blurt out: “You silly boy, you are not counting yourself”. Their minds were not calmed down enough to listen and get it and it may have just caused more confusion to hear such an insensitive insult. So, the old man first speaks in such a way that the boy could trust and hold on to hope. This made it so that the boy’s mind became receptive before the old man put him to ‘the task of counting’. We can say that at this point, the boy chose to have faith; but this was a faith pending discovery. Not a blind faith, because the old man had communicated that right here and now, I will show you the tenth man. It is a verifiable, tangible

10th man he was talking about. He never said, “The 10th man is not dead, he exists,....in heaven with god. “This would never be discoverable, i.e. readily verifiable; and if it is not verifiable, then it can be negated because it is not a self proving truth.

The 10th man is immediately there to be readily seen in flesh and blood; this is an incredibly important and profound distinction to be made, that there is both blind faith and a faith pending discovery. They are poles apart. Then, when the boy now knows that he had lost himself and has ‘gained’ himself back.....will there be any pride and self-congratulation? Will he become self-serving or self-promoting? Actually, discovering the error humbles one.

This story tells us that there was little to no effort on the boy’s part.... his spiritual path of the moment was to just trustfully and alertly listen to the guru of the moment. It was the gurus’ effort of reaching out to the boy and ‘teaching’ him, pointing out the mistake to him, in just the right manner at the right time. The means of knowledge for the boy to ‘get back’ who he really was, was in the form of words. They were not from reading a book for self-study, but spoken words from the wise one who could see clearly the falsity of the mistake. And he also had enough care to bother to teach the boy. Unfortunately, our ignorance takes more time...only because we have been mistaken for so long. There is no instant realization.

*To be continued...*

“For those who know that they seek freedom, there is a teaching whose topic is the Self – its nature; the Self as whole, unisolated from anything. This teaching is *Vēdānta*, which gives you knowledge of your true nature. With this knowledge you find yourself free from all forms of limitation and isolation. Full and complete in yourself, you strike harmony with the entire universe.”

- Swami Dayananda Saraswati

## Silver Jubilee Gita Jnana Yajna

Sri Swami Tannisthanandaji has been conducting annual Gita Jnana Jajna at Mathura (Kalahandi District of Odisha) for the last Twenty-four years. He has completed entire Bhagavad Gita verse by verse till 2020. This year we celebrated the Silver Jubilee Jnana Yajna.



The program was held for ten days both in morning and evening. The first session of the first day started chanting '**Mahamrityunjaya Mantra**' twentyfive times lighting a 'deepa' during each chanting of the mantra. Every session, the program begins with chanting of one Chapter from Bhagavad Gita'.

With the help of 25 selected verses from all the eighteen chapters Swamiji unfolded the complete vision of the Bhagavad Gita. He says, "This is a new but successful experiment and is all Parama Pujya Gurudev- Swamiji's blessings."

Report by:

*Pabitra Mohan Padhi, AVS Mathura, Dist. Kalahandi, Odisha*



## Manjakkudi Jnanpravaha Retreat announcement

Jnana Pravaha, Vedanta Study Centre at Manjakkudi invites participants for a **three-day** retreat beginning **17<sup>th</sup> June, 2022**. The retreat will be felicitated by

Swami Ramesvarananda Saraswati. The topic of the retreat will be:

To claim the truth of life as unfolded by the Bhagavad Gītā.

Bhagavad Gītā verse to be discussed - 2.47 ( **Karmanyeva adhikārah te mā phaleṣu kadācana, mākarmaphala hetu bhūḥ saṅgam tyaktvā tu akarmani** )

Programme:

- Participants to register at the venue by **5pm on June 16, 2022**
- Brief tour of Jnanpravaha: 5-5.30 pm
- Jnanpravaha Administration to brief on activities: 5.30-6 pm

Retreat program brief

**Date: 17/06/22**

- 6.30 – 7.15 am - prayers at Dhyānamandapam(daily)
- 7.15-7.45 am – Meditation(daily)
- 9.00 – 10.30 am - View of life. Interactive session to know participants and their view, their expectation from the retreat.
- 11.30 – 12.30 pm - Consensus building on what we look for in this retreat
- 4.00 - 5.00 pm – The gita context
- 8.00 pm – Satsang (Screening of Pujya Swamiji's video talks)

**Date: 18/06/22**

- 9.00 – 10.30 am – Karma understanding
- 11.30 – 12.30 pm – Freedom in Action
- 4.00- 5.00 pm – phala understanding

**Date: 19/06/22**

- 9.00 – 10.30 am – Freedom from phala
- 11.30- 12.30 pm – Life is a happening in Ishvara sannidhanam
- 4.00-5.00 pm – Discover our life is a blessing
- 5.15 – Wrap-up session

Interested participants can mail to Swami Ramesvarananda Saraswati at [ramanathanv.avrandpt@gmail.com](mailto:ramanathanv.avrandpt@gmail.com).

The details of accommodation and other arrangements will be shared through a document and further queries will be handled by Sri. R. Rajagopal - 80561 62635 and Sri. Prasenjit Bannerjee – 70944 67516

**Talk on Mahasivaratri by Swami Sadatmanandaji on March 01, 2022  
at Arsha Vidhya Gurukulam, Anaikatti**

Every culture has got several aspects like food habits, dress, belief system and festivals. Festival forms a very important aspect of every culture. In Vedic culture also, there are so many festivals . Some of them are very significant, well known and well celebrated festivals. One of them is Sivaratri festival. Ratri means night and Siva refers to lord Siva. The night dedicated to the worship of Lord Shiva is called Sivaratri. This Sivaratri is connected with the manifestation of Lord Siva as a column of fire- agnih stambah.

*Phalgunakrishnacaturdashyam siva lingataya udbhutah kotisuryasamaprabhah.*

On this phalguni krishnacaturdasi, Bhagvan Shiva appeared in the form of a column of fire in front of Brahma and Vishnu. There is some story behind it. Brahma and Vishnu requested Shiva that this manifestation of yours does not have a beginning and an end, so how will people be able to relate to that? Therefore Bhagvan Shiva was requested to divide this column into 12 jyotirlingas. That is why we have 12 jyotirlingas in this country. This happened on this day. That is why we are celebrating this day commemorating the manifestation of Lord Shiva in the form of a column of fire.

Also there are some stories in the Puranas - There was a hunter and he was not able to catch anything one day. In the evening, he climbed a bilva tree to rest. One deer came around 6pm and he was ready to kill that deer. Because of that attempt some water fell from the tree along with some bilva leaves on a shiva linga which was there below. Thus unknowingly the first prahara puja was done. The female deer pleaded with him to let her go so that she can hand over her children to her relatives and then she would happily come back to him. Somehow the hunter got the thought to let her go.

At 9pm in the second prahara of that day, the sister of the first deer came. The hunter was about to kill her . The movement with his bow and arrow unknowingly spilled some water and bilva leaves which fell on the linga below. The sister deer also requested him to wait and let her hand over her babies and then she will definitely come back. Though he was reluctant, but he also let her go.

At 12pm in the third prahara , a male deer came and the hunter raised his bow to kill him. Some water and bilva leaves fell unknowingly on the Shiva liga. The male deer also requested him to let him go to hand over his children to his relatives and promised he to be back soon. Again he was reluctant, but he let the deer go.

At 3 pm in the fourth prahara, all the deers came back along with their babies and said – “*We are ready for you. Please kill us all*”. The hunter was very much surprised and because of his movement while aiming his arrow at the deers , some water and bilva leaves

unknowingly fell on the Shiva linga below. Seeing all the deers returning back and requesting him to kill them, the Hunter suddenly felt bad about what he was doing. He felt these animals are having so much more values and I am a human being and I don't have it. So he just told them – “*I set you free , please all of you go*”. Then, Lord Shiva manifested from the linga under the tree and blessed this hunter that in your next life he would be born as Guha and Bhagavan Rama will come to you. The day all this happened was Sivaratri. This story is told for the purpose of glorification (*arthavada*) in order to show the significance of doing puja on Sivaratri day. Even if it is done unknowingly also, it blesses the person. This is how the significance of this puja is talked about.

This Sivaratri puja has 4 aspects-

Doing Shiva nama japa - Repeating om namah shivaya japa as many times as possible.

Doing 4 prahara puja- 6pm , 9pm, 12pm, 3 pm.

Jagaranam - Remaining awake all night .

Upavasa or fasting.

One who follows this vrata, generally will be following these 4 aspects.

### **What is the significance of Sivaratri puja?**

Like any other puja it helps us to get chitta shuddhi, it helps us to earn the grace of isvara, to invoke and strengthen the devotee in us. It also helps us to develop some tapas. Now-a-days life is getting so pampered, we don't have so much tapas in our life. So such vratas give the opportunity to do tapas which is important for a sadhaka. When this puja, japa has been done properly, then we are ready to relate to Isvara at the next level.

### **There are 3 ways, we relate to Isvara –**

*Ekarupa or Vishesharupa Isvara* - Isvara with a particular form like Shiva, Krishna, Rama. That is the beginning. This is with dvaita buddhi. *Sarvatmaka or Visvarupa Isvara* where I invoke Isvara as the entire cosmos. I see myself as a part of Isvara. From dvaita we graduate to vishishta advaita. My vision is expanded. Puja, etc done will take us to this level. That Visvarupa Isvara bhakti will take me to *atmarupa-shiva*. Appreciation of Shiva as myself. In Mandukya Upanishad, Shiva is the name used for atman who is *nAntah prajnam , na bahishprajnam*....where I relate to Shiva as myself. That is the culmination of all sadhanas where I can say- *Shivoham*. I am one with Shiva. The truth of Shiva and the truth of myself is not different.

I alone am appearing as jiva, I alone appear as Shiva. Both of us are one. This is the culmination of all sadhanas in the form of discovery of oneness with Shiva.

Thus Sivaratri takes us to the next level of appreciating Isvara and finally helping us to discover I am one with Shiva. Today we invoke the grace of lord Shiva. We discover him to be one with the entire universe and finally discover I am Shiva- *Shivoham*. *Om Tat Sat*

## 6<sup>th</sup> Swāmi Dayānanda Saraswati Memorial Lectures (12th Ārsha Vidyā Indological Conference)

Ārsha Vidyā Vikās Kendra, Bhubaneswar organized the sixth **Swāmi Dayānanda Saraswati Memorial Lectures** from 5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> March 2022 in Bhubaneswar.

Seven speakers presented nine scholarly papers on the Vedas (2), Vedantic Literature (1), Upanishads (2), Sankara and Ānandavardhana (1), Vedānga, Chandas (1), Western view on Sanskrit Language (1), and Sanskrit Poetry (1).

Speakers were from “Prekshā”, Bengaluru (2), Visva Bharati, Santiniketan (2), Xavier Institute of Management, BBSR (1), Utkal University (2), Ārsha Vidyā Gurukulam, Coimbatore (2), National Sanskrit University, Tirupati (1), Dum Dum Motijheel Rabindra Mahāvidyālay (1)

The Conference was convened and directed by Ātmaprajnānanda Saraswati. Dr. Bhārat Bhusan Rath from National Sanskrit University, Tirupati was the Organising Secretary.

The academic conference was attended by many distinguished scholars and intellectuals from Bhubaneswar. The event was covered by the local Odia daily “Sambad”.

Inspired by Pūjya Swāmi Dayānanda Saraswati Ji, AVVK honoured three Indological scholars this year with "Ārsha Vidyā Bhārati" Sammān –

1) Dr. R. Ganesh, 2) Prof. Arun Ranjan Mishra, and 3) Dr. Bharat Bhusan Rath. The Sammān carries a memento with a mānapatra (citation) and an honourarium of an undisclosed amount. AVVK by now has honoured 57 Indological scholars since 2009.



## The Speakers

### 6<sup>th</sup> Swāmi Dayānanda Saraswati Memorial Lectures - March 2022



Śaṅkara & Ānandavardhana: a comparison – by Dr. R Ganesh



Pyramidal Vedantic Literature – by Ātmaprajnānanda Saraswati



Concept of Bhakti in the R̥gveda - by Prof. Dr. Arun Ranjan Mishra



संस्कृतसाहित्यस्य वैश्विकं स्वरूपम् – by Dr. Bhārat husan Rath



Trainings to the poet as found in Bhāmaha - by Dr. Sukanyā Bhattacharjee



Metrical Beauty of Śārdūlavikrīḍita – by Er. Shashi Kiran



Om: as reflected in the Upanishads wrt Māṇḍūkya - by Ācāryā Maheśwari



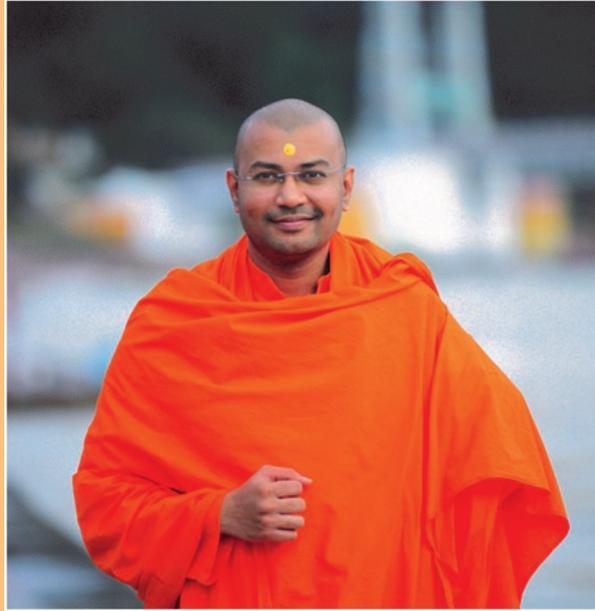
Some Hymns of the R̥gveda with Yogic Implications - by Prof. Dr. Arunranjan Mishra



षड्लिङ्ग-वाक्यविचार in Kena and Chāndogya – by Ātmaprajnānanda Saraswati

## 7 days Vedanta camp at Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, Anaikatti

Arsha Vidya Gurukulam is pleased to announce a 7 day Vedanta camp with Swami Sachidananda ji.



**Date :** 22nd May 2022 ( Sunday ) To 28th May 2022 ( Saturday)

**Topic :** Discovering Freedom & True Happiness through the study of Amritabindu Upanishad.

*Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, Annikatti, Coimbatore* is a perfect place for the study of Vedanta. Vedanta retreats are designed to enable deep learning and absorption. The day is packed with prayers, meditation class, classes on vedanta, chanting class, evening satsang. Learning happens effortlessly in Arsha Vidya Gurukulam with the blessings of Sri Medha Dakshninamurthy and Pujya Swamiji.

**Swami Sachidananda** is a dynamic young monk and he is known for his simple and clear exposition of vedanta. His simplicity, pleasant personality and contemporary thinking makes it easy for people to connect and have a joyful learning experience.

Those who are interested in attending the camp are requested to register on the website [arshavidya.in](http://arshavidya.in).

For further enquiries please send an email to [office@arshavidya.in](mailto:office@arshavidya.in) or call us at ( Landline ) 0422-2657001 or ( Mobile ) +91-9442646701 between 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

## Guru Peyarchi and Tamil New Year Puja



### ARSHA VIDYA GURUKULAM

(SRUTI SEVA TRUST)

ANAIKATTI, COIMBATORE - 641 108

Phone : 0422-26 57 001, Mobile : 94426 46701

E-mail : [office@arshavidya.in](mailto:office@arshavidya.in) Website: [www.arshavidya.in](http://www.arshavidya.in)

### Guru Peyarchi & Tamil New Year Puja

A special Abhisheka and Puja will be performed at the Gurukulam on Thursday, April 14, 2022 on the occasion of Guru Peyarchi & Tamil New Year to invoke the blessings of Lord Dakshinamurti for the welfare of all.

We welcome you to attend the puja on this day and receive Guru's blessings.

#### Programme

Abhisheka and Puja	-	10.15 AM
Diparadhana	-	12.15 PM
Maha-Prasadam	-	12.30 PM

P.S. Please send your Puja offering Rs. 250/- to reach us on or before 11.04.2022. Use the form given below. Please make your Cheque or DD payable to **Sruti Seva Trust, Coimbatore**.

Alternatively amount can be transferred for the credit of **Sruti Seva Trust** to Indian Overseas Bank, Chinna Thadagam Branch, A/c. No. 064301000007129. IFS Code IOBA0000643.

In case of Electronic Transfer please intimate details over e-mail at [office@arshavidya.in](mailto:office@arshavidya.in)

You may also be one of the sponsors of the day by offering ₹5000/- or more.

To Watch live stream of the programme please visit our you tube channel **Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, Anaikatti** or visit our website [www.arshavidya.in](http://www.arshavidya.in)



#### PUJA OFFERING

Enclosed is my offering for the **Guru Peyarchi & Tamil New Year Puja** on 14/04/2022

Name (IN BLOCK LETTERS)      Nakshatra      Gotra

1. ....	} Rs. 250/-
2. ....	
3. ....	} Rs. 250/-
4. ....	

My Address (IN BLOCK LETTERS) .....

\*Pan .....

Phone ..... Mobile ..... E-mail .....

Cheque/DD No. .... Bank ..... Date .....

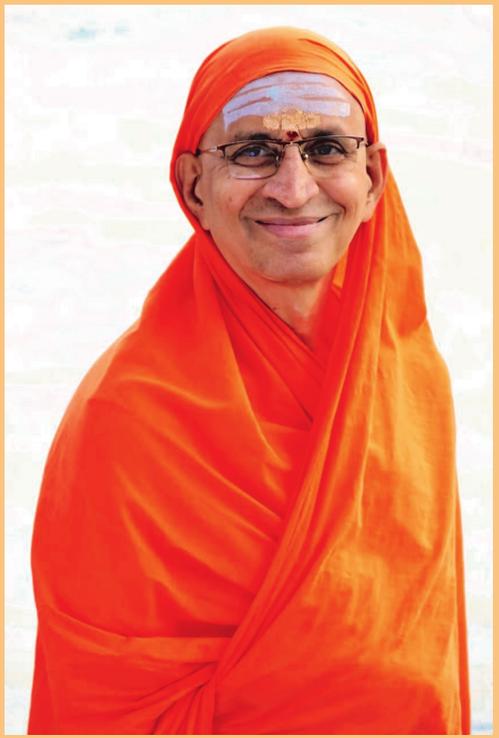
"Save paper save Environment" - Would you like to get information through your Email in the coming days? - Yes/ No - Email to .....

\*Please provide PAN Number Positively

Swami Shiva Swaroopananda Saraswati was given Sanyasa Diksha on Mahasivaratri day, 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022. His Poorva Ashram name was Subramanian and is also known as Sridharji.

He has been an ardent devotee of Pujya Swamiji and has been following Pujya Swamiji's teachings since a very young age. He has been studying Vedanta since 1979 starting with Bhagavad Geeta week end classes in Mumbai with Swami Shudhdhabodhananda, with Swami Paramarthananada between 2005-2007. Later with Swami Satswaroopananda between 2007 - 2012.

He did long term Vedanta courses with Pujya Swamiji and Swami Sākshātkritānda Saraswati from 2012 to 2013 and Swami Sadatmananda and Swami Shankarananda from 2014 to 2017 at Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, Anaikatti. After completing the course he was doing Seva in Anaikatti Ashram till 2020. He is currently stationed at Arsha Gurukulam, Somangalam, Chennai.



## *Arsha Vidya Newsletter*

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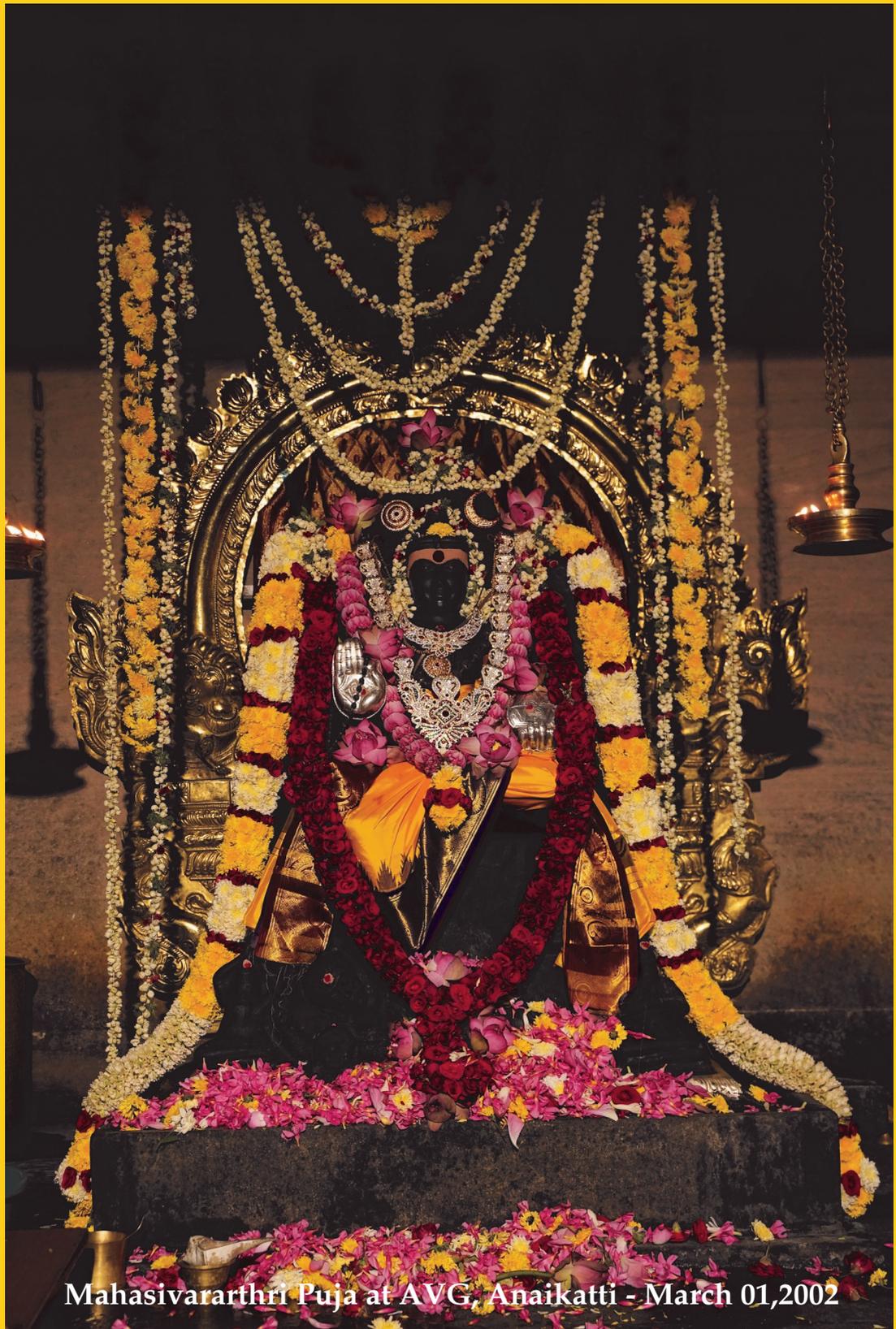
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**Mahasivararthri Puja at AVG, Anaikatti - March 01,2002**





Mahasivararthri Puja at AVG, Anaikatti - March 01,2002