

# Arsha Vidya Newsletter

Rs. 15

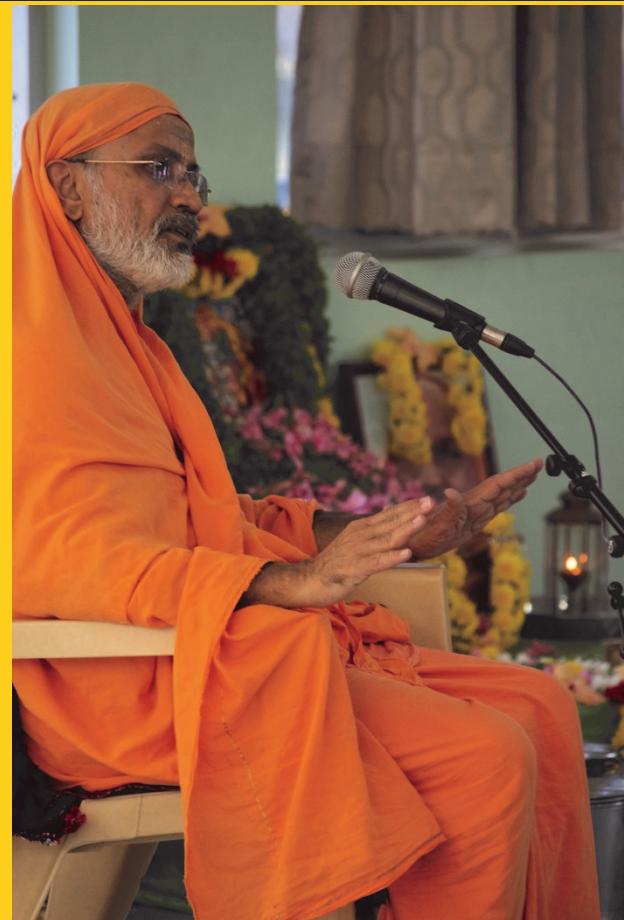


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## AVG Anaikatti, Rama Navami Puja Photos



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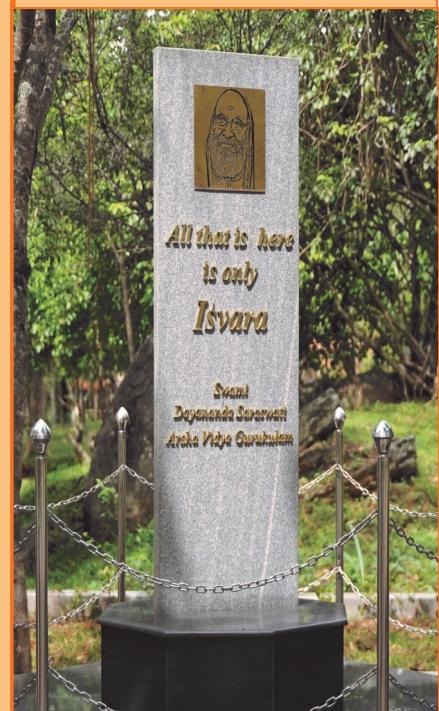
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This is the third part of the serial article, continuation from April 2021 newsletter.

### SEE THE LIMITATIONS OF SUKHA

What are the limitations of *bhava-sukha*? First, it is *anitya*, limited in time. Before the *sukha* is born, there is pain. After the *sukha* is gone, there is pain. While the *sukha* is there, there is also pain because it is going away. Some people are afraid even before the *sukha* comes. They worry it is only going to last one minute, or ten minutes, or an hour, or a day. In this way, *sukha* goes away even before it comes! Even before the springtime comes after the winter, many worry that it is only going to last for two months. Such people are always counting down, 'One day gone, two days gone, three days gone.' You do not look at what is coming, instead you always count down, worried about what is going away.

This is what is called a 'countdown mentality.' The countdown *buddhi* is a very difficult mind. You can say, 'Coming, coming, coming,' but this is not the case. This type of *buddhi* is orientated towards, 'Gone, gone, gone.' 'Going away' is a problem with *bhava-sukha* anyway because it is limited in time, *anityatvāt*. It is a problem even before it comes and after coming, it goes away. It does not last.

Even when it comes, it does not fulfill all your needs. That which is instrumental in giving you *sukha*, the *sukha-sādhanam*, is not totally satisfying because it always lacks one thing or the other. Therefore, degree-wise there is a *doṣa*, limitation, time-wise there is a limitation and quality-wise there is a limitation. *Bhava-sukha* includes not only *sukha* here on earth, but also *amutra*, in *svarga*<sup>21</sup>. The *sukha* of *svarga* is also *bhava-sukha*, also limited in time. *Anusandhiyatām*, may you remember these *doṣas*. So what happens now? The person has no *arthakāma* interests. He is not interested in *kāmyakarma*, fulfilling desires, because he has seen the limitations of *bhava-sukha* connectedly. Now he has *viveka*, discrimination and *vairāgya*,

<sup>21</sup>*Svarga* is the Vedic equivalent of the 'Heaven' discussed in other scriptures.

dispassion, as well as *antahkaraṇa-śuddhi*, purity of mind. He gets the *antahkaraṇa-śuddhi* by doing his duties properly with the right attitude of *karma-yoga*. So the mind is also taken care of. Then what?

### BURNING DESIRE FOR SELF-KNOWLEDGE

Previously he had a desire for self-knowledge, but it was like a small glow-worm. Now and then he heard something here and there. There was some curiosity. Then it became a small flame. Now, as *viveka* and *vairāgya* become more and more firm, the *ātma-icchā*, desire for self-knowledge, grows proportionately, eventually becoming a huge flame of desire.

Therefore, *ātmecchā vyavasīyatām*; may you entertain and pursue, *ātma-icchā*, the desire to know the *ātmā*. Generally your desire is for *anātma*, non-self. 'I want this,' means what? *Ātmanastu kāmāya sarvam priyam bhavati*.<sup>22</sup> It is for the sake of the *ātmā* that I want it, as some addition to me. Or I want to avoid something so that I can get rid of some pain. Whether it is for gain or for getting rid of something, desire is always with reference to *anātma*. If you want to take care of your physical body, that is *ātma-icchā*. But if you just shift your standpoint, that is also *anātma-icchā*. If you are interested in psychology, taking care of the mind and so on, that is *ātma-icchā*. However, afterwards you find that is also *anātma-icchā*.

Then you want *svarga*, heaven, which is *anātmaicchā*, a desire for non-self. Wanting heaven is a desire for non-self. Wanting wealth is a desire for non-self. Wanting power, name, influence, people, relationships, all these are a desire for non-self. We do not say it is right or wrong. We must simply know that it is a desire for non-self. Suppose you say, 'I want better health', there is nothing wrong with that. But it is a desire for non-self. I want to have a clearer mind. It is not wrong because it is important. But still, it is a desire for non-self. What then, is a desire for self?

*To be continued...*

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<sup>22</sup> 'Everything becomes beloved only for the sake of the self.' (Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad 4.5.6).

## Camp at AVG by Swami Veditatmananda Saraswati

### From December 14 to 18, 2019

#### Value of Values - Part 10 (Final part)

##### **Value 17: *viviktadeśasevitvam***

Separate from everything else, a practice of resorting to solitude, cultivating like for solitude. Solitude is a tough thing , very difficult called *ekāntam* in Sanskrit. Whose company do I have, I have my own company and that is the most difficult company. It is very difficult to be with myself, provided I have learned to like myself, or made myself likeable. When the mind becomes free from *rāga-dveṣa* or impurities, I find myself more and more comfortable with myself. How do I know my mind is getting purified? To the extend you are with yourself, *ātmanyeva ātmanā tuṣṭah* . One is totally satisfied with oneself. Because the self is *ānandā*, one has to abide in that self.

It is the ignorance which creates *ahaṅkara*, which in turn creates *rāga-dveṣa* and these are the entities which in effect, veil the happiness within my nature. Most difficult person to live with is myself. I am very critical of myself. And I find it is most difficult to live with me. When alone, first thing we do is to look at the cell phone, WhatsApp, distracting from myself. Self-escape mechanism, escaping from the self. That's what I have been doing all along.

We have to practice to be on our own. Watch our mind , have close introspection, understand the mind. I need to learn to spend time with myself. Discover more comfort with myself. I like myself when I am compassionate, charitable, kind, not greedy, not cruel. These values are meant to create self-loving as we proceed. Do cultivate a value of spending time with yourself. Everyday take out sometime for yourself. Understand the disturbing things, try resolving them with *pratipakṣa-bhāvanā*. Ideally we should constantly watch our the mind. So take out special time to understand the mind. To begin with, being with myself , trying to cultivate loving for myself. This ego is not my true self, *rāga-dveṣa* is not my true nature. Vedanta has only one message, you are whole, beautiful , complete, full of love, happiness. Remind yourself this. Negate the negativities. Fight against the mind. We need leisure time to assimilate the knowledge. To assimilate our value, we need some time. So ***viviktadeśasevitvam***.

Find a time when there is no noise, a corner in the house where a practice of trying to be

with myself, introspection of myself. What is the truth of myself? How does ignorance manifest in my mind? What tendencies it created and what was the problem ? More clear the problem more clear the solution will become. More value will arise for knowledge and offer the values that will give you that mind.

It is highly advisable to transcribe this talk. If you write every word you discover so many things that you were not listening in the class. Do it as a teaching, you can find a creative activity. All of this can be included in this **viviktadeśasevitvam**. When I can't be alone with myself , I can have activities like *japa*, prayer or meditation which could help to spend secluded time with *īśvara* . Stretch that period of time . We have to cultivate this habit when we are not distracted by anything. **Viviktadeśasevitvam**, love for solitude, cultivate liking for solitude.

Purpose is to spend time with oneself. It can be introspection. Looking at my own mind, thoughts, intentions. When realized that it is not as desirable then use *pratipakṣabhbāvanā* to neutralize them. Study scripture (*śravaṇam*), then focus on what I have understood and making my understanding clear (*mananam*), *nididhyāsanam* - meditation upon some form of *īśvara* or mediation upon my own self -getting abidance in the knowledge that I have. Cultivating the habit of being with oneself. That way we develop more and more acquaintance with ourselves and our mind, and develop comfort with our self, satisfaction with our self. Thus it is important for a student of vedānta to be able to withdraw from activities and spend time on reflection, getting further clarity in my understanding, getting abidance in my understanding named *niṣṭā*. All these are helpful.

#### **Values: 18 - *aratirjanasamśadi***

*Rati*, meaning liking. *Na rati*, *arati* is opposite, freeing mind from the need to seek company of the people. *jana* = people, *samśadi* = gathering. Seeking company of persons, now with all the strong social media it is changing. It is to distract oneself and get emotional support from outside. Distract myself amounts to escaping from myself. All of these shows inner need. Seeking other people's company is desirable when they are also seeker like you, it is called *saṅgā*, with wise people, learned people, your *śraddhā*, *bhakti* all of that get encouraged.

On the other hand, some people just attack our devotion. They unsettle your firmness and understanding when you not very sure. One should seek desirable influence at such stage. We are at the moment vulnerable. To better to seek desirable company. Seeking

company of other seeker is okay, but avoid company of those who are opposed to what the scripture are talking about. Avoiding the company of such people. Seeking company of those where we get encouragement, nourishment, clarity of understanding. That is what is meant by *aratirjanasamāśadi*. That does not mean disliking or avoiding people. Not courting the company of people. That shows my mind is seeking some escape. As we should not be chasing material pleasure, we should not be chasing emotional support, cheap gossip, etc. that is what meant here.

#### **Value 19: *adhyātmajñānananityatvam***

*jñānam* – knowledge, *adhyātma* - centered upon *ātmā* - that for which self is the location, pertaining to self, self-knowledge. Or knowledge which is centered upon the self. Here *ātmā* means *saccidānanda ātmā*. Constancy in the pursuit of the knowledge of self. As best as we can we should, not focusing on all other pursuits. Constancy in self-knowledge. Constancy in maintaining the means of self-knowledge.

Some additional points on this value are also given with the next value ( Value- 20)

#### **Value 20 : *Tatvajñānārthadarśanam***

Seeing the purpose of the knowledge, *Tat* is a pronoun, *sarvānām* - name of all. It is *Brahman*, *Tatvajñānam* is knowledge of everything, Knowledge of truth, knowledge of *Brahman*, knowledge of self. ***Tatvajñānārthadarśanam*** - keeping in mind the purpose that served by the knowledge of the self. What is the purpose served by this knowledge?

*Brahmavit āpnoti param*, knower of *Brahman* attains the limitless. Attainment of limitlessness is the result of this knowledge. Knower of self, crosses all the grief. One thing is that we do not want the sorrow, pain unhappiness, sadness, sorrow. Imagine a condition that there is a cessation of all of that once and for all. That is what we want. Attainment of unsurpassable happiness, should come and never go. Pain should go and never come. That is what we want. *Duḥkha-nivṛti* , *sukha-prapti*. This is what all of us want. That is called *mokṣa* - liberation. *Brahmavit āpnoti param* – knower of *Brahman* attains the limitless. It is ‘as though attainment’, in a notional sense. Tenth man discovering I am the tenth is the attainment of 10<sup>th</sup> man, it is not attainment. I am searching for my *mālā* getting late for class, and it is right there in my neck. That is what ‘searching for and getting it’ is as though getting as it was never lost. Attaining limitless, he is not getting it, he is discovering his own true nature. Becomes free from all the grief and makes me discover limitlessness as my nature. Keep that always in my mind. This knowledge enables me to

attain the goal to what I am born for, what is dearest to my heart. The desire behind all the desires.

Desire behind all desires is the desire for *mokṣa*, unconditional freedom, happiness. I, not only want happiness , I want unconditional happiness. We want to be happy at all the places with all the people, in all situations at all time 24X7. That is what we are seeking. Mostly we do not understand what we are seeking. What I am seeking is my own self. This is what is valuable knowledge. Story of a learned person wanting to cross the river, boatman takes him, learned asks this boatman have you studied literature, boatman says I am totally illiterate, one fourth of life is gone. Did you study music, classical music, boatman says no, 25% of your life is gone. Do you know any art, painting, sculpture ? Boatman says no . Another 25% of your life is gone, 75% of life is gone. There was flashflood in the river and the boat started to sink, Boatman asks this learned man 'do you know swimming?'. This learned man said 'no', Boatman says then your whole life is gone.

We should delve upon the glory of this knowledge. What it has to contribute to our life. **Tatvajñānārthadarśanam**. Keeping this in mind , we should know that this is the only valuable thing in life. Primary need is to become free from sadness and acquire happiness. Other things will be taken care of, no need to worry about other things. Only agenda in life should be *adhyātma-jñānam*, pursuit of knowledge. Nothing can give what I am seeking. Making the mind see the purpose of this knowledge again and again. Whenever mind wants to do something, ask ' for what?'. Famous dialogue between Yagyavalkya and Maitreyi. Will this wealth give me immortality? She was very clear what she was seeking in life. If 'no' , then what is the use of that?. She wanted *amṛtatvam*. It is not worthy to pursue any goal other than this. More we understand , more we will have commitment to this. *Ātmanastu kāmāya sarvam priyam bhavati* - it is *ātma* that is dear to me. Therefore first of all, what you are seeking is to be discovered from yourself. You love wealth, your son, fame not for yourself. Wife is dear for the sake of self. Yagyavalkya narrates one by one, all of them dear for the sake of self. Ignorance is denying the benefit of your own nature. This is how it is important. If we do not understand inevitability, this journey will continue until I seek abidance in self-knowledge. This is ongoing pursuit, it goes on *anekajanmani*.

It only makes sense for me to be committed to the pursuit of the knowledge - **adhyātma-**

**jñāanityatvam.** *ātmā* must be seen, known. Seeing means clear knowledge without any doubts, errors. Know *ātmā* without any error. Oh Maitrye, *ātmā* must be listened to-*śravaṇam*. Listen to unfoldment from a competent teacher based on the scripture. Teacher is in fact for us a means of learning what this upaniṣads are teaching. *Mananam* - then you must dwell upon that, deliberate upon that. Then *nididhyāsanam*, by meditation remove the habitual errors of I am the body. In this manner oh Maitriyi you get abidance in the knowledge and this is the way to get immortality.

Recognizing not only importance of knowledge but inevitability of knowledge is being stressed. Sooner it becomes, sooner our life gets proper direction. **Tatvajñānārthadarśanam.** Reflect upon the purpose of self-knowledge and constancy (*nityatvam*) in the pursuit of knowledge. If you have duties and responsibilities, then let that be *karma-yoga*. Either *sāṅkhya* – direct pursuit of knowledge or *karma-yoga* either one of that seeker of *mokṣā* has to pursue. If I still need the purification of mind then *karma-yoga* and that is where these values are coming. There are two kinds of desire. Natural desire- hunger, thirst, etc. and cultivated desire- I want Pepsi cola /pizza,pasta. *Īśvara* is obliged to satisfy our natural desire not obliged to satisfy cultivated desire. Desire for *mokṣā* is a natural desire. Desire behind all the desire is desire for *mokṣā*. One should recognise that. And knowledge is a means for *mokṣā*. Need a mind enjoying purity, prepared for that knowledge, *sādhana-catuṣṭaya-sampatti*. Mind enjoying preparation, maturity is a mind fit for knowledge. Self-knowledge is the only means of *mokṣā*, for which *śravaṇam* becomes important. Prepared, values become indirect means for *mokṣā*. That's how values are important for us.

That's how Lord Krishna says, *karmaṇi eva adhikāraḥ te ma phaleṣu kadācana*. You have the freedom to pursue the process. No control on outcome. Self-knowledge outcome, I do not control where as, to prepare my mind for the knowledge I can control that. The process is important and enjoy the process. Our preoccupation with the outcome very often creates disappointment. Then we keep on judging ourselves again and again. All of these is not meant for self judgement. My commitment is to the process. When will it yield its outcome only *Īśvara* can decide. I cannot decide the outcome. That's how the values become important to us. I am not hung up on the outcome. I let things take proper course. Maturity or purification of mind is like ripening a mango. It ripens because of the natural warmth. When you allow proper process then mango gets ripened and that is a delicious mango. It becomes tender, orange, sweet, not hard, green and

sour. Where did the sweetness, fragrance, colour come from?. It's all there but unmanifest. By allowing a natural process, by creating the conditions, mango ripens. That's how our mind is. What matters is we should subject our mind to process of ripening. That is what Bhagavad Gītā teaches. Enjoy the process, don't worry about end, enjoy the means. Travelling to Gaṅgotrī not only end is beautiful ,path is also beautiful.

*Etat jñānam iti proktam* - these values are means for knowledge, means for ripening the mind. Ripe mind is the means for pursuit of knowledge. These values are remote means of knowledge, which comes by *ātma-jñānam* - self-knowledge. So Krishna glorifies them by telling *etat jñānam iti* - this is the knowledge. If values are not there, knowledge cannot take place. We need to get abidance in knowledge. To begin with these values required understanding. If injuring serves greater purpose than non-injuring, then it is not violence. Gangrened leg removing is not considered as violence, since the greater purpose here is to save the person concerned. Arjuna's fight against *adharma* is not to be considered as violence. There is no action called violence, it is my understanding and interpretation that matters in a given time place and condition. Values are universal but the practice is individual.

Practicing values requires inner strength and they also give me inner strength. Practicing value means first understanding, interpreting them and displaying inner strength and commitment to practice them. Morally weakling or spiritual weakling cannot get self-knowledge. *Etat jñānam iti proktam ajñānam yadato'nyathā* - rest is ignorance. Gita teaches us how to make the right choice.

*Om tat sat*

“Time rolls on in a procession of fresh moments and the body ages. But the mind living with fresh moments is ever young. Time is a devourer only if you take yourself as the aging body. It is no more so if you live in its content, the Eternal Now.”

- Swami Dayananda Saraswati

## Report on Shankar Jayanti celebrations at AVG , Anaikatti on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021

It was a simple low-key function attended by 2 year course students and residents. Due to the lock down no outside guests were allowed. The program started at 11.30 am in the lecture Hall at the altar of Shankaracaryaji and all gurus. Puja was conducted by our two resident priests. The garlands were made and the flowers for the puja were collected by the resident students and asramites from within the premises. The occasion was blessed by the presence of our resident swamis and swaminis.

### ***Talk by Sw Sadatmanandaji, the Chief Acharya -***

Today we are celebrating the birthday - *avirbhava dinam* - the day Bhagavan Sankaracaryaji got manifested on this earth. In our tradition, Sankaracaryaji is considered to be an incarnation of Lord Shiva also known as Lord Dakshinamurti. It is said that Lord Dakshinamurti giving up his maunam got manifested in the form of Sankaracaryaji.

Sankara was born in Kaladi in Kerala state about 1235 yrs ago. At the age of 8 years itself he completed the study of vedas. Then he took sanyasa from Govindapadacarya who lived on the bank of Narmada. He walked all the way from Kerala to the Narmada bank to study with Govindapadacaryaji. At the age of 16 years, he completed writing the commentary called bhashyam on Upanishad, Bhagavad gita and brahma sutra which together are called prasthanatrayam. He was to live only upto 16 years, but Veda Vyaasacaryaji extended his life by 16 yrs. Therefore he lived for 32 years. The glory of Sankaracaryaji can be described in various ways. We have ashtottara-shata-namavali with 108 names describing his glories.

But I would like to highlight 3 of them. First one is- वैदिकधर्मोद्धारकः – *vaidikadharma uddarakah* . He was the one who re-energized vaidika dharma because during his time due to the influence of other dharmas, especially Buddhism, vaidika dharma was going down. Kumarila Bhatta and afterwards Sankaracaryaji revived it. So his first contribution is - he was *vaidikadharma uddharaka*.

The second glory which we value personally so much is – वेदान्तगताद्वैतमतप्रकाशकः – *vedantagata- advaitamata-prakashakah* - he revealed the vision of non-duality which is very much present in Vedanta. So he is not really *advaita mata sthapaka* - propounder of advaita mata. That is not our view, even though that is how scholars and academicians look upon Sankaracaryaji. But it is not that he speculated one more philosophy called advaita. But the traditional view is : advaita darshanam was very much there, already presented in Vedanta, but was not seen clearly by many. So Bhagavan Bhashyakara brought out through his commentaries that advaita is the tatparyam of all Vedanta vakyas. Also

he taught his vision to his shishyas and that is how it has come to us through the bhashyam and through the parampara of which he was the bright link. That is why we say - *Sankaracarya madhyamAm*. Thus his second contribution is that he was – *vedantagata-advaitamata-prakasaka*. He was a संयोजकः:

His third glory is that he was a great synergiser or synthesizer. There were different views regarding worshipping the Lord. Each one of them was claiming oneself to be the highest and putting the others down. He became the synthesizer and connected all of them. He said all six forms of the Lord worshipped are manifestation of one and the same reality. The six views of the worshipping the lord are - shaiva, shakta, ganapatya, vaishnava, skandha and saura. He synthesized all of them. He was a great *sanyojaka*.

These are the three things, but if you see his other great qualities, he was very humble in his approach. He will many a time start his answer in the bhashyam saying- *baaDham* (You are right from your angle). There was no anxiety to dismiss others. Whatever part is right, he would highlight. He was very humble. He was also a person of purpose. In the bhashyam, you will not see any extra word. If something is already explained, he will say- *uktam*. It is already explained.

He was a great teacher of so many disciples. Four of them are very popular – Padmapadacarya, Sureshvaracarya, Hastamalakacharya and Totakacarya. Atleast we should know their names since we belong to that parampara. Each one of them was sent in one-one direction of the country. They took care of the centers called mathas and they continued the activity of teaching vedanta and protecting dharma. He had the foresight that in future also this vaidika dharma should continue and therefore he established these 4 mathas.

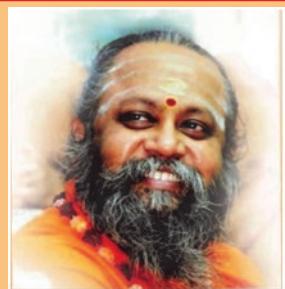
We are very grateful to Shakaracaryaji for leaving with us this teaching tradition. Because of him we are able to get the vision of advaitam which is there in Vedanta. Because of him the vaidika dharma continues with this strength. We remain always indebted to Sankaracaryaji. Today we pray and invoke his grace to be successful in our pursuit of knowledge. We seek his blessings in our pursuit of knowledge. Generally on this day we read his bhashyam.. so we will read some part.”

Acharyaji concluded the occasion by reading a portion of Sankaracaryaji’s adhyaasa bhashyam which is the introduction to brahmasutra. The students and all present were given fruit bags as prasadam sponsored by one of the last course students.

*Om Tat Sat*

*Note: Pictures of this function, are in the last page (#32)*

## Swami Omkarananda - śraddhāñjali



पदवाक्यप्रमाणज्ञैः दीपभूतैः प्रकाशितम्।  
ब्रह्म वेदरहस्यं यैः तान् नित्यं प्रणतः अस्मि अहम्॥

padavākyapramāṇajñaiḥ dīpabhūtaiḥ prakāśitam।  
brahma vedarahasyam yaiḥ tān nityam praṇataḥ asmi aham॥

upadeśasāhasrī. 17.2

With this salutation to the whole guru-parampara, I endeavour myself to present this śraddhāñjali to Pūjyaśrī Swāmī Omkārānandaji. Trying to describe Swāmīji's multi-faceted personality is like showing camphor ārādāna to sūrya-bhagavān.

**श्रोत्रियः ब्रह्मनिष्ठः**: *śrotriyah brahmanışṭah* – it is a description of guru in Munḍakopaniṣad (2.12). After his upanayanam at the age of 11, he first had his *veda-adhyayanam* with brahmaśrī Manakkal Sri Mahalinga gaṇapāṭī and later completed with śrī Anantapadmanabha śraudi, a dvivedī of Perur, Coimbatore. Later Swamiji underwent Vedanta study with revered Swami Paramarthanandaji, Chennai for eight years. Swamiji was thorough with both karmakāṇḍa and jñānakāṇḍa with all its nuances. No doubt, he lived up to this description of śrotriyah brahmanışṭah.

**गुरुः**: *guruḥ* – As even Swamiji was completing his study with Swami Paramarthanandaji, he accompanied him in his various spiritual camp and started teaching in parallel, both Tamil and Sanskrit texts. Later, after the establishment of Sri Chidbhavananda Ashramam, Theni, Swamiji conducted two Vedanta courses with the intention of creating teachers, thus fulfilling the description of sparśamaṇi. ( śataśloki 1.) Simultaneously Swamiji travelled widely in India and abroad and carried the Vedanta teachings to innumerable students for more than 35 years. Swamiji's AGNI Global Classroom is unique in bringing-in vast sections of students across the world under one roof.

**वेद-अध्यापनम्** *veda-adhyāpanam* – Traditionalist to the core, Swamiji established pāṭhaśālā at Theni itself for ṛg (rg) and यजुस् (yajus ) and it continues. Swamiji encourages vedapaṇḍīts from all over India. As pontiff of Bhuvaneshvari Adhishtanam of Pudukkottai, he is closely associated with highly qualified vedavits.

**पीठातिपति** *Pīṭhātipati* – at the behest of Pujya Sri Dayananda Saraswatiji, Swamiji assumed the charge as Pīṭhātipati of Sri Bhuvaneshwari Avadhuta Vidya Pitham at Pudukkottai in the year 2005. Swamiji, as Acarya of Theni ashram and as pīṭhātipati of Sri Bhuvaneshwari Vidya Pitham could manage both the affairs diligently. Tall task of this order could only be done by Swamiji with his innate strength and vigour. Maha

Kumbhabhishekam of this pitham is scheduled in year 2022.

Having seen Swamiji in close quarters and his ability to organise and execute intricate nature of works, Pujya Swamiji passed on the responsibility of leading **Dharma Rakshana Samiti**, an organisation with the specific aim of saving the roots of sanatana dharma. Also Swami Dayananda Saraswati inducted Swamiji as **Vice President of Mahalinga Swami Seva Trust**, an organisation for refurbishing all five chariots of Thiruvidaimaruthur Temple, which was successfully completed.

To the Tamil Veda, otherwise called Thirukkural, we owe our at most gratitude for Swamiji in making it as a mass movement – Kudisaithorum Kural, Illanthorum Valluvam and Ullanthorum Valluvam. Swamiji's main aim was to put an end to many people giving out wrong interpretation to Thirukkural verses for their own selfish ends, thereby twisting the innate purport of the kural verses. Thanks to the dedicated support of the Trustees of this movement, it is now getting a concrete shape.

Heading and managing such type of diverse activities calls for all the qualities of corporate manager. There is absolutely no doubt Swamiji could assume various requirements with ease. To name a few:

**As a manager**, Swamiji knows how to carry every one as a group, how to tap the abilities of different persons, facilitating group members in order to efficiently carry out the work, counselling them in situations of crisis of any individuals, identify and relate himself to each and every member – to name a few.

**As a leader**, he leads from front whether it is to do with temple functions like kumbhabhishekam, major yajnas, annual functions at Theni or Pudukkottai etc. He is tireless in his endeavour, he spends many sleepless days, if it calls for.

**As a resource tapper**, Swamiji is very quick to adopt to modern gadgets and leverage their functions for the propagation of his teaching – Someone called him Whatsapp Swamiji !!. AGNI Global Classroom is another example. Towards this he has ability to get required techies to fulfil his dream.

**As a Public relations manager**, Swamiji's inter/intra-organisation relationship is one to be learned even by other public relationship officers of other service organisation.

**As crisis manager**, modern managers are expected to establish best practices and organise them meticulously so that every one knows clearly what responsibility one carries and how to execute. In spite of availability of such system, when due to situations outside of the organisation triggers a crisis, manager should be able to overcome. Swamiji is the best example for this, every one will vouch for the same.

One can go on listing all of Swamiji's abilities.

With his thorough knowledge of Veda and agama sastras, mantra sastra and a keen

in-sight in to silpa-sastra, along with his rapport with respective artists, Swamiji is an **authority in Temple architecture**, also on the **puja paddadis**.

**Orator** – Swamiji's oratory capabilities are par excellent. His very reverberating voice ( by the strength of veda chanting), voice modulations, his medha-sakti of ease of quoting both from Sanskrit and Tamil texts, his ex-tempo nature, getting rapport with audience instantaneously- all make him as most sought after person both in spiritual and literary forums.

**Ācarya of priests** – Swamiji's own experiences of priesthood in his *pūrvāśrama*, helped him conduct various vedic rituals such as kumbhabhiṣekam of temples, Pujya Swamiji Dayanandaji's ṣaṣṭiabdhapūrti , sathabhiṣekam ( to name a few) in meticulous way. All the vedic pandits have tremendous reverence for Swamiji and it shows their acceptance of him as an authority in the ritual world.

**Swamiji** as someone said is conglomerate of *vedamūrti*, *jñānamūrti*, *mantramūrti*, and *karuṇāmūrti*. In his very presence people get solace. Add to this is jovial nature, child-like laughter makes him an *āśutoṣi* an instantaneous pleaser.

Of these nature of Swamiji is all manifestation of *īśvara-vibhūti* through which we can appreciate the very *īśvara* himself. As Swami Paramarthanandaji said elsewhere, *videhamukti* of *jñāni* is not an occasion for sorrow. It is the very appreciation of the very *ānanda*.

Though Swamiji is not available in his flesh and blood, he has left the above said legacy along with required institutions and manpower, to nurture sanatana-dharma through which the whole mankind will be guided in the years to come. Following his teaching and passing on to next generation will be our main gratitude to him.

No doubt we will remember him in our every daily prayers be it *viṣṇu-sahasraṇama* or *lalitā-sahasraṇama japa* or for that matter any *aṣṭotram* where “om” is integral part.



**Śraddhānjali on behalf of Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, Anaikatti and Sruti Seva Trust, with inputs from a devotee — Editor**

## Śraddhānjali to Swami Omkaranandaji

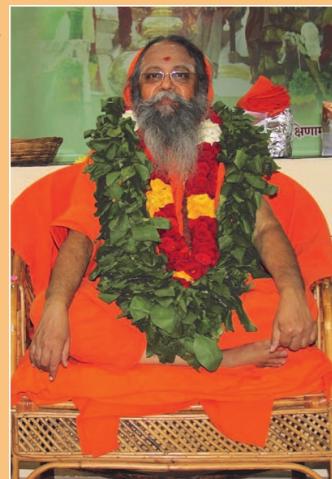
By Swamijis

During 1987, Swami Omkarananda came to me to study Vedanta. Swamiji had already taken Sannyasa-- diksha from Swami Chidbhavananda of Ramakrishna- Tapovanam. In his purvasram, Swamiji had studied Yajurveda traditionally. He also knew how to perform vedic and temple (agama) rituals. He had a good knowledge of Tamil religious and spiritual literature and was giving discourses in Tamil. He had exposure to Sanskrit language also. In fact, his introductory conversation with me was in Sanskrit.

Swamiji stayed with me for 4 years and attended private classes with three other Brahmacaries. These classes were conducted in Sanskrit medium. Swamiji was very intelligent and quick in grasping the finer aspects of Vedanta. Within a few months he clearly understood the uniqueness of our Arshavidya-sampradaya.

During his stay, Swamiji joined all our Sadhana- camps and conducted Tamil classes. Because of his friendly and jovial nature, he became very popular among the public students of Chennai. The very sight of him lit up their faces.

After studies, Swamiji set up an Ashram at Theni ,Tamil Nadu. He has been conducting several religious, spiritual and social activities, including short-term and long-term Vedanta courses, through the Ashram. Even during the pandemic, he was conducting online classes on various subjects. The growth of the Ashram has been phenomenal.



Puja Swamiji recognized his resourcefulness and said " Omkarananda is an asset to us ". Swamiji played a major part in all the Arshavidya functions -- Temple Kumbhabhishekams, Pujya Swamiji 's Jayanti celebrations etc. Seeing his leadership qualities, Pujya Swamiji made him his successor to head Dharmarakshanasaamiti, an organization involved in religious and social activities. Around this time, Swamiji took up the additional responsibility of becoming the Pontiff of Bhuvaneswari Pitham, Pudukkottai, Tamil Nadu.

Together, we used to visit many places in India every year. I can never forget those relaxed, enjoyable moments.

Swamiji 's tireless work, day and night, took a toll on his health and led to an early end. We are fortunate to be associated with such a Mahatma and we cherish this association lifelong.

- Swami Paramarthananda

Sri Swami Omkarandaji was a Mahatma in the true sense of the word — a large hearted Sadhu with universal love and compassion. His inner joy manifested as his ever smiling face and a very friendly and unassuming interaction with whoever came in contact with him. Naturally, the few occasions when I had personal association with Sri Swamiji, have left a pleasant and lasting memory.

Swamiji invited me to visit Vedapuri, his Ashram in Theni in Tamilnadu and I am happy that it became possible to spend several days in the beautiful Ashram in 2017, with several friends and we enjoyed the love and hospitality and under the guidance of Sri Swamiji, visited several important shrines. We enjoyed the Darshan and the Puja in the grand Dakshinamurti temple and great meals in the Ashram.

Sri Swamiji was always ready to extend help whenever required and we received his guidance for performing elaborate religious ceremonies including the ceremonies during the Shatabhishekam of this Swami. I know that his departure from this world is a loss for countless people and it is a personal loss for me and I will always miss that laughter and warmth.

**- Swami Veditamananda**

The news of Mahasamadhi of Sri Swami Omkarandaji came to us like asani-pata, thunder strike. When it happened against all odds, a sense of great loss gripped the hearts of all of us. This sense proves countless qualities that Swamiji was endowed with.

The foremost was his Vedic knowledge. Generally we do not find a Veda Pandita taking to sanyasa ashrama, outside a few traditional Maths. In those Maths also sanyasa ashrama is part of the necessary qualifications to occupy the position of Pontiff. So Sri Swamiji stands out in this respect as he chose this path voluntarily.

Vedanta joined his Veda jnanam:

Having chosen this path, Sri Swamiji did not rest content with a contented life it offered. He renounced those comforts and sought the purpose of that very life style and Swamiji was blessed with a Guru that one would envy to have, that is Sri Swami Paramarthanandaji. He mastered brahmatma vidya under Sri Swami Paramarthanandaji's feet. That proves Swamiji had the necessary adhikaritvam that one needs to grasp the vision of brahmatma. Thereafter there was no looking back for him.

Swamiji came into contact with Pujya Swamiji and at once he established a concrete bond with Pujya Swamiji. The result is that he became part and parcel of Arsha Vidya and he always led the group of priests, be it the 60th, 70th and 80th birthdays of Pujya Swamiji, be it Kumbhabhishekams or any other big rituals.

### His wisdom of Tamil literature:

Another great contribution of Swamiji is to Tamil speaking people in that he presented the vision of Vedanta through famous religious texts in Tamil language. His proficiency and knowledge of those texts combined very well in imparting this knowledge to a vast Tamil speaking audience. In the process of teaching through Tamil texts, Swamiji tried to nail the idea that this wisdom is alien to Dravidian people.

### His qualities:

Coming to the emotional side, Swamiji showered boundless compassion and grace on all those people who approached him at all the times. His availability to them, his ability to address their issues, his readiness to help them in whatever way he can, his cheerful countenance and his face ever bubbling with joy - all these qualities made him a mahatma the most sought after.

Finally his love for protection of Sanatana Dharma made Pujya Swamiji nominate him as President of Dharma Rakshana Samity, an initiative started by Pujya Swamiji, represent him in the Chariot festivals of the great Thiruvidai marudur temple for which Pujya Swamiji offered new chariots built at a cost of five crore.

We pray to Sri Swami Omkaranandaji to continue to shower his blessings for the continuation of the legacy he left behind.

- **Swami Sakshatkrdananda**

Friendship is a beautiful relationship because it is born of total choice. Human beings are blessed and cursed by relationships. Punyam results in favourable relationships and pa-pam results otherwise. With Swami Omkarananda I had a beautiful friendship. We were inspiring each other. Now I remember the days of our study with Swami Paramarthanandaji and good times we spent.

Swami Omkarananda left positive and sweet memories in me. Lamp is lost but not the light. Like the light, his teachings will continue to be with us for ever.

- **Swami Guruparananda**

I salute to the Swamiji known as Omkarananda who always had a smiling face bringing smile on the face of everyone and now he is one with Ishvara,,the meaning of pranava, omkara. In Swamiji's taking mahasamadhi, there is a great loss to Hindu dharma.. He used to talk of three things- practice, protect and propagate our sanatana-dharma and he himself did.He practiced by leading the life of dharma. Protected whenever required and propagated in various ways.

He was great scholar of vedic literature and agamas. Also religious and spiritual Tamil literature which he used to teach. He was very accessible and jovial. Used to make the atmosphere light by his presence. People used to love to be in his presence. He used to relate to people with human touch and leading to divinity or godliness.. Even his form used to remind us of lord Shiva.

For me it is a personal loss because he was a guide for me in some religious and Veda related matter.His departure has created an irreparable loss.. We pray to him to guide us through his blessings.Our greatest tribute to him will be following his spirit and carrying forward the legacy he has left.

आकृत्या शिवरूपो यः स्वभावतोपि यः शिवः ।  
वन्देहं शिवरूपं तं सादरं सर्वदा धिया।

"One who is like the Lord Shiva in form and also auspicious by nature.. To that swami Omkarandaji mentally I ever salute with respect".

- **Swami Sadatmananda**

Tomorrow, the 11th May morning Sun will not see the Son of the Sages rising from sleep to do the Pratah Smaranam, the Dhyanam, the soulful chanting of the ancient Veda mantras. Nor shall it see the Glorious Son of the Sages doing the elaborate worship of the Dakshinamurthy, the Adi Guru of the Creation and then move around the antebasis , the loving, adoring Ashram residents and crowds, to offer them not only the Prasad of the God, but also sharing the wisdom of the Ancients with a smile that is innocent and a laughter that is in the words of Kalidasa, धूजटिः अटुहास्यः; the laughter of Shiva!

That Son of the Sages IS very near and dear Swami Omkarandaji, who Was and Shall Be Eternally Present in the land He walked, the river in which He bathed, the air He breathed, the space that held Him, the trees He planted, the shelters He built and most importantly the lives of the people He touched and shaped - ALWAYS and all with a perpetual smile!

I had seen him first ever time when He was a resident student with Swami Paramarthanandaji , learning the Vedanta Shastra from a very learned and capable traditional Guru. He always held Respected Paramarthanandaji in the highest esteem. It was like the river

meeting the ocean. Both of them had similar background and they clicked with each other in perfect harmony. Since He was already a student of the Vedas, familiar with the traditional chanting and the art of worship, it was a natural shift to the Vedantic Wisdom - that too at the feet of a Teacher who had the privilege of being groomed by Poojya Swamiji Dayanandaji, who was the embodiment of the Upanishadic wisdom. Poojya Swamiji Dayanandaji perpetuated the Guru Parampara as upheld by Acharya Shankara to keep the unique yet the universal way of transmitting the Wisdom, the Atma Vidya. When the revered Shankaracharyas of both Kanchi and Shringeri had total admiration for Poojya Swamiji, Sringeri Acharya recognised the great traditional teaching of Poojya Swamiji by conferring on Him the First ever Shankaracharya Sammana.

Respected Swami Omkarandaji perpetuated that link with the Shankara Maths, upholding a hoary tradition ,while moving around with people who were exposed to the modern day educational systems also. When I met him for the first time , I was introduced to his traditional ways and I really loved it. Whenever we met, I would ask him to chant the Upanishads and he would happily do so. I remember onetime He had come to Tiruvannamalai sometime in 1990s and we all went for Girivalam. Since He knew I loved His chanting, He started the chanting from the moment we stepped into the Girivalam road from our Ashram and continued chanting. Sometime we shall sit-down on the road side under the trees and then He will chant. Those were the beautiful nights of walking around the Arunachala ....

Once He had come to Uthandi Ashram. Someone had given me a Goldplated Shivalingam. I was keeping it more as an collector's item as I did not know the ways of worshipping it. When He came visiting me with Sri Viswanathan from Hongkong, I happily offered the gift of an icon to Him as He was the right person to have it. He named it as the Swarna-kaliswara and kept for the pooja in Theni Ashram. When later I visited Vedapuri, He showed me the Shivalinga He was worshipping. I had taken two special' plants from Odisha and we planted those in the Ashram. Whenever we talked over the phone He would tell me how the trees were growing.

It so happened, people whom I knew in my frequent travels to different countries became his students also and that brought us still closer. I had total admiration for his very traditional upbringing and He had that open admiration for my open friendliness. I was ten years older to him. As even I and our dear Paramarthanandaji were very friendly from our Chennai Chinmay Foundation days, that friendship continued with Swami Omkarandaji too.

Because of His mastery over traditional ways of worship, not only He arranged the rituals to be conducted by a great number of priests for Poojya Swamiji's 80th Birthday organ-

ised in Coimbatore, but also He was there for the Samadhi of many mahatmas who attained Mahasamadhi.

As I am writing this sitting on the roof top of Chennai Ashram under the starlit sky, in the absence of the light, because of the temporary electricity failure, I am aware, in that distant landscape of Theni , the Son of the Sage will have His Samadhi, in the middle of the night, not to be confined to a small space but to belong, at once, to the entire Existence, the Paramdham, where there the Sun never shines. Neither the Moon nor the stars shine there. Once Being there ,there is no question of returning!

न तत्भासयते सूर्यः न शशाङ्को न पावकः यद्गत्वा न निर्वर्तन्ते तद्वाम परमं मम

Cannot say: Farewell my Friend! as we are Inseparable in the Absolute. You were, are and shall ever be there. We all your friends and admirers were, are and shall ever be there. God (the Truth) Was, Is and Shall be ever there. Never shall it ever happen that we shall ever cease to exist!

न त्वेवाहं जातु नासं न त्वं नेमे जनाधिपाः न चैव न भविष्यामः सर्वे वयम् अतः परम्

Therefore Friend ,when the tomorrow's Sun rises ,it will surely not see you walking your path. But it shall continue to shine in You, for You ,in total deference to you as even the Air will continue to blow, the Fire will continue to burn, the God of gods and the senses will continue to rule and out of sheer Reverence to you, the Death shall continue to run non-stop...

भीषास्मात् वातः पवते। भीषोदेति सूर्यः। भीषास्मात् अग्निइन्द्रश्च। मृत्यु धर्वति पञ्चमः इति

It was not your time to return. But then , Friend, who can ever deny you the Immortality.... मृत्योः मुक्षिय माऽमृतात् . You are free from the change, the death. But never from Immortality.

A generation shall remember you and then you shall be passed on from one generation to another for the time, life ,laughter and the wisdom you shared with them.

May your wishes and the dreams be fulfilled by the generation next!!!!!! You were a friend and a great younger brother. I always felt that brotherly love and admiration. We walked together many a steps in many decades of life. I will miss you! You shall be missed by all the friends who walked together in the foot steps of Poojya Swamiji's life and Teachings.

- Swami Suddhananda

Chennai, 1.51am 11.5.21

ॐ ह्रीङ्काराद्याः पादसंपूज्यं हृदयानन्ददायकम् ओङ्कारानन्द-पादाञ्जं नमामः चित्तशुद्धये

*om hrīṅkārādyāḥ pādasam̄pūjyam hṛdayānandadāyakam  
oṅkārānanda-pādābjaṁ namāmaḥ cittaśuddhaye*

I had darshan of Pujya Omkarananda Mahaswamiji in the year 1990, while I was learning Vedanta from Sri Sivaramakrishna Sastri in Advaita Sabha, Trichy.

Pujya Swamiji has been teaching the Vedic path of Santana Dharma to the spiritually inclined –both in India and abroad, through his unparalleled knowledge of the scriptures and for protecting the Dharma and for everyone to have peaceful happiness, has installed Adiguru Sri Prajna Dakshinamurti at Vedapuri, Theni. Swamiji has formulated daily prayers through which thousands of devotees are benefitted.

Swamiji took charge as the pithadhipati (pontiff) of Sri Bhuvaneshwari Avadhuta Vidyapi-tham and for the past 16 years, did Srividya Puja and various Mula Mantra Homas; took Vedanta Classes, guided the trustees; gave Mantropadesha to thousands of devotees and showed the way of worshipping Jaganmata Sri Bhuvaneshwari; did Sankalpa to construct a stone temple for Sri Bhuvaneshwari Pitham, did Bhumi Puja, Chitravaana-shilapratishtha and Sri Bhuvaneshwari Yantra Prathishttha.

Swamiji attained Mahasamadhi on 10-05-2021, leaving all his students, devotees and Sadhakas in unexplainable deep distress. Sri Swamiji's blessings filled with love, must always give mental strength and more and more sraddha to all of us.

I offer my sincere prayers to Jaganmata Sri Bhuvaneshwari, Adiguru Sri Prajna Dakshina-murti and Srividya Paraashodashi that Swamiji's teachings must ever be in our hearts.

**- Swami Pranavananda**

SWAMIJI HAS ATTAINED MAHASAMADHI. VERY SAD. LOST A GR8 LEADER, MOTIVATOR, FRIEND, AND MUCH MORE. Those who had come to Anaikatti for Temples' Kumbhabhishekam in 2018 would remember he led, guided the entire performance of that program. With his passing away we have lost a great spiritual leader who had captured the whole of Tamilnadu with his talks. His knowledge of the entire Krishna Yajur Veda with all its finer nuance had been unparalleled. Pujya Swami Dayanandaji even appointed him to lead the Dharma Rakshana Samiti after him. A great teacher and master he leaves behind a great number of grieving devotees and students. I of course lose an extraordinary friend

**- Swami Atmatriptananda, Calcutta**

## Śraddhānjali to Swami Omkaranandaji

By disciples

"I and my family have had a long association with Sri Swami Omkarananda. We have fond memories of his helping us during the shatabhishekam of Sri G.K. Sundaram, Chairman, Lakshmi Mills. Swamiji also played a leading role in the ritualistic aspects during Pujya Sri Swamiji's shatabhishekam celebrations. Again, during the temple kumbhabhishekam in the Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, Anaikatti, Swamiji guided all the activities with great interest. We will be ever grateful for the long association that we have had with him and remember him as a very learned, enthusiastic, energetic and cheerful mahatma. Many pranams to his lotus feet."

- **R. Santharam , Chairman, Sruti Seva Trust**

"Omkarananda Swami was a star within our tradition, which enlightened many minds and inspired many.

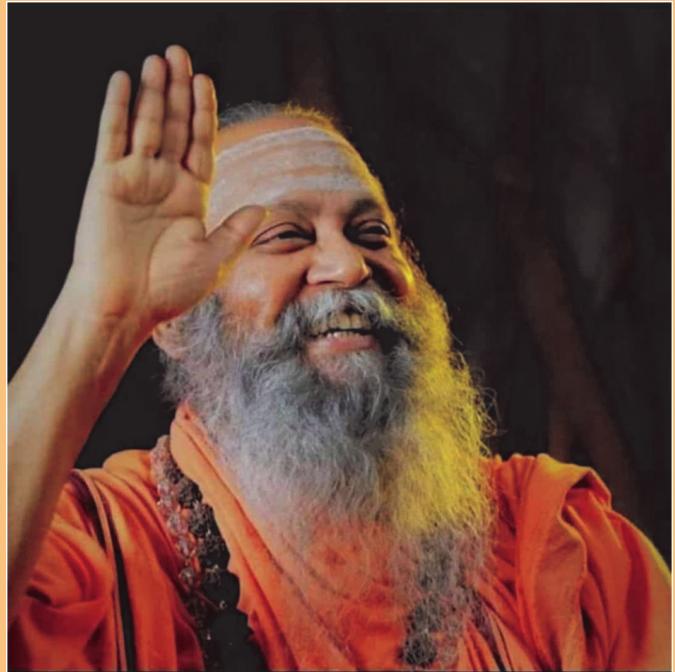
I had the privilege of being with him sometimes, especially in the coordination of shad-abhishekam rituals. His voice dispensed microphones, had that Vedic tone, and he had a deep and penetrating gaze: even with everything going on around him, he entered a kind of trance and chanted as if he were receiving the mantras at that moment directly from Īsvara.

Omkarananda has inspired and inspires many of us with his Vedic chants, with his life dedicated to the Vedic Tradition.

Here in Brazil we have the privilege to listen to many of his chanting recordings and the students has connected to him through his voice and spirit. "

- **Jonas Masetti, Vishva Director Vedanta Life, Brazil**

"Having had the blessing to study under Pujya Swami Omkarananda ji for few years now, He has become an integral part of my life. It's extremely hard to get my head around the sudden turn of events in the past few days which happened so suddenly and rapidly. To accept the physical absence of our Guru who was teaching until a few days back is really



difficult.

Generally, many Acharyas predominantly teach either Sanskrit or Tamil texts. In Swamiji, we find a unique style, where He gave an equal status to both literature, and presented them in accordance with the sampradaya in an extremely cogent manner . The clarity of His teachings, the choicest usage of words, His majestic and sonorous voice, all made His classes irresistible to all seekers across the world.

Swamiji's teachings reflect the vision of the shastras of an inclusive Sanatana Dharma that embraced all facets of the culture, traditions and never saw discordance among them. Swamiji passed on His bhakti towards Ishwara, Guru, shastra, Bharata desham and Sanatana dharma through His teachings.

Swamiji was so meticulous in devising the syllabus for the Atma Vidya course and, it is in many ways sad to see that He couldn't finish the full five years. Swamiji embraced technology like a child's play and, it was delightful to see how he handled the devices and even glitches with humour. Swamiji was extremely well informed with a great sense of humour. He could quote from a film song or a recent WhatsApp forward to make a point. We'll miss His physical presence dearly. However, the great consolation is that, He is very much present in the form of His teachings in every Kural we read, every Gita verse we study, every nama we chant of bhagavan. I sincerely pray to our Guru to continue to guide us to follow His teachings steadfastly, and remain committed to dharma and jnanam." - **Prashanth Mohan, Sydney**

"HH Sri Swami Omkarananda has taken up the sacred mission of rejuvenating the spiritual values and cultural traditions of India. Born in a family steeped in culture, he adopted the Vedic life style from an early age. He studied Vedanta under Pujiyasri Swami Paramarthananda, one of the foremost disciples of Pujiyasri Swami Dayananda Saraswathi.

Through his eloquent discourses, he drives home the deep insights of the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads, such that even an average person can comprehend them with ease. He expounds the essence of some of the sacred texts in Tamil, such as Tevaram, Tiruvachakam, Tirumandiram, Tayumanavar's hymns, Bharatiyar's songs and in particular Tirukural.

He interacts freely with people of all strata without discrimination of caste, creed, age, economic status or education and attracts them by his compassionate words and friendly demeanour." - **A disciple**

"That Swami Omkarananda attained samadhi now is a great loss for Tamil Hindu society and it does feel orphaned in this loss of the physical presence of the Swami.

Goshteswara Sharma was the name given by his parents and he grew up mastering Vedic recitation and rituals. Even in his young age he had mastered Vedic recitation.

His spiritual led him to Swami Vivekananda's works. He obtained his sanyasa deeksha – initiation into monkhood – from Swami Chidhbavananda. He later learnt traditionalist Vedanta from Swami Paramarthananda of the Swami Dayananda Saraswathi Guru-tradition. Following the footsteps of his deeksha-guru Swami Chidhbavananda, Omkarananda Swami took the Tamil classic Thirukural to the masses.

Thirukural, a civilizational high peak of Bharatiya culture and spirituality has been reduced to a source of stage rhetoric and a means to further Tamil chauvinism. Swami Omkarananda valiantly rescued Thirukural from the pseudo-rationalist racial forces. He did it through various means. Not only Thirukural, his other favourite are the songs of Bharathi and hymns of Thayumanavar. Subramanya Bharati was not just a freedom fighter and social reformer. What animated his poems were his eternal spiritual nucleus. Swami Omkarananda brought this out in his lectures.

Swami Dayananda Saraswathi chose him as the head of Dharma Rakshana Samithi (DRS) – a vibrant movement under Swami Dayananda Saraswathi that had spread in almost all villages infusing energy to protect Dharma in all forms of its manifestations – from renovation of village temples to immunising against proselytising.

We Hindus traditionally hold that when great seers attain samadhi they do not cease to be but become even greater forces operating in the society through individuals and institutions, peoples, and movements to establish and protect Dharma and society.

With that in mind, even as the society accepts the physical loss, may he ever be a blessing and inspiration for the protection of Dharma and society in Tamil Nadu – particularly in these testing times.” - **Aravindan, contributing editor at Swarajya**

“I am a student of Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswathi since early 80'. For the past 1 year had been hearing to Swami Omkarananda.

Swamijis talks had been so inspiring and connecting Gita Shastram to Thirukural and other great Tamil saints expressions. Swamiji took the Tamil knowing people to a great dimension of understanding Shankara Bashyam with quotes of scholars of sangath Tamil Swamiji's reverberating voice and the continuous flow is a pravaham.

His video classes are a great wealth which has no comparison.

Swamiji will remain as a teacher of Atma jnanam who had and wanted to share with his listeners all that he could. So compassionate Swamiji had been. “ - **Janaki Krishnan.**

“While the news of Pujyasri Omkarananda Mahaswamigal's attainment of siddhi or mahasamadhi shook the Spiritual world at large and particularly the Tamil speaking followers of Sanathana Dharma, it was an unacceptable personal loss for me.

Our beloved Omkarananda Mahaswamiji was the swami for the scholars as well as the common mass; for the orthodox as well as the ordinary! He was the synergizing factor

amongst the traditional and non-traditional mutts. In Pujyasri Omkarananda Mahaswamiji - we could experience a vidwan par excellence like Swami Paramarthananda Saraswati, a Tamil scholar like Vaariyar or Kundrakudi Adigalar, an upasaka like Pudukotai Shanthananda Swamigal, a tapasvi like Swami Chidbhavanandaji Maharaj, a dharmic warrior like Sri Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamigal and a humanitarian and dharmic hero like Swami Vivekananda.

May it be the shathabishekam of Pujya Swamiji, or the rebuilding of the magnificent rathams and conducting the annual Ratotsavam at Tiruvidaimaruthur or Kumbhabhishekam at Ananikatti or elsewhere, his role was inevitable.

He maintained the same amount of shraddha for both Sringeri and Kanchi Jagadguru Shakaracharyas and had greatly contributed for a synergy amongst the devotees of both the mutts. The dimension of being the peetadhipathi of Bhuvaneshwari Peetam, brought a lot of guidance to the world of upasakas. Being a Vaidhika himself in his purvashrama and an approachable traditional sanyasi later, he had emerged as a guiding light to the community of Vaidhikas.

Ever approachable, easily understandable, ever cheerful and most practical he was! Swami Omkarananda ji mentored the Dharma Rakshana Samiti so well that it started emerging as the common voice of Sanathana Dharma.

After the mahasamadhi of Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati ji, it was only Pujyasri Omkarananda Mahaswamiji who had aroused to continue the spiritual leadership, especially in Tamil Nadu.

As soon as I invited him with a short notice to inaugurate the event of "Krishnam Vande Jagadgurum" on 11th August 2020, organised by Adhyatma Yoga & Advaita Academy, Swamiji happily agreed, blessed me immensely and delivered his anugraha bhashanam. This is one of the few rarest talks that he had given in English. That was the last time I came in touch with Swamiji directly in the recent times."

**- Yoga Mitra Dr A Subramanian, Bangalore**

Swami Omkarandaji was at Pujya Swami Dayananda's sixtieth birthday celebration in Rishikesh. He was so friendly and open, a bright candle of enthusiasm, independence, and maturity, a tribute to his teachers Swami Paramarthananda and to Pujya Swamiji. He embodied their dedication and devotion and their sense of the universality of Advaita Vedanta. In Tamil Nad he grew to a justified position of authority and Vaidika contribution. Many evenings in the fresh air of his ashram he would take satsang with pathashala and other students, teaching in Tamil from the Ramayana and other texts. Early Theni temple mornings the cow puja was conducted before the prominent standing Dakshinamuri. Pujya Swamiji knew he could depend on him. **" - John Warne, USA**

## **SWAMI OMKARANANDA SARASWATI (17.01.1956 - 10.05.2021)**

### **A brief biography by N. Avinashilingam**

**BIRTH:** Manoharan alias Sri Goshteswara Sharma was born in Perur, Coimbatore, January 17, 1956. His parents were Sri Vaidyanatha Ganapadigal and Smt. Alamelu Ammal. After sannyasa diksha he was known as Swami Omkarananda Saraswati.

**EARLY EDUCATION:** Swamiji studied in the traditional Veda patasala, at Perur, after his upanayanam. His father used to perform rudram-japam at Perur Pateswarar temple. Swamiji assisted his father and also keenly observed the rituals and festivals conducted at temple, and eventually was adept at the agama sastra regulations.

Swamiji's initial spiritual ignitions were from the books of Swami Vivekananda and upanayasams from great Tamil stalwarts like Sri Kripananda Varier etc.

**STUDENT OF SWAMI CHIDBHAVANANDA:** Impelled by his spiritual desire, Swamiji left home and stayed at Sri Ramakrishna Tapovanam, Tirupparaithurai, Trichy. Swami Chidbhavananda, Founder of Tapovanam initiated him to sannyasa in 1985 and was given the diksha name SWAMI OMKARANANDA. Having studied Hindu Dharma and Hindu scriptures from Swami Chidbhavananda, he started giving talks on Bhagavad Gita and conducting spiritual camps for seekers.

**STUDENT OF SWAMI PARAMARTHANANDA:** He later went to Chennai and studied from Swami Paramarthananda Vedanta for four years.

**PUBLIC TALKS:** Subsequently he started giving advanced talks on Vedanta. Through his eloquent discourses, he drove home the deep insights of the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads, such that even an average person can comprehend them with ease.

He also gave talks on sacred Tamil texts such as Thevaram, Thiruvachakam Thirumandiram, Thayumanavar's hymns, Bharatiyar songs and Thirukkural. He became a very popular Tamil speaker on Hinduism.

He has also conducted jnana yagnas in India asnd in many places abroad like Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, Hong Kong, London, Dubai, Muscat and USA.

**SRI SWAMI CHIDBHAVANANDA ASHRAMAM, THENI:** He established Sri Swami Chidbhavananda Ashramam, under Vedanta Sashtra Prachara Trust. Three year residential Vedanta courses were conducted here in traditional Gurukulam style. The students who had completed the course are spreading Vedanta throughout Tamil Nadu. In the Ashramam,

Veda Pathasala is functioning. The brahmacharis from Vaidika families are taught Yajur Veda and Sivagamam. Under the auspices of Sri Dakshinamurti Seva Samiti, he had constructed a magnificent edifice named Adiguru Sri Prajna Dakshinamurti Vidyapitham in 2002 at Theni.

**VEDANERI AND BHUVANESWARI VIJAYAM TAMIL MAGAZINES:** Swamiji published Tamil Magazines- Vedaneri and Bhuvaneswari Vijayam which had articles on Veda purva and Vedanta.

**SRI BHUVANESWARI AVADUTA VIDYA PITHAM, PUDKKOTTAI:** Swamiji ascended the pitham subsequent to Sadguru Santananda Mahaswamigal in 2005. He became the Pontiff of Sri Dattatreya Avadhuta Vidya Pitham also in 2005.

**REVERENCE FOR PUJYA SWAMI DAYANANDA SARSWATI:** Swami Omkarananda adept as he in veda sastra, was in charge of the vaidika rituals during Pujya Swamiji's 60<sup>th</sup>, 70<sup>th</sup> and 80<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations. He was in charge of the Kumbhabisekam of the temples in Arsha Vidya Gurukulam at Anaikatti and Swami Dayananda Ashram at Rishikesh. He has also succeeded Pujya Swamiji in Dharma Rakshana Samiti and Sri Mahalinga Swami Seva Trust.

**U V FOUNDATION:** Swami Omkarananda founded U V Foundation in 2017 to spread 'Ullam Thorum Valluvam', an initiative to spread the message of Thirukkural. The Foundation trains teachers, who in turn can teach students Thirukkural.

**ATMA VIDYA ONLINE COURSE, WHATSAPP SPIRITUAL MESSAGES , AGNI GLOBAL CLASS-ROOM** are various social medias he used to spread widely his spiritual messages.

**MAHA SAMADHI:** He attained maha Samadhi on May 10, 2021 at Madurai. Jivan mukta became Videha mukta. His Samadhi shrine is in Theni Ashramam.

**SWAMIJI'S UNIQUENESS:** Swamiji was a rare combination on karma kanda and jnana kanda parts of the Vedas. His medha-sakti enabled him to eloquently quote from Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Thirukkural, Thayumanavar hymns, Bharatiyar songs and other Sanskrit and Tamil texts. He emphasised that Thirukkural is the essence of Vedas and dharma sastra. Swamiji was a walking encyclopaedia on Hindu Dharma and his majestic voice captivated every one whether it is vedhic chanting or discourse.

Swamiji lives with us in the form of his teaching, books, audios, videos and institutions established by him.

**Swami Dayananda Ashram**  
**Rishikesh**

Swami Dayananda Ashram, Rishikesh is pleased to announce that the Kumbhabhishekam of Haimavati Sameta Sri Gangadharesvara Swami will be held on 13<sup>th</sup> of June with the rituals beginning at 5.00 a.m. with Vighnesvara Puja. The muhurtam will be between 11.00 to 12.00 Noon. Subject to the situation obtaining in the country in different states at that time, all the devotees are requested to participate in the kumbhabhishekam function and take the blessings of the Lord and Pujya Sri Swamiji. The rituals will be available for darsana on live stream for the benefit of all those who are not able to physically be present. The URL link for witnessing the function is given on the home page of our website [dayananda.org/](http://dayananda.org/) **Kumbhabhisekam of "Sri Gangadharesvar Temple live streaming"**. Ashram takes this opportunity to thank all the donors for the kumbhabhishekam and wish to inform that the prasadams will be sent to all of them by post/courier on completion of the function.

**Management**  
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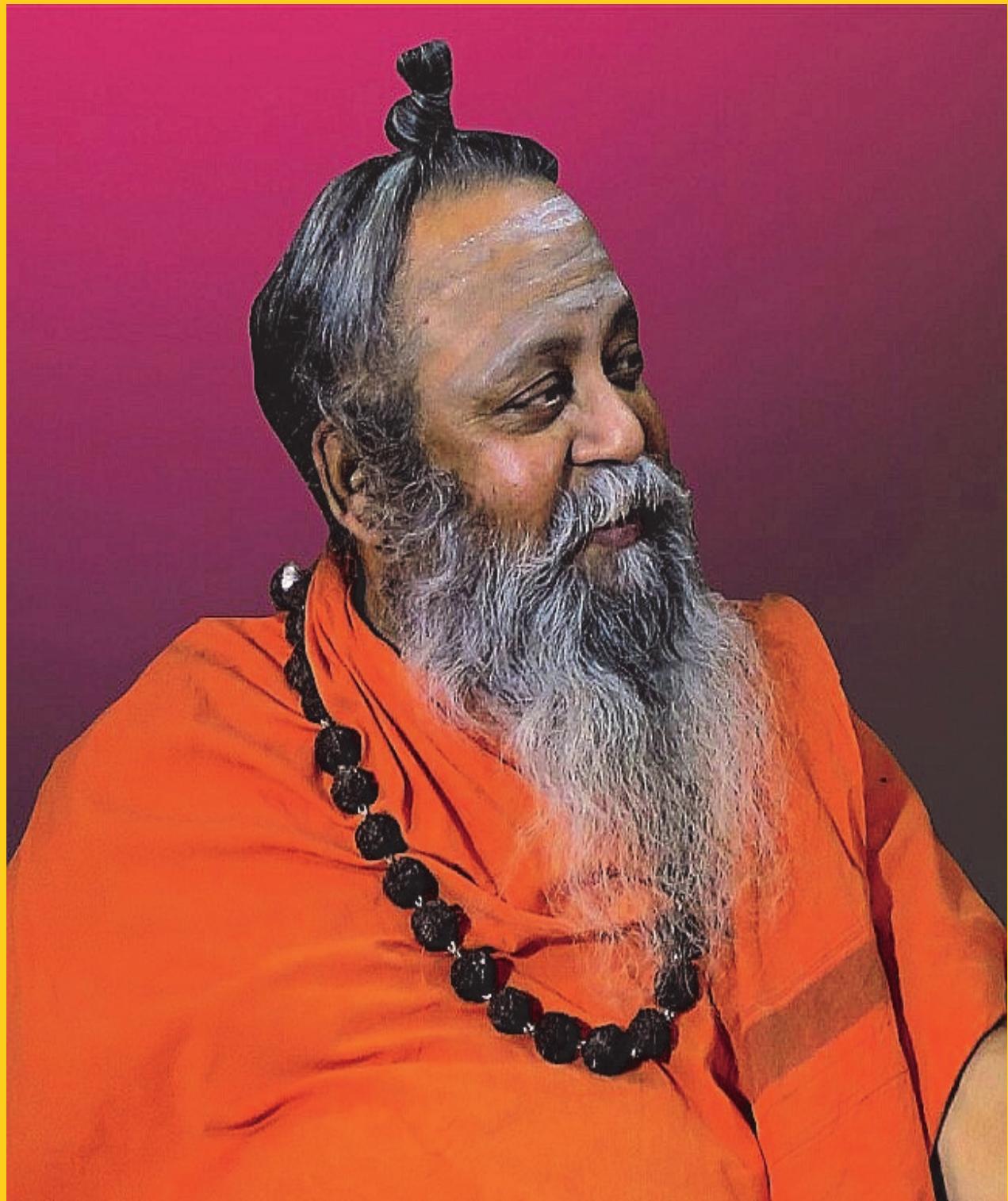
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## Swami Omkarananda



### AVG Anaikatti, Shankara Jayanti Puja Photos

