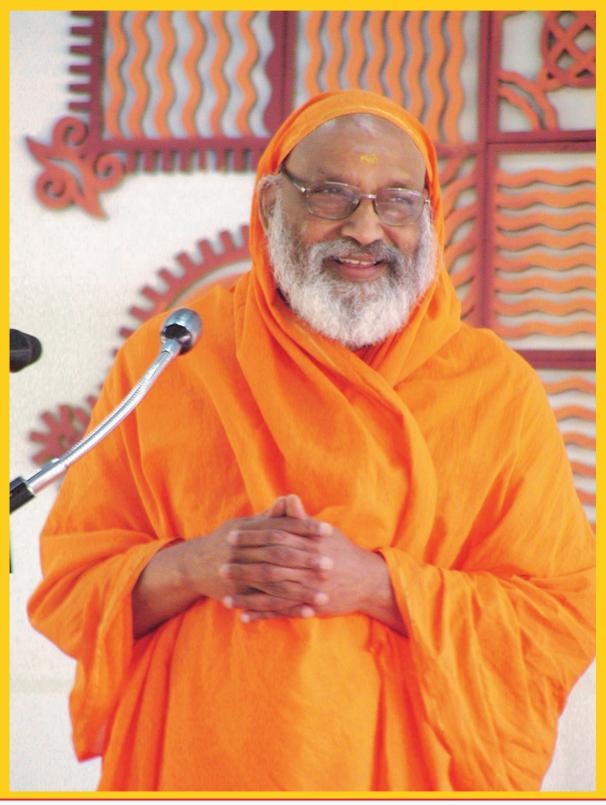


Arsha Vidya Newsletter

Rs. 15



Swami Paramarthananda's Jnana Yagna at Coimbatore





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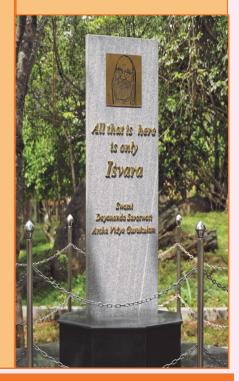
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Sādhana-pañcakam Pujya Swamiji's transcribed talk

This is the fifteenth part of the serial article, continuation from April 2022 newsletter.

UNDERSTAND THE VISION OF ŚRUTI

Śrutiśiraḥ pakṣaḥ samāśrīyatām: Śrutiśira means Vedānta. Pakṣa means the vision, the contention. Samāśrīyatām means samyak āśrīyatām, may one follow, pursue, conform to the vision of the śruti. In this vision, ātmā is aparicchinna, not bound by any form of limitation such as time, space and so on. All that is here is ātmā. Ātmā is the adhiṣṭhāna, the truth of everything and therefore it is the svarūpa of Īśvara.

This is the vision of Vedānta and may you have śraddhā in this particular vision. If you have śraddhā in that vision, then the inquiry into the meaning of the vākyas will be proper. Otherwise, you will be saying tasya tvam asi, atat tvam asi, and so on. Such an understanding does not bless you. What is the use? Some will say that the goal is sāyujya, joining Īśvara, or sāmīpya, going near Īśvara, but the individual is still there. If you have to join with Īśvara and become one with Īśvara, then are you going to retain your individuality or are you going to lose it in Īśvara? If you lose your individuality, then individuality is not real. Because anything that is anitya, limited by time, is mithyā and therefore not true. So how can you lose it? And anything that is real is nitya, and therefore there is no bādha, negation, or nāśa, destruction, of what is real.

All this talk of *sāyujya* and *sāmīpya* is silly because there is no logic in it. When the *śāstra* says you are Brahman, why do you not go for that? Why say, 'I don't want to become sugar, I want to taste sugar'? We do not say you become sugar, we say you are sugar, whether you like it or not. There is no need to create a philosophy of your own, no need for a 'personal or private truth.' There is only truth, which is public and available for anyone to see. All the realities are public. This truth is not personal, belonging to somebody. Therefore do not try to create a private philosophy. Instead, try to discover exactly what Vedānta-*śastra* says.

Suppose you say, 'Why do the other *ācāryas*, teachers, who have other qualifications, say other things?' This is the problem, which only confuses people. These teachers have other qualifications, such as grammar, *śraddhā* etc., and they look

upon śastra as a pramāṇa. They are not mean people. They are all exalted people. They are great devotees, capable of communication, writing and so on. They have all the qualifications going for them. But at the same time, they say different things, and therefore you ask which mata, doctrine, to follow? Just look at what the śruti says, follow the śruti-mata; śrutiśiraḥ-pakṣaḥ samāśrīyatām. They are interpreting the śruti, after all.

TEACHING SHOULD BE METHODICAL

What is more, you also have a mind. It is good to have *śraddhā* in the teacher. But when someone says something wrong, who says you have to follow that person or swallow what he or she says? A true teacher may ask you to follow what he is saying, but he will never ask you to just swallow without thinking. So go along with him, try to see what he is saying. That is what we call being 'in tune' with the teacher. As he teaches, he sees a possible obstruction, which he presents for you and you also are able to see it. Then he removes the obstruction and you see and gain clarity. This is called the *pūrvapakṣa-siddhānta* method.⁸⁵ First we create an objection, then we remove it. In doing so, you get clarity. This is the method of teaching.

If these great $\bar{a}c\bar{a}ryas$ talk about other things, let them, but you use your buddhi, intellect. This is the greatness of Śaṅkara; he will call Patañjali as Bhagavān, then completely dismiss the $s\bar{a}nkhya^{86}$ aspect of Patañjali's teaching. All of these great $mah\bar{a}tm\bar{a}s$ are certainly respected, but their thinking is not accepted by everyone. If the thought is not acceptable, then you should dismiss it. That is why the approach is not charismatic. In a charismatic approach, you first accept the person as great, then accept whatever he says as right. That does not help anybody.

A student must not simply be cynical, however. Cynicism is not criticism. Cynicism is dismissal of what anybody says, calling it useless. This is what we call <code>samśayātmā</code>, believing neither in oneself nor in anyone else. Criticism, on the other hand, is objectively seeing the limitation or fallacy of an argument, so that the fal-

⁸⁵ *Pūrvapakṣa* = opponent's point of view; *Siddhānta* = response to the opponent's objection.

⁸⁶ Sāṅkhya = a dualist school of thought

lacy has to be dismissed. Therefore, if any teacher were to say *tasya tvam asi*, you belong to that, or *atat tvam asi*, you are not that, or any other thing, you must determine what *śruti* really intends to convey. You must examine whether it is going to give you an auspicious result or do something else. You must see what sort of *mokṣa* this could be. In this way, you see that there is no other meaning possible, and therefore *śrutiśiraḥ pakṣaḥ samāśrīyatām*, may you pursue the vision of the *śruti*.

The vision of Vedānta is already established, especially in the Brahma-sūtras, which are meant for analysing the subject matter of Vedānta, the meaning of all the *vākyas*. In the Brahma-sūtras, there is a *sūtra* that says *tattu samanvayāt*. This *sūtra* presents *jīva-īśvara-aikya*, oneness between *jīva* and Īśvara, as *akhaṇḍātmaka*, an undivided whole. That is the fourth *sūtra*, and the entire book is for that one *sūtra*. The vision of the entire *śruti*, all of Vedānta, is oneness between *jīva* and Īśvara. That vision is unfolded by *śāstra*, analytically presented in *sūtras*.

There are two types of *sūtras*. One type presents a subject matter like *vyākaraṇa*, grammar. The other type analyses a subject matter. The Brahma-sūtras and Pūrva-mīmāmsa-sūtras are analytical. They are *nyāya-granthas*, books that use reasoning and arguments to precisely establish the *tātparya* of Vedānta. There are many commentaries for each of the *sūtras*. First there is Śańkara's commentary. Then there is a sub commentary on that text, called Bhāmatī by Vācaspatimiśra. This is then commented upon by Amalānanda in what we call the Kalpatarū, which in turn is commented upon by Appayya Dīkṣitar in Parimala. Thus it branches out like an inverted tree or a pyramid, with the *sutra* at the top and the commentaries below, one after another. Studying one *sūtra* is the work of a lifetime. Each of these authors has dedicated his entire life to writing his commentary in order to establish the vision of the *śāstra*. So one cannot talk of personal philosophy here. There is no personal philosophy at all.

To be continued...

⁸⁷ 'All the *vākyas* having their purport in that Brahman alone' (Brahmasūtra 1.1.4)

Kaivalyopaniṣad Swami Viditatmananda Saraswati's transcribed talk

This is the twelfth part of the serial article, continuation from April 2022 newsletter.

There are some aspects of the world that make us feel good about ourselves. When someone says, "You are wonderful, you are so good," we like that. We have a natural attachment for the one who makes us feel good about ourselves. Then there are some other aspects of the world that make us feel miserable by reminding us of how limited we are. We do not like them at all. Therefore, our relationship with the world is one of aversion and attraction, both of which keep us from recognizing the truth about ourselves. In fact, we should recognize that nobody can make us happy or unhappy. It is we who make ourselves happy or unhappy, depending upon the kind of complexes we entertain about ourselves. For this to become clear, we should spend time with our feelings.

When we feel happy, it is a good idea to spend some time on analyzing that feeling. Why do we feel happy? It may appear as though it is because somebody did this or that for us. What was the result of that? It made us think that we were all right; it made us comfortable with ourselves and seem acceptable, worthy, and good in our own perceptions of ourselves. If it took somebody else to tell us that we are worthy, that would be a different matter. What makes us happy is that we feel worthy, good, or acceptable in our own perceptions. Conversely, feeling unworthy or unacceptable in our own perceptions causes unhappiness. Therefore, whenever the mind feels happy, we should pay attention to what makes us happy and whenever the mind feels unhappy, pay attention to what makes us unhappy. No doubt, something out there triggered the condition, but what happens as a result is that we do not like or accept ourselves. Clearly, that is the cause of our sorrow, and, as we have seen before, sorrow is nothing but the product of ignorance. When it is clear that our sorrow is the result of ignorance, the only agenda we have is to get rid of ignorance through knowledge. That is when we become de-

cultivate some qualifications, like śama or tranquility of mind and dama or the discipline of the senses, we will strive to cultivate them. When we do all these, our lives become directed to a single pursuit. This is called *bhakti*, devotion.

Dhyāna, meditation

When śraddhā or an unquestioning trust in the scriptures and the words of the teacher and bhakti or devotion are cultivated, the mind is free from distractions; it is focused upon the self. That is called *dhyāna*. *Dhyāna* can be called meditation or focus of the mind. When śraddhā and bhakti are present, the mind is available without any resistance; it is willingly available for *śravaṇa*, listening to the teacher.

The means of knowledge are śravana, manana, and nididhyāsana. Śravana is listening to the teacher as he unfolds the nature of the self based on the scriptures. Listening to the scriptures is listening about ourselves, because the subject matter of the Upanisad is the self. Even if the Upanisad talks about other things, the purpose is only to unfold the nature of the self. Therefore, when we listen to the teacher, to the Upanişad or Vedānta, it is an unfoldment of the self. Ātmā vā are śrotavyaḥ. "Hey Maitreyī, ātmā must be listened to." It is during śravaṇa that our complexes and false notions are dropped.

After śravana comes manana, during which doubts are resolved with the help of reasoning that is in keeping with what the scriptures unfold. Nididhyāsana or deep meditation helps us become free from habitual errors. Taken together, śravana, manana, and nididhyāsana are referred to as dhyāna in the present context. We are meditating when we are listening. During śravana, the mind is focused. As the teacher unfolds the scripture, the same unfoldment takes place in the mind, because we are in tune with the teacher. Having śraddhā and bhakti, faith and devotion, allows us to be completely in tune with the teacher. The teacher is then able to operate our minds so that we may deliberate upon the nature of the self with his or her help. During śravaṇa, an objective deliberation upon the nature of the self also takes place in our minds. So śravaṇa is not merely listening; it is vicāra, a deliberation upon the nature of the self.

To be continued...

¹Br.Up. 2.4.5

Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa As Taught by Swami Dayananda Saraswati

This is the eleventh part of the serial article, continuation from April 2022 newsletter.

स जगाम वनं वीरो रामपादप्रसादकः ॥ १-१-३४ गत्वा तु स महात्मानं रामं सत्यपराक्रमम् । अयाचद्ः भ्रातरं राममार्यभावपुरस्कृतः ॥ १-१-३५ त्वमेव राजा धर्मज्ञ इति रामं वचोऽब्रवीत् । रामोऽपि परमोदारः सुमुखः सुमहायशाः ॥ १-१-३६ न चैच्छत् पितुरादेशादः राज्यं रामो महाबलः । पादुके चास्य राज्याय न्यासं दत्त्वा पुनः पुनः ॥ १-१-३७ निवर्तयामास ततो भरतं भरताय्रजः । स काममनवाप्येव रामपादावुपस्पृशन् ॥ १-१-३८

sa jagāma vanam vīro rāmapādaprasādakaḥ ||1-1-34 gatvā tu sa mahātmānam rāmam satyaparākramam | ayācad bhrātaram rāmamāryabhāvapuraskṛtaḥ || 1-1-35 tvameva rājā dharmajña iti rāmam vaco 'bravīt | rāmo'pi paramodāraḥ sumukhaḥ sumahāyaśāḥ || 1-1-36 na caicchat piturādeśād rājyam rāmo mahābalaḥ | pāduke cāsya rājyāya nyāsam dattvā punaḥ punaḥ || 1-1-37 nivartayāmāsa tato bharatam bharatāgrajaḥ | sa kāmamanavāpyaiva rāmapādāvupaspṛśan || 1-1-38

When Dasharatha died, Bharata was appointed king, as Rama had declared. The panel of court advisors in Ayodhya approached Bharata and asked him to be the king until Rama returned. The strong-willed and strong-armed Bharata had no desire to have this kingdom. He, brave Bharata, who sought the blessing of the feet of Rama, went to the forest. His intention at first was to bring back Rama. But he knew that Rama would not return, no matter how he pleaded. He decided that he would get Rama's sandals, and he would rule in the name of Rama with the sandals as symbol of his brother's presence. This is how the tradition goes even today. Still, Bharata dreamed he could beg his brother to come back. Bharata knew that Rama could not say no to someone who had surrendered to him. Bharata thought he could persuade Rama.

Among those who deserve to be worshipped, Bharata deserves to be named first. Bharata went to Guha, who was now angry that the kingdom had lost Rama. Guha, the hunter, thought Bharata had brought this all about to gain the kingdom. Guha thought Bharata might pursue Rama and try to finish him off. Guha decided to fight with Bharata. But when he met and listened to Bharata, he helped him cross the river, and he told him where to find Rama in Citrakuta. Reaching Rama, Bharata approached the *mahātmā*, this man committed to truth, his brother. He

begged his brother, "O dharmajña, you should be the ruler. I am but a child. What do I know about ruling a kingdom? My mother committed a mistake and now she realizes it and now you should come back. Whatever punishment is deserved by the people who caused this banishment we will take care of. Please come back." He went on and on. "You are the one who knows dharma; you know the sāstra, and the people, and the ways of administration. A king must be a dharmarāja; you alone should be the king." These words were said, and they made a strong argument.

Rama, who does not reject anybody who comes to him, who will redress the other's difficulties, a man of spontaneous compassion, ever cheerful, whose fame for doing good is well deserved, whose renown echoes through the family of Raghu into which he was born, a man of great strength that is for justice, who makes others happy, in whom others revel, said, "Because of my father's command, I definitely will not accept the rule of the kingdom. Even if Dasharatha is no longer alive, even if Kaikeyi sees her mistake, even, Bharata, with your argument that I should rule, my mind is committed to fulfilling the words of my father."

Bharata said, "I cannot rule the kingdom; I cannot sit on the throne; it is just not possible. Even, dear brother, your saying that I should go and rule cannot make me. I will never sit on that throne. I will return only because you command me." There again, emotion served *dharma*, duty. Bharata would prefer to join Lakshmana and stay with Rama, but Rama would not allow it. To ensure that the kingdom had a fit leader, Rama commanded that Bharata return and rule.

Bharata asked for his brother's sandals and said, "These will rule; I will be only a *nimitta*, an instrument."

"Padukasahasram" is a thousand verse poem in complex Sanskrit by a famous poet, Vedantadeshika, about this taking of the sandals by Bharata. Bharata took the sandals back to the city and built himself a simple cottage on the outskirts of the city where he lived like an ascetic. He constructed an altar and kept the $p\bar{a}duka$ there. It was the sandals that ruled from the altar. Bharata was the ruler, but his attitude was that Rama was the king and that he, Bharata, was an instrument of his elder brother. Never was there a thought on Bharata's part that he was the king, and yet he was an excellent leader and a just ruler. Never letting go of the sandals, surrendering at the feet of his brother Rama, filled with his desire for Rama to return, Bharata ruled the kingdom from the hut in Nandigrama. The characterization of Bharata is the beauty here.

To be continued...

The Wholeness of You by Swamini Saralananda

This is the twelfth part of the serial article, continuation from April 2022 newsletter.

A Glimpse of Reality

How to see this intangible Self of pure unconditional love, awareness, fullness, etc., etc. True, there is nothing my physical eyes will see, but the seers.....the ones who 'saw' left us a legacy of teachings whereby we can see with our 'eye' of wisdom. This is what is meant by the symbolic third eye, an 'eye' to understand the knowledge of things beyond what my physical eyes can see. Just as how human beings saw the world as flat until a higher knowledge, science, taught us different. For example, the sun does not move, the earth is rotating on its axis in its orbit and it only looks like the sun is moving across the sky, rising and setting. If you think about a lot of knowledge and whatever wisdom you have, it is not tangible, but it can be appreciated and known, taught and shared in a very real way.

Experience vs Knowledge

It is an epistemological law; Experience can never be a substitute for valid knowledge. "But I saw it with my own eyes". It is not given that much weight in a court of law these days. Our eyes and all other senses fool us all the time and when proper inquiry is done, we find the truth is quite often entirely something else. And how I see and know myself now needs to be displaced by a valid, 'truer' version of who I am; I need to get at least a glimpse.

If the Self is Infinite.... how will we 'see', grasp it, what will be at least a glimpse? There are two particular Sanskrit verses in Vedanta that can serve as an answer. To understand those verses one Sanskrit word needs to be translated and explained because there simply is no word for it in English. Please fasten your cognitive seat belt again and hang in here. To attempt to explain the Infinite, within some few paragraphs is no easy task.

A Need To Understand The Word '

The word "Brahman" is a word for that Infinite, Oneness which has been spoken of already, as it is my Self. It is the formless essence of us all and everything else. It pervades absolutely everything known and unknown that you can name or think of. Once we use the word "Infinite" then it cannot exclude anything. And it is not a 'thing', not some primordial ooze, some formless gel out of which this universe is made. (I only bring that in because people do have some funny kinds of words when trying to grasp Brahman.) So, it

being not a thing and being the essence of everything, still, what is it...because that "essence" should be explainable. If the 'seers' saw...then how and what did they see?

Formlessness

First, "Brahman" is the formless reality as "Beingness"... "Is-ness". It is that because of which the first and last comment you can make about anything and everything is that "it is", meaning, it exists. If you say "The son of a barren woman does not exist;" it will be said, "But your thought and knowledge of that non-existent son...IS... known to you. You know his non-entity status. "So, for absolutely everything we can think of, known or unknown....is...is.... isness is always there. The treeis, the table is, he is, water is, my 'I' is...your 'you' is. This isness of everything can only be known to you because it exists. Brahman is the 'isness' of everything. It is pure Existence, per se, which excludes nothing.

There are three words that are used to explain Brahman, first 'is' and the second 'knowledge,'. For better clarity we use the abstraction, so we say knowingness, knownness, knowableness; it is the 'knowing principle' and like is-ness, it is formless. It pervades everything as pure, unconditional consciousness. These two 'conceptualizations' in the form of words used to indicate, not define Brahman, are not two different adjectives for the one substantive, a 'something' called Brahman. Formless isness and formless consciousness are one and the same Brahman. "Brahman is isness-consciousness. Consciousness-being-ness is Brahman". Consciousness IS. All these expressions are called Brahman. Admittedly this is very subtle, we are not used to thinking in such abstract, absolute terms for anything formless; this is why perhaps the words seem to be 'straining' here.

If we say, "The tree is." that 'involves' existence, the 'is' of it. And then, is it an unknown or known 'is'? It is Existent. It has to be known to you or you can't say the tree exists, and that is the known-ness aspect. And so, both the 'is' and 'known' has to be there in order to know anything, whether it exists or doesn't exist, like the barren woman's son. It will always depend on consciousness-is, isness-consciousness; you can't have one without the other.

Our Typical Thinking Does Not Work Here

We cannot do our usual kind of thinking here in terms of distinguishing things one apart from another. The being-ness and the conscious-ness are one-same, not two. Two words are used only for the sake of our limited-mind ways-of-understanding and analyzing things by breaking them down into parts and facets. Brahman has no parts, so how to explain it in the usual way we explain most everything else? It is Infinite so how to de-fine-

note, define it. Yet the teachers have to make the attempt somehow, so they bring words and use them in an enigmatic, paradoxical way and when those words reach the target of understanding the teacher is aiming at, he will remind us of the limitation of these words.

No Ordinary Teaching Of This Limitlessness

It is a magical kind of teaching like how the 'guru' of the rope-snake man made the snake disappear. Once he said and showed "this is rope", they did not go on talking about the particulars of what kind of rope or snake it was and where could it have come from, blah blah.... the guru's job was done.

The other word used for Brahman is limitless-ness. If Brahman is formless-Being-ness, the essence of absolutely all things, then that means it is everywhere, all at once and not limited by any form whatsoever. It has no divisions of even two things, so it has no limits in time and space. There is nowhere it is not. It is limitless. So, at the same time it is, pure formless existence, limitless consciousness, present in absolutely everything, since it all 'amounts' to only one indivisible infinity, then that has to mean that it is Absolute Fullness-without-lack. If it is absolutely Full, a limitless Whole without depending on anything outside itself then that fullness is not conditioned, never disturbed by anything. It is not affected by want; it 'knows' no lack.

Brahman Is Never To Be Equated To Emptiness

And it cannot be said to be a void of emptiness because it pervades and includes, it spans, everything. It cannot exclude me, not even in this very moment when I am still ignorant and would even deny that this makes sense. The rope was rope even when being taken for a snake. So, pervading everything as IS-ness, which is also knowing-Consciousness, it can never be said that it is nothing-ness, emptiness, the Void. In fact, we have to say it is Everything-ness. It is the essence of all there is. And if nothing is lacking, by virtue of what 'infinite, formless, existence-consciousness is', that means that the 'third' non-separate aspect, to be understood about Brahman is Absolute Fullness.

To be continued...

"One can seek what one does not have and one can seek what one thinks one does not have. If one thinks one does not have a given thing and one considers it desirable, one cannot but seek."

- Swami Dayananda Saraswati

Message from the mentor, Swami Guruparananda

Sri Swami Chidbhavananda Ashramam is born out of the sankalpa and hard work of Pujyasri Swami Omkaranandaji. I am just narrating the activities of this Ashramam.

Food and stay

Simple, hygienic, healthy and sattvic food will be served. Comfortable and neat accommodation is available for stay.

Teachings

Primary goal of this Ashramam is the teaching of Vedanta. Regular classes, camps etc will be conducted. Pujyasri Swami Omkaranandaji's teachings will be made available to all the seekers. Swamijis can bring their students and conduct Vedanta camps. Antharyoga (One day spiritual program), full chanting of Thiruvachakam, Thayumanavar Padalgal, Thirukural etc., will be conducted.

Contemplation

Many seekers ask me to suggest a place where healthy food and clean accommodation with serene atmosphere are available for stay for a week or a month to contemplate on the teaching which they learnt from their teachers. Pujyasri Swami Omkaranandaji has created an excellent spiritual atmosphere for such a contemplation and owning up of the teaching. This Ashramam must be used for this purpose.

Vidyapitham (Temple)

Adiguru Sri Prajna Dakshinamurti Vidyapitham is making the Ashramam spiritually pure, and pujas are going on very well. Seeing the puja itself brings our mind to us.

Pujyasri Swami Omkaranandaji's Adhishtanam and dhyana-mandapam (Swamiji 's Samadhi) have been consecrated in traditional vedic way. Pujas will be done accordingly. This place is declared as a silence zone where puja, chanting, japa and meditation alone can be practised.

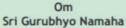
All these programmes are being carried out with the blessings of Pujyasri Swami Paramarthananda.

Donations

Ashramam infrastructure is totally complete. No more new building is necessary. So, Ashramam does not need huge contributions. Ashramam needs a corpus fund and donations to maintain its day-to-day activities. Generous donations from those who derive benefits from this Ashramam, are enough.

With the Blessings of Adiguru Sri Prajna Dakshinamurti and PujyaSri Swami Omkaranandaji and Guru Parampara, let us grow spiritually. Some people make the world beautiful just by being in it. Let us evolve to be one among them.

- Swami Guruparananda, 16th May 2022





We are happy to share that
Pujya Sri Swami Guruparananda
has very graciously and kindly
consented to our request, to be the
Mentor, and we are very happy that
Swamiji has accepted our request.
The Trustees heartily welcome
Swamiji to be the Mentor, and offer
our Namaskarams to Swamiji.





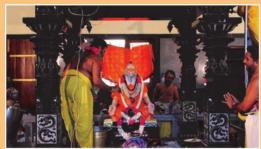


With the guidance and Blessings of Pujya Sri Swami Guruparananda, Swami Samananda is being appointed as the Managing Trustee and all of us will focus and offer our Seva collectively, to take forward Pujyasri Omkarananda Swamijis Lakshyam.

Maha Kumbhabhishekam

At Theni, Ishvara is Adiguru and Guru - Ishvara. Parabrahma svarupa with constant Akhandakara vritti lived here showing the path of dharma & upasana and taught here the Truth of Brahman. This avatara Mahapurusha was, is and will be worshipped as Pujyasri Swami Omkarananda. To facilitate this, has been consecrated an adhishtanam along with a dhyana mandapam as per the sastras (scriptural injunctions).

The Adhishtanam of a great jnani is an abode, radiating serenity, holiness and spiritual splendour. Sadhakas who reverentially offer worship and meditate be-



come recipients of the Jnani's blessings and there are instances where such seekers have been blessed with directions, guidance, etc pertaining to their sadhana. With this purport conveyed by Sri Sharada Peetham Sringeri and under the divine direction of Sri Acharyals of Sringeri, the Vedic rituals were conducted com-

mencing from Mahasamadhi of Pujyasri Swami Omkarananda, monthly and annual Aradhana and the Adhishtanam activities upto Mahakumbhabhishekam.

23rd April 7 am in Guru Horai assembled the Vedic pundits and devotees in the sannidhi of Adiguru Sri Prajna Dakshinamurthy seeking His blessings. Gomatru puja for auspiciousness, Sri Ganapati homam to avert hurdles, Sri Mahalakshmi puja for resources, Sri Navagraha homam invoking devatas and Vastu shanti to prepare and sanctify the place for the conduct of the yajnas were conducted.

Everything we start should flourish as the seeds germinate and grow – Germination of seeds in small mud containers is a ritual integrated in every one of our functions to bring out this attitude. Every element of nature is worshipped in our culture and is evident in our puja practice. In Mritsangrahanam, we pray to Sri Bhudevi as we dig to fill mud in the containers to sow the seeds. (Swamiji's lessons on patience echoed as we were under the shade of the banyan tree in the Sri Bharati Tirtha Vidyarthi Vilasaha)

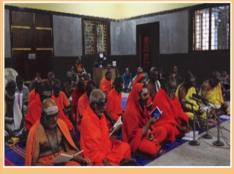
23rd April 4 pm along the banks we offered worship to Surabhi Saraswati River followed by Ganga stotram and carried water in kalasams to the yajnashala. After taking the Sankalp to dedicate to the conduct of the activities of Mahakumbhabhishekam pledging to set aside personal pursuits, the protective holy thread kankanam was wound round the wrists of all the ritviks and the key people involved in organizing the function in the Rakshabandhanam ritual led by Executive trustee, Sri Parasuraman.

Yagashala Pravesham was done with Mandapa dvara puja inviting and offering



puja to devatas of all directions and Indradi devatas. Agni pravesha was followed by Hamsa Gayatri mantra and Shiva Taraka Mantra japa homam with offerings culminating with the Purnahuti. Chaturveda parayanam (Rig, Shukla Yajur, Krishna Yajur, Sama, Jaimini Sama and Atarvana), Shiva puranam, Na-

mavali with Vadya gosham, Vedanta sravanam including Sri Guru Gita and Srimad Bhagavad Gita Shankara Bhashya portion chantings reverberated filling the air with divinity. Four kaala (times) yagashala pujas were conducted including the morning and evening of 24th April and the morning of 25th April. PujyaSri Swami Omkaranandaji was invoked and prarthanas for all vidyarthis and devotees offered.



Sri Swami Samananda and many other sanyasis participated fully in the celebrations. Pudukottai Sri Swami Pravananda rendered an anugraha bhashanam elucidating the importance of shraddha bhakti towards Guru after Sri Ganesha Ganapadigal explained how all devatas reside in Agni, Apah and Brahmana, who are important in a yajna.

24th morning 11 am yantra pratishta, rajata bandhanam (fixing of silver ring outside the shiv ling) and ashta bandhanam (mixing the eight ingredients and applying the binding material) for the mandap kalas were done at the adhishtanam. Pratishtha of PujyaSri Swami Omkaranandaji's vigraham in dhyana posture was done. This faces the 9 feet tall edifice of Adiguru Sri Prajna Dakshinamurty Swami.



25th morning 10 am a ritual of absorbing the worship in the havan to the kalash and that to the adhishtana mandap kalash with mantras was done. Devotees flunged in large numbers to have a darshan, witness the events, offer their shraddha purvaka bhakti at the adhishtanam.

Mahabhishekam was done with Sri Rudram chanting. Ritviks were honoured.

26th and 27th April morning – Sri Rudra Gayatri Pallava Sri Prajna Dakshinamurty Moola mantra homam and Sri Hamsa Gayatri Pallava Navachandi homam were done.

28th morning – Sri Rudra Ekadashi homam was done and in the evening being pradosham day, Sri Rudra Ganaparayanam at the adhishtanam for about three hours was a feast to everyone's ears.

29th morning – Taitriyopanishad parayanam, Brahmana Aradhana and Tirtha Narayana puja were done and that marked the conclusion of the week-long events.

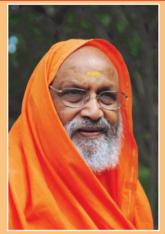
Avar arulale avar taal vanangi - By His grace, we worship Him. In the words of Sri Kanchi Mahaswami – When a great person attains siddhi, a ray of their power of Grace will remain in their body, even after the life energy has left it. The place of samadhi of a Mahaan will serve as a place for this blessing ray to take root and flow to the bhaktas. Come one and all for Pujyasri Swamiji so full of love is here to shower His grace and protect us with Knowledge at this Vidya stanam Theni.

Om Tat Sat

"There are many people who propound positive thinking as a means of overcoming sadness. But this cannot solve the problem of human sadness for good, because where there is positive thinking, there must be a fact that makes it a factual positive thinking. If this is so, there is going to be another fact forming the basis for negative thinking. Positive thinking cannot erase the conclusion, 'I am sad'."

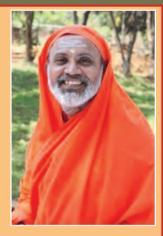
- Swami Dayananda Saraswati

Guru-Poornima Camp









Email: office@arshavidya.in Phone: +91-9442646701, +91-422-2657001

announces Gurupurnima Residential Retreat

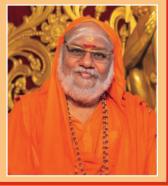
On Manishapanchakam and Selected Verses from Gurugita

Swami Sadatmananda Saraswati and

Swami Jagadatmananda Saraswati

From 10th July to 13th July 2022

For Registration please visit the web site www.arshavidya.in
Last date for submitting the application 30.06.2022



Life as it is

A deep study of the upanisads reveals why Swami Dayananda Saraswati is insisting that Bhagavān is to be understood as order of orders. The truth is there is no 'thing' around. Everything is stitched together as order of orders, knowledge all the way, Hiranyagarbha is referred to as sūtrātmā, a stitcher, in some places jyotiṣām jyotiḥ, light of knowledge all the way, inside also antarjyoti, manaso manah, again knowledge, no 'thing'. Swamiji always used to say, since the sense of touch runs all over the epidermis, one has a notion that body is one single entity, whereas body is put together as order of orders, a representative miracle encapsulating the order of orders, matter, energy, all kinds of forces, biological, electromagnetic, chemical, psychosomatic, all kinds of glory, it is knowledge all the way. So ultimately when there is only knowledge and no 'thing' around, fundamentally all of us make the mistake of doing vyavahāra thinking as though there are things around, whereas it is only "vijrmbayati," meaning projected and sustained as "Mahāyogi iva svecchayā," (by the being's own volition, by its own nature. Since the being is not even a particle, infinitisimally smaller, meaning 'no thing' that is what it means, it is just knowingness-cit, caitanyam hence is all powers that can be imagined, infinitely more than nuclear power and power of a further smaller particle yet to be discovered, etc just extrapolate, unimaginable) feels like kiñcit bhāvam asti, it is all in a flux gives the feeling something tangible is out there, but no. In Tamil in colloquial language, there is one expression, even we use, "enna scene podare", "enna padam kaatare", meaning what is happening around is only like a movie. We compound the problem by attaching false values to these so-called things. We give names, words, meanings, fix connections, relationships, etc as if they are all there as tangible, substantial, but no. Naturally founded on lack of true knowledge assuming 'things' can only misfire. If things happen as we wanted, we are just lucky, we have earned some grace sometimes. So, only hope of redemption is surrender to this all-knowledge knowingness, being, order of orders and slowly unravel in our mind the knowledge involved in

every small aspect of life day in and day out and retract ourselves to the truth of the 'being'. See some details here.

Sri Rudram chanting followed by camakam exemplifies the fact, they being directly from Vedas, everything, the whole society, the world at hand has been projected graphically in all details, Bhagavān emphatically says that seeing them as 'na mama,' seeing them differently but not the real thing, at the same time 'namah', surrender to the knowledge, and follows immediately saying 'ca me, ca me,' exhorts us not to go away with the idea that they are other than 'I', the allknowing being. In the Mrtyunjaya mantra that we chant at end of Sri Rudram "ṭān yajñasya māyayā sarvānava yajāmahe". Puruṣasuktam also says savs, "ajāyamāno bahudhā vijāyate," the paradox in the same sentence. Gītā says 'matsthāni sarvabhūtāni' and immediately follows 'na ca matsthāni bhūtāni.' Sri Dakshinamurti Stotram compassionately captures the essence of the paradoxes that "māyā kalpita deśa kāla kalanā vaicitriya citrīkṛtam," the whole world we confront, all happenings captured like etched in a film, memory screen, and like film rolls, the memory is projected in a continuum as though there is continuous life from the past, like a movie it is played out, a longer bluff, you see only changeless light(vivarta- changeless, upādānam-the light is the knowingness being, lights up all the dimensions of knowledge including ignorance) the changing images on the mind screen are the viśvarūpa, a historical life projected into future, both are unreal, here and now is the only truth. All our intelligence and creativity(I the being) māyayā/avidyayā has seemlessly spilled over through the window of sakṣī into identifiction with 'I thought' to body, name, relationship, status, position, power, opinion, bias, prejudice, judgements, desires, actions, sufferings, etc all strung together like a movie. Everything originates from I the being, sustained by the being and resolves into the being. Namama is namah and ca me(in Sanskrit), it is all I. Just be. Let go. Let God.

Then the question can be "what am I the being, who am I the being referred to here?" Let us look at that.

There is 'I the being.' There is 'I thought.' 'I thought' is largely in the domain of bhagavatśakti māyā and almost all life is determined and guided by that śakti, Īśvara srsti. Ātmavān, 'I' the being, avidyayā identifying with 'I thought' is samsārī meaning limiting ourselves to a fleeting thought in mind and converting into an action, desire, the results are never ending desires, hence samsārī. Ātmavān abiding in 'I the being' is freedom. Generally even students of Vedanta think ātmavān identifying with 'I thought' is essential because śāstra says one should do one's duties with full śraddhā, effort and enthusiasm quoting Viṣṇu Sahasranāma 'mahotsāḥ...', etc that Bhagavān is himself enthusiastically participating in srsti. The good thing is as I said all happenings are within supreme will including the 'I thought' participating in prayrtti is in the presence of 'I the being', bhagavat šakti operates. In Māndūkya Kārikā talks Swamiji clearly explains there is no Īśvara sṛṣṭi other than the order, niyati, māyā/avidyayā vijṛmbanam. The asamsārī (not identifying with I thought) ātmavān abiding in the being is freedom. If I look at my life honestly, that is how it is. Be generous in the aloofness, role-play of prayrtti in all roles. There is no disconnect or dissociation. If we see any disconnect or dissociation, we are only imagining things or we are not willing to drop ātmavān identifying with I thought. We are afraid we would lose all that we have earned over janmas, a pseudo ātmavān. Further,

'I the being' is free and that is life and ātmavān is free enough to commit the error of identifying with 'I thought' and assume I run my life, whereas almost all of life is in Īśvara's domain. Swamiji uses the 'tṛc' pratyaya (word ending) to refer to I am kartā (kartṛ), I am bhoktā (bhoktṛ) attitude, saying that attitude can only mess up things - tṛc is only tṛsamam, even in tamil trasamam means messing up. The only excuse can be making the error is part of the order and so also is the vidyā that can help you claim the freedom from the error.

For some strange, divine reason, till I first heard Swami Dayananda Saraswati telling 'you are the awareful being', till that moment I never had any notion or concept in my mind, even though at that time I was just nineteen yrs, a science

graduate with good understanding of Maths, physics, chemistry and reasonably religious, I had gone through upanayanam, Gāyatrī initiation, etc. But till I heard Swamiji I never had any thought-process that were to tell me that science or religion would tell me 'who I am'. I always instinctively thought I am the one seeing what science runs in my mind and what religion, God thought runs in my mind. I am the observer of all that, I knew. So when Swamiji said 'you are the awareful being' it rang totally true and I have not looked back since.

So to put it all together, I the being, svarūpa being "knowingness", all so-called things, world spring from this knowingness, severally referred to as ātmā, Brahman, Bhagavān, śakti, all-knowledge. Knowing this I remain. Be, let go, let God.

This is the only truth, the reality that cannot be negated, this is the only knowledge that cannot be improved upon and that can be claimed as knowledge because it is 'I'. Only a flower can know itself completely, can claim flower-knowledge which cannot be negated or improved upon however great a botanist or a biologist be who analyses the flower. So fulfilment is "I" the being. So be I.

Om tat sat.

Swami Ramesvarananda Saraswati

Jñāna Pravaha – Vedanta Study Centre, Manjakkudi

"Anything that is considered desirable by us becomes an object of seeking. There are two types of seeking in our life. First is the seeking of things which I look upon as desirable and which I do not have. Things like comforts, money, power, progeny etc., fall in this category. The second kind of seeking also pertains to objects which we consider desirable. But there is a difference. While the first kind of seeking pertains to objects we do not have, this second kind of seeking is for the objects we have, but think we do not have."

- Swami Dayananda Saraswati

SWAMI PARAMARTHANANDA'S JNANA-YAGNA AT COIMBATORE

Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, Anaikatti and Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Coimbatore Kendra organised a jnana-yaga during April 24, 2022 to April 30, 2022. This yagna has been going on for more than 30 years. Due to the pandemic it did not happen during the last two years. Coimbatoreans were happy that this yagna has resumed. Around 250 students attended the classes. A brief summary of Swamiji's both classes – Advaita Makaranda in the mornings and Uddhava Gita Chapter V in the evenings is presented.

ADVAITA MAKARANDA

Advaita Makaranda is a nididhyasana text written by Sri Laksmidhara Kavi. Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati says it is a tying up text.

The essence of Vedanta is: Brahma Satyam. Jagan Mithya. Aham Brahamaiva Naparah. I, Brahman alone is real. Everything else is seemingly real. Anatma Isvara is mithya. Atma Isvara is satyam. Dream world appears real because I lend reality to it. It borrows reality from me. Veda is the pramanam. Supportive logic is used so that the mind will be convinced. I am avasta traya sakshi, the illuminator of the three states- waking, dream and deep sleep.

Swamiji taught from Verse 13. I am atma which is free from the six type of changes. I am atma the changeless witness of continuously changing body mind sense complex. We have Sastra pramanam that atma is changeless. Atma is knower of changes and is free from changes.

Atma is paramartika satyam. Self ignorance is vyavaharika satyam. Opposite things can coexist in different orders of reality. Though illogical self ignorance is there, Atma reveals all forms of knowledge and all forms of ignorance. Self ignorance is mithya. Ignorance has seeming existence until you bring the light of knowledge. Once pramanam is used, samsara disappears without residue.

We project a dream world during sleep. It can be called dream no.1. Maya projects this waking world. It can be called dream no.2. The dream no.2 includes jiva, jagat, Isvara, svarga and moksa. For the one who has woken up to atma swarupa, this world is dream no.2.

Atma cannot be described by conventional explanation. Initially it is explained that anatma is there and atma is karanam and adistanam. Atma is Sakshi or wit-

ness consciousness. Later anatma is negated. Then Sakshi status of atma is also negated.

Atma is existence, consciousness and happiness. But they are not attributes of atma. They are the nature of atma. Svarupa jnanam is consciousness. Vritti jnanam is knowledge.

Svarupa sukam or bimba ananda or happiness is my nature. It is non experience able happiness. It is limitlessness. Vritti sukam or vritti pradi bimba ananda or visaya sukam or kosa ananda is temporarily experience able happiness. A thing unconditionally loved by all is self. A thing unconditionally loved by all is happiness. Therefore atma or self is happiness. Happiness is my very nature.

'Tat Tvam Asi' maha vakya reveals the identity of I and Brahman. By bhaga-tyaga -laksana, the incidental aspect of attribute is given up. The common aspect of consciousness is retained. I am that consciousness where maya created divisions of jiva, jagat, Isvara are not there.

May the Advaita Makaranda (honey) of the Laksmidhara kavi be drunk by the bees in the form of qualified Vedanta students.

UDDHAVA GITA CHAPTER V

Lord Krishna told Uddhava that the seeker should perform duties as prescribed by the Sastra as per his varna, ashrama and kula. The seeker should surrender to the Lord. One should initially perform his duty with karma yoga attitude. He should accept the result as Isvara prasada. Later he should see the entire universe as viswa rupa of Isvara and see that the result itself as Isvara. He should have a un-pre-occupied mind. That is possible through PORT (Possession, Obligatory duties, Relationship and Transaction) reduction.

The benefit of karma yoga is a non reacting mind. Such a mind is a learning mind. When there is a materialistic approach to life, all the efforts will become counterproductive.

One should reduce materialistic actions and religious activities done for the sake of achieving materialistic desires. One should avoid prohibited actions. One should know the limitations of worldly desires. One should do nitya naimittika karma or panca maya yagna. One should do actions with Isvara arpana buddhi and accept results with prasada buddhi. One should follow the Sastric do's. One

should avoid the Sastric don'ts.

When values are there, mind will be calm. Real success is internal peace. The spiritual seeker should be humble, without jealously, efficient, without mamakara, devoted to the Guru, tireless and use speech sparingly.

One should remain neutral to his wife, children, house, fields, relatives, wealth, etc. There should be neither like nor dislike. Sannyasa buddhi is being ready to lose the loseable. Detachment is an important qualification for Vedantic study.

One paramatma is available as self conscious I. One paramatma appears as many jivatmas. Without the attribute of body it is one. With attribute of body it is many. I am the all pervading paramatma doing transaction through the medium of body. To claim the glory of paramatma I require a body. If I identify with the body, I will have repeated births and deaths. If I use my body as a costume there is no problem. Interaction between the Guru and the student produces knowledge.

One may think that by doing good karma and by increasing the punyam, he can make the life happy. But the problems of old age, disease and death are always waiting. Svarga itself is not eternal. Hence stay at Svarga is also limited. Prohibited actions give immediate benefit. But they result in lower bodies and naraka. One should do karma judiciously, to transcend karma and come to jnana kanda.

Report by N. Avinashilingam.

Photos in wrapper page #2 and #31

"If we look at our life and enquire as to what it is that we seek, we find that all the varieties of activities that we undertake are prompted by an urge to acquire something or get rid of something. All the urges that a human being feels fall under three basic categories: (1) to live – to live a day longer, (2) to gain happiness, and (3) to acquire knowledge."

- Swami Dayananda Saraswati

Residential Spiritual camp

With the blessing of Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Swami Paramarthananda, Swami Sakshatkritananda and Swami Sadatmananda, Arsha Avinash Foundation conducted a residential spiritual camp. The camp was held for two days on May 14, 2022 and May 15, 2022. Around 35 students from Coimbatore, Tirupur, Chennai and Shimoga participated in the camp.

INAUGURATION: Swami Sadatmananda, Chief Acharya inaugurated the camp. He explained that Bhagavad Gita is not only for worshipping, chanting on special occasions, general chanting, but for learning its meaning. As the worshipper of the Lord is benefited, the chanter is benefited, the listener is benefited, the teacher is benefited and the student is benefited.

We can divide Bhagavad Gita into three sections of six chapters each. We can say it talks about karma yoga, upasana yoga, and jnana yoga. We can say it talks of jiva, Isvara (including jagat) and oneness between jiva and Isvara. We can say it talks about self efforts, Isvara's grace and values.

Bhagavad Gita is for inner growth called spiritual growth. We should be committed to truth. If we are street smart, we may not be committed to truth. If we practice the values mentioned in Gita our life will be meaningful and rewarding.

Like banks observing customer service week, students can observe ahimsa month. In one month one value can be practised with more emphasis. Like that if we practice 12 value in 12 months, we will be endowed with 12 values in one year. Moreover they are interconnected. If we pull one leg of a wooden cot, the other three legs will also come. Similarly if we practise one value, all other values will also come to us. Swamiji blessed the students for success in their spiritual pursuit.

IMPORTANCE OF VEDANTA STUDY: Swami Jagadatmananda, Acharya addressed the students regarding the importance of Vedanta study. He said that we generally think that the problem is due to brother, son or neighbour. Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati has written a book titled 'You are the problem. You are the solution'. Swamiji has explained that the fundamental problem is non acceptance of the self. Sastra says that the world is not real as its existence depends upon Brahman. When we rearrange our understanding through self knowledge, all our problems are solved. Swamiji also explained about the proposed 3 months Vedanta course in Tamil at Anaikatti Gurukulam.

BHAGAVAD GITA SESSION: Sri N. Avinashilingam and Smt. Ponmani Avinashilingam taught 20 values from Bhagavad Gita Chapter 13. They explained the values in detail

and also referred to the relevant portions from Kathopanisad, Niti Satakam and Thiruk-kural. If these values are there atma jnanam is very easy to gain. These virtues give the required qualification for atma jnanam. Hence these values themselves are called jnanam. There was excellent interaction and floor participation during the classes.

OTHER SESSIONS: In the meditation session, Sri N. Avinashilingam conducted Guided Meditation on the topic of Value Meditation. Smt. Visalakshi Ananthanarayanan taught Gita Chanting. In the evening Satsangh, Smt. Kalyani Natarajan and Smt. Uma Ramachandran sang devotions songs including Bho Shambho, which is the most popular composition of Pujya Swamiji. Smt. Prema Rammohan beautifully summarised the Vedantic teaching.

VALEDICTORY OF PRASTANA TRAYA CLASSES: Arsha Avinash Foundation, Tatabad, Coimbatore started prastana traya classes on September 30, 2017. Sri N. Avinashilingam and Smt. Ponmani Avinashilingam were the Teachers. They have successfully completed the teaching of following texts without bhashyam, Bhagavad Gita, Mundaka Upanisad, Kenopanisad, Kathopanisad, Kaivalyopanisad, Taittiriya Upanisad, Isavasya Upanisad, Mandukya Upanisad (without karika), Prasna Upanisad and Aitareya Upanisad. They have also taught the summary of Chandogya Upanaisad, Brihadaranyaka Upanisad and Brahma Sutra (555 sutras).

Swami Sadatmananda, Chief Acharya on May 15, 2022 gave the valedictory address for the prasana traya classes. He said that I am limitless atma. I am free. But I do not know how I am free. Ignorance is the cause for bondage and knowledge is the solution. The means of knowledge is Vedanta (Upanisads). Prasata trayam means a group of three main texts. Three main texts are Sruti –Upanisads, smriti -Bhagavad Gita and for resolving doubts Brahma Sutra. They have to be studied under a Teacher.

The teaching can be summarised as under:

Samsara varnanam: The problem is diagnosed as self ignorance.

Sadhana varnanam: The jnana sadhanas are sravanam, mananam and nididhyasanam. The student should have four fold qualifications.

Jiva svarupa nirupanam: Jiva has avidya and therefore appear limited

Isvara svarupa nirupanam: With upadhi, Isvara is jagat karanam. Without upadhi, Isvara is Satyam, Jnanam, Anantham Brahman.

Aikyam: Oneness of jiva and Isvara

Jnana phalam: Attains moksa or limitlessness.

Students may ask what next? I have completed study of prastana trayam. If the question what next is there, repeat studying again and again. Some say 'I am Brahman'. But my

wife is not accepting. Brahman has no wife, so the student has not yet understood that I am Brahman. Once knowledge is gained, every moment is fullness. There is no fear of God, no fear of rebirth. Fullness is expressed in the form of universal love and compassion. Until there is conviction that I am Brahman, keep studying prastana trayam.

FEEDBACK FROM THE CAMPERS:

The atmosphere in the Gurukulam, spiritual teaching, temple and food were all excellent. The values taught in the class are highly useful in our day to day life.

- Smt. T.T.Varuna Devi

The camp was beautifully arranged, held in sylvan surroundings, gave a brief outline of essential values for becoming a Vedantic student. – **Sri K. Anathanaryanan**

The values presented are very much useful to improve the quality of our life. The temple puja was divine. – **Kumari M. Bhavani**

The ambience and intellectual participation of the campers were excellent.

- Dr. S. Dorairaj

The punctuality of the classes were perfect, the explanation by the Teachers were wonderful. – Sri V. Natarajan

I found this camp very purposeful to begin my spiritual journey.

- Sri M.R. Krishnamohan

I loved it thoroughly. - Smt. Prema Rammohan

I liked the accommodation, punctuality, Swamiji's introduction, Gita classes and vibration in the temple.- Smt. C. Kalyani

The camp was a stepping stone in my spiritual journey.- Sri G. Unnikrishnan

I was so happy to hear the speech of Swami Sadatmananda and Swami Jagadatmananda. I had a very peaceful and happy stay in the Gurukulam. Sri Avinashilingam and Smt Ponmani explained the Gita verses patiently. – Smt. Archana Krishna Mohan

Report by N. Avinashilingam

Photo in the wrapper page #31

Dayananda Anugraha Fund

The Dayananda Anugraha Fund was established in 2016 to provide financial grants to direct and indirect disciples of Pujya Swami Dayananda who are in need of such support.

Primary grants (first priority) are given for living, medical, dental, and other necessary personal expenses.

Secondary grants (second priority) are given for expenses related to travel and teaching, as well as ashram/residence construction.

Any disciple in our parampara who is in need of support is invited to visit www.dayanandafund.org or email - dayanandafund@arshabodha.org

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