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Swami Dayananda Ashram**

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

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Arsha Vidya Gurukulam

Institute of Vedanta and Sanskrit
P.O. Box No.1059
Saylorsburg, PA, 18353, USA
Tel: 570-992-2339
Fax: 570-992-7150
570-992-9617
Web Site :
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Institute of Vedanta and Sanskrit
Sruti Seva Trust
Anaikatti P.O., Coimbatore 641108
Tel. 0422-2657001
Fax 91-0422-2657002
Web Site:
http://www.arshavidya.in
Email: office@arshavidya.in

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Ātmānam ced vijānīyāt
PujyaSwamiji's transcribed talk

This is the seventh issue of the serial article, continuation from June 2020 newsletter.

"You cannot produce what is limitless. Either it is already there or it is non-existent. If it is already there, then you do not produce it. Finite karmas would produce finite results. If you are seeking nitya, that nitya cannot be the result of any action."

You cannot produce what is eternal. There is no eternal heaven. That 'eternal' is like waiting for someone eternally. When you are waiting for your dear one, even five minutes of delay looks like eternity. You feel as though some grass is growing under your feet. This is what they call eternity. You cannot enter into a heaven which is eternal, because it is not there for you until you go there. What was not there for you before is non-eternal. It begins at a given time. Eternity does not have a beginning. That which was in the past, which is in the present, and of course, which will be always in the future, is what we call *nitya*.

Naturally, *nitya* is always there, being that which is not produced. It need not be produced and it cannot be produced. Being eternal, it does not require to be produced. I now have this much *viveka*; it is called preparedness. The *viveka* is: *Nitya* is something that has to be known. If I miss 'what is' I have to know. I do not know what is *nitya*. I miss it, and hence I have to know.

To produce or accomplish something, I must do *karma*. However, to know what already exists, which I miss, I have to go to a source of knowledge. You can gather knowledge only from a means of knowledge. You do not have a means of knowledge at your disposal to know the self that is *nitya*. Further, what is *nitya* cannot be other than the self.


To begin with, there are two *padārthas*, things, in this world. One is *ātman* and the other is *anātman*. *Ātman* is *dr̥k*, the seer, subject, the self, me; everything else is *anātman*, *dr̥śya*, the seen, object, the not-self. I define *anātman* as anything that you confront, objectify. Whatever you confront or objectify is *anitya*.

You confront the whole *jagat*. This *jagat* consists of five types of objects. You objectify all of them—*śabda*, sound; *sparsā*, touch; *rūpa*, form; *rasa*, taste, and *gandha*, smell. All of them are finite. Anything you objectify and come to know perceptually, inferentially, presumptuously, or by any other means, is *anātman* and *anitya*, time-bound. It is within time. Even ignorance that you are aware of is also finite. If it is eternal, it will not go and there is no question of learning. It exists until knowledge takes place. That is also confronted. Ignorance is *sākṣi-vedya*, available for witness perception. You know that you do not know. So ignorance also is *dr̥śya*, but in a peculiar sense. Therefore, the entire *jagat* is *anātman* and is *anitya*.

..... to be continued



Dr. P.R Krishnakumar

HOMAGE



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All that is here is only Īśvara
Swami Sakshatkritananda

Continuation from previous month...

If God is a reality, then definitely I have to discover that. The Veda tells me, “All this, whatever moves in the world, is to be [understood as] pervaded by Isvara,” Isavasyam idam sarvam yat kinca jagatyam jagat, “All that is here is Isvara,” is the opening sentence of the Isavasya Upanishad, which is generally listed first in the tradition of study. It is not that this UpaniKhad is more important than the others, but the ten Upanishads are usually listed in the order: Isa, Kena, Katha, Prasna, Mundaka, Mandukya, Taittiriya, Aitareya, Chandogya, Brhadaranyaka. Each Upanishad contains a different dialogue, and since they are found at the end of the four Vedas, they are called Vedanta. It is said in the Isavasya Upanishad, Isavasyam idam sarvam, “All that is here is Isvara. Therefore, look at it as such.” For your own sanity, look at all that is here as Isvara. There is nothing other than Isvara. Look at that. The Veda is not saying that there is one God; it says there is only God. If you do not see that, you have to prove that it is not true. It is not a matter of belief.

When I look at this given body/mind/sense complex, I definitely find that what I thought was hardware is nothing but software. This is an amazing thing. When I go to the level of quantum physics, I understand that there is only software—the whole thing is knowledge. When I examine the cell, it just opens up new areas for me to know. This cell is governed by the laws of biology—in fact, the cell is biology, and as such, it has properties in common with all other cells. For instance, there is not a separate, isolated pack of cells for Swami Dayananda. And it is not that the swami’s cells are different, holy cells while the cells of people who are not swamis are unholy cells. There is no such difference. The cells are the same. Even though I am called “His Holiness”, receiving letters addressed to “H.H. Swami Dayananda”, I like to think of ‘H.H’ as meaning “Holy Hobo.” I even have a T-shirt which says “Holy Hobo”. In America, a hobo is a person with no bank account, no job,

no family. Then, how does a hobo live? Like a sadhu, a mendicant. There is nothing special or holy about the cells that make up Swami Dayananda. All cells are governed by the same biological laws. There is no such thing as holy as opposed to unholy. In fact, either everything is holy, or there is no such thing as holy.

Not only is there a commonality, but all the structures I see are intelligently arranged. If I just look at the physical body, I see it consists of parts that are put together intelligently. If I look at a plant or this tent in which we are all sitting, I find they are intelligently put together. If the tent were unintelligently put together, it would collapse. Similarly, a car is a car because its parts are intelligently put together. That is why there can be the commercial, "Have you driven a Ford, lately?" They have been using this commercial for several years. Do you know why? They have supposedly improved the car each year. Thus, even if you drove a Ford last year, you have not driven a Ford lately. The previous year, they said the same thing. It shows that there is always room for improvement. Human intelligence being what it is, human knowledge being what it is, the car can always be better. The new car has some elements that were not incorporated in the previous edition. Leaving aside the question as to whether the change is an improvement or not, the point is that the car is intelligently put together. So, too, my physical body is intelligently put together. No one can simply create a pair of eyes if mine need replacement. While organs cannot be created, some, such as the kidneys, can be replaced through transplantation. Transplantation is a possibility in the scheme of things. This is all intelligently put together, with the possibility of transplantation. Where something is intelligently put together, we don't take it for granted. Even though you don't see the person who has the intelligence which put it all together, you cannot but recognize that there is such a being. For instance, suppose you ask me, "Who put this tent together?" and I tell you, "Oh, yesterday, it just sprang up. We thought it would be nice to have a tent, so we thought of a tent and it sprang up." Perhaps some people may believe that, because anything can pass as truth in this world. However, in this campus, at Arsha Vidya Gurukulum, we don't

let it pass. We question. In studying Arsha-vidya—the knowledge of the Rishis, or seers, we learn to question in order to see the essential truth.

Since we see that the universe, including my body/mind/sense complex, is intelligently arranged, we cannot but appreciate that there is an intelligent being, regardless of whether we think he is here, there, or elsewhere. The physical body is a marvel. It is not meant to give you complexes. It is meant to serve you, but it has become a locus of complexes. That I am black; that I am not blond, may give rise to complexes in certain cultures. Or that I am blonde may be a problem in other cultures. People do have complexes, all because of ignorance. There is a self-judgment because of a certain basic ignorance, which implies the ignorance of God, as well. In fact, the basic ignorance is ignorance of God. This physical body, with the mind and senses organs, with all its faculties, is a marvelous piece of creation. 'Creation' only means that it is intelligently put together. It does not mean that God dropped it down from somewhere else. The fact that it is intelligently arranged implies an intelligent being, a conscious being. That conscious being must have the knowledge of what is going to be created because creation presupposes knowledge. Knowledge has to rest in a conscious being. When we talk about the total creation, then that conscious being must have the knowledge of all; he must be sarvajna, all knowing, sarvavit sarvajnah iti, the one who knows everything (in detail) is sarvajna (omniscient). The Veda tells us that God is all-knowing in terms of all details.

Then we may ask where God found the material to make this world. He could not have borrowed from anybody, because there was nobody else to borrow it from—everybody had yet to be created. He has to find the material only in himself. Therefore, in keeping with the nature of the reality of the world, there must be a material cause. We call that material cause prakrti, and it is not separate from the being, purusha. The Lord has to have that power. As to the question of where God abides, there is no 'where' for God. The question of 'where' doesn't come into the picture, because space and time have not yet been created. The fact that the Lord is the one who is the maker as well as the material cause opens up a new vision for me. Anything

created from a material is not going to be independent of that material, like the shirt that you wear. If your shirt is made of cotton fabric, you cannot remove the cotton fabric and still be wearing a shirt. Your clothes are made of the fabric. If you remove the fabric, where are the clothes? Only emperor's clothes may be there. The shirt is fabric, and there is no shirt apart from fabric, much less is there fabric without yarn. There is no yarn without fibers, and there are no fibers without molecules, nor are there molecules without atoms. You can go on and on, but anything created is not separate from the material of which it is made. In the model that is presented by the Veda, the five elements: akasa, space, which includes time; vayu, air; agni, fire; apah, water; and prthivi, earth, subtle and gross, manifested from Isvara and constitute this universe. And this universe includes your body/mind/sense complex. The first of these elements, which manifested from Isvara, the cause, is space. "From that [Brahman] which is this self arose the space," *tasmad va etasmad akasas sambhutam* (TU 2.1.1). That's why space is worshipped. Time, kala, is also worshipped in India. Kala is Lord Yama, and sometimes kala as the Lord himself is worshipped as Kalagni. Thus, all the five elements, which include space and time, are the universe, and the universe is not other than the Lord. The Veda does not say there is one God. It says there is only God.

There is one more thing that is included in this vision—you, the one who is aware of, conscious of, the five elements. That conscious, awareful being is also Isvara, the Lord. And this consciousness, although in and through the universe consisting of the five elements, is of a different order of reality. Everything that is here is Isvara alone; it is not separate from Isvara. Therefore, may you look upon it all as Isvara, *Isavasyam idam sarvam*.

When that is understood, you will find that everything is holy; there is nothing unholy. It is only we who choose to see unholiness in the holy. We are given the faculty of choice. The more we accept Isvara in our life, the more order there will be. Even our jealousy, and other emotions are within Isvara's order alone, and if we see that, even jealousy will disappear. Since all these emotions are within the order, there is no need to condemn yourself.

You will find that your buddhi, your intellect, and manas, mind, are pervaded by order. The outside world, also, is pervaded by order. Everyone is pervaded by order. Everyone's behavior, values, attitudes—all of them—are but expressions of their background, and the order is the connection between the expression and the background. That is the psychological order. Thus, the more you appreciate the order, which is universal, the more you recognize Isvara. In that there is sanity. There you can accept yourself. How can anybody be secure and relaxed without accepting Isvara? Therefore, in the Bhagavadgita and elsewhere, Lord Krishna says, "Those whose minds are in me . . . are always satisfied and joyful," maccittah. . . . nityam tushyanti ca ramanti ca , (BG 10.9); and "Be one whose mind is in me," manmana bhava (9.34; 18.65). In other words, bring more Isvara into your life, for in truth, you are never away from that Isvara. That makes you relax and trust because the one thing that is infallible is the order. Isn't that so? You can trust only this order, because only this order is infallible. This order also provides you with capacities and powers to neutralize the effects of circumstances that are not acceptable to you. Those means are given; they are within the order. Also, I can neutralize my own reactions to situations. So, without condemning myself, I can make my life comfortable and sane.

This all-encompassing order is the only Isvara you can accept. It is folly to accept any other Isvara, yet you need not condemn others for the concepts they hold. I am not at all giving you sanction to condemn anyone because of their beliefs. But then, this is the only God that will withstand scrutiny, when all that is here is this God. I don't have the burden of proving it when the Veda tells me that all that is here is Isvara, and I see it. Although I can prove it is true, you bear the burden of proving it is not true if you don't see it. If you don't understand this, then it is up to you to try to understand and see. Without trying to understand, if you say that there is no such God, then you have the burden of proving that. And I would like to listen to your arguments. Then I can show you where the problem is, because there is nothing to believe here. There is something to know. When I say that all that is here is Isvara, it is something to be understood, not believed. A concept or object that requires your belief need not be real. However, when something

can be understood, when something can be known, there is reality. It is not a matter for speculation.

All that is here is Isvara. The more you recognize that Lord, the more trusting you are. The more trusting you are, the more sane you are. That is to say, you can relax, you can be objective. Your subjectivity, which comes from your fears and insecurity, is lessened. The less subjective you are, the more you are with Isvara and that means you are objective. This is the Vedic vision of God. We can ill afford to miss that vision.

Om Tat Sat

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Editor.

**5th Anniversary Aradhana Celebrations of Pujya Sri Swamiji at
Arsha Vidya Pitham, Rishikesh**

Paramapujya Sri Swamiji's 5th Aradhana Celebrations started on 22nd September, 2020 with Bhashya parayanam of Bhagavad Gita. Sri Swami Sakshatkrtanandaji led the parayanam which was held in two sessions, morning and evening. Parayanam of the first five chapters was completed.

On 23rd September, 2020, Pujya Sri Swamiji's adhishtanam was decorated with abundant flowers sent from Chennai by Sri Ganesh, brother of Sri Suresh Ramamoorthy. A very extensive adhishtana puja was performed by Sri Swami Sakshatkrtanandaji himself, which included ekadashadravya abhishekam, Rudra trishati and Gurveda archana, caturveda seva including rendering of Pujya Sri Swamiji's favourite Setu sama. This was followed by the release of Pujya Swamiji's book on Sri Dakshinamurthi Stotram by Sri Swami Suddhanandaji. Speaking on the occasion, Sri Swami Sakshatkrtanandaji said that there could not have been a better place to release the book than Pujya Sri Swamiji's adhishtanam and there could not be a better person to release the book than Sri Swami Suddhanandaji who had been associated with Pujya Sri Swamiji for more than 50 years. He also said that Sri Swami Sankaranandaji had done an excellent job in editing the book and that Pujya Sri Swamiji flowed through the book. Swamiji also praised the designing of the book cover and said that it bore the stamp of Smt Sheela Balaji.

When Pujya Sri Swamiji first came to Rishikesh in the 50s-60s, he lived in a grass hut which stood exactly at the same place where the satsang hall stands today. With a desire to immortalize the place, a photo gallery consisting of Pujya Sri Swamiji's old photos has been put together and the same was also inaugurated by Sri Swami Suddhanandaji.

A bhandara was offered to the sadhus after which all the devotees partook the mahaprasadam. A ten-minute video, covering the entire session on 23rd was made part of the final day's webcast of the 5-day virtual program for Pujya Sri Swamiji's Fifth Aradhana Celebrations organised by AIM for Seva.

Camp at AVG by Swami Vidadatmananda Saraswati
From December 14 to 18, 2019

Value of Values Part 05 *(Continuation from June 2020 newsletter)*

Straight-forwardness – absence of crookedness is called *ārjavam*. Having one thing in mind, another thing in speech and third thing in the behavior is crookedness. Alignment in all the three aspects of my personality is *ārjavam*. Sainly people will have alignment between their thoughts words and deeds. When *ārjavam* is not there, that person is a split personality. There is a ज्ञाता (*jñātā*), the knower and कर्ता (*kartā*), the doer. Knower, the mind knows one thing; however, the doer, the performer of action which is different from the knower does different things. When I am not honest, these things happen. Men know what is being honest and truthful but because of some compulsion, they act the other way. If I have no price to pay, then I will be an honest and straightforward person.

Conflict arises when being truthful requires some kind of sacrifices that I think valuable to me. Those acquired values for wealth, power, fame and their attraction is so strong that they become more valuable to me than my honesty and truthfulness. In that conflict, honesty loses the battle. By nature, we are all saints. We are Brahman, and mind is saintly by nature created from sattva aspect of five elements. राग (*rāga*) and द्वेष (*dveṣa*) are incidental; they intrude us. Each one of us loves to be honest and truthful. Unfortunately, acquired values compel me to go the other way and that's where the misalignment comes. If there is no alignment, I sacrifice my inner strength. It creates a sense of dissatisfaction and guilt within me. All of this is a big price to pay in terms of creating misery for myself. We sacrifice honesty to be happy. I sacrifice these values for the sake of some name, fame, power, wealth etc; otherwise, these values are dear to me. But by creating this split, I am creating guilt and unhappiness in myself. I am sacrificing the self-goal. This is a losing game as I am sacrificing the very thing I want to acquire.

Following the value is the best policy for my peace of mind. All the stress

can be traced back to the crookedness of not following values. Honesty is a natural value and the value for some materials is an acquired value, and now, there is clash between these two. The world thinks that the dishonest fellows always get ahead but they lose by remaining honest. We think that the person has gained prosperity by being dishonest. But we should understand that it could be the result of something that he has done in the past. Let us understand this by an example. A farmer had a huge silo of grains. He grows three crops and throws them in this huge silo. First he dumps rice, then wheat and then corn on the top. But when he opens bottom, he gets rice first which is what he had put first. So, if dishonest person gains some pleasure now, let us not be deluded that dishonest persons are getting the best. Law of karma always works.

Firm conviction should be there about the law of cause and effect. The effect has to be consistent with the cause. Honesty is the best policy for harmony in my mind for an integrated personality. Following values must be the best policy for conserving my inner energy and thus becoming a strong person. If you have the inner strength, you can overcome obstacle by being honest. People compromise values because of inner weakness. They do not have that moral strength and conviction in life. As you sow, so you reap. The law always works for everyone. Therefore, dishonest people cannot be the role model for anyone.

.....to be continued

“The Lord is one, effulgent, all-knowledge, without a spot of ignorance. And that Lord is the one upon whom we meditate or whom we pray to, *dhīmahi*. We pray with our heart and mind to that Lord who is effulgent, all-knowing and all-consciousness and who is most worshipful.” - Swami Dayananda Saraswati

THE EQUATION

The hallmark of Pūjya Swamiji's teaching is his unequivocal stand that the Vedic vision of God does not require one to believe it. God is a matter for understanding. In Pūjya Swamiji's words, "it is a challenge for one to know." In his words, *idam sarvam* – all that is here, is equal to *Īśvara*. All includes everything that is known and unknown in the world plus the body-mind-sense complex of the individual who confronts the world. This 'all' equals the Lord, and this represents an equation. Pūjya Swamiji's definition of an equation is that when there is a seeming difference between two things, yet there is an essential non-difference between them, then an equation is required to show the identity. This equation, 'All = *Īśvara*' is like the famous equation, $E = mc^2$ (energy equals matter). Any equation is to be understood and not to be believed. Any statement, which is simply a matter for belief, does not require an equation. If the equation 'All = *Īśvara*' is understood, then one can say that there is only God. With this understanding it is easy to appreciate that nothing is created by anyone, and all the resources are given. No one can claim ownership. According to Pūjya Swamiji, the notion of ownership is the greatest myth in the world.¹⁴ An attitude of humility will grow in a person and subsequently letting God into one's life will become simple. One can totally trust the infallible God who is in the form of the various orders. A simple shift in the vision of *Īśvara* endows one with the capacity to relax in the appreciation of the ever-prevailing degrees of order. One then lives an alert life in harmony with the order. In every expression of life, one sees *Īśvara*. In any inappropriate expression also, there is *Īśvara*, but the contribution from the immodest and ignorant individual dominates. The vision of the infallible *mahā* order as *Īśvara* ensures a dynamic relation with *Īśvara* and makes one a religious person.

'All that is here is *Īśvara*', means that *Īśvara* is the whole and that every phenomenon is *Īśvara*. One can invoke *Īśvara* in a given phenomenon or as the phenomenon itself. For example, a phenomenon such as fire can be invoked as a deity (*dēvatā*).

¹⁴ "Bringing *Īśvara* into your life," in Talks and Essays of Swami Dayananda, Compiled by Swamini Srividyananda, Vol. II, p.331, 1st edition 2006.

The total can also be invoked in any given form. For example, to draw the attention of someone, one can touch the person with one's little finger. That little touch is enough to draw the complete attention of the person. Similarly, *Īśvara* can be invoked totally in any form, providing an altar for worship. Many forms are handed down to the Hindus traditionally, and every form becomes sacred as an altar for worship. The *pūjā* room in a Hindu home will be adorned with the pictures and *vi-grahas* of many Gods and Goddesses. There is generally a misconception that Hindus worship idols. Pūjya Swamiji was unequivocal in dismissing this stereotypical perception by asserting that nobody worships an idol, and everyone worships the Lord.¹⁵ In the declaration of the second Hindu-Jewish Leadership Summit, Pūjya Swamiji was steadfast in including as one of the affirmations that a Hindu relates to only one Supreme Being when he/she prays to a particular manifestation.¹⁶ On hearing the word God, one's mind is immediately connected to the form of one's *iṣṭa-dēvatā* such as Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Vināyaka, Kārtikēya, Lakṣmī, Durgā, Śiva and so forth. This connection is the result of a rich tradition supported by a vision. Sometimes even a particular form is not necessary. A lump of turmeric powder is enough to invoke Lord Gaṇēśa. Once the Lord is invoked in the form, then it becomes an altar to perform the *pūjā*.

GRACE

At any one time during one's life, what is to be done in a given situation is called what 'is', and what 'is' is *Īśvara*. It is *Īśvara* in the form of dharma. Any appropriate action in a given situation is the manifestation of *Īśvara* and that becomes *svakarma*, one's action. *Svakarma* is doing the right and appropriate thing at the right time and at the right place. Then, one lives a deliberate conscious life in harmony with dharma, in harmony with *Īśvara*. This is how one earns grace which comes from the Lord. It is the favorable result (*karmaphala*), which is called *punya*, of doing one's *svakarma*. Grace (*kṛpā*) is not something distributed by *Īśvara*. One has to tap it and the tapping is done by the right and appropriate action alone. Besides *Īśvara*'s grace, there are other types of grace. There is the grace of *guru*, *guru-kṛpā*, the grace of the *śāstra*, *śāstra-kṛpā*. Finally, there is *ātma-kṛpā*, one should be earning the grace. One has to discover that one's life is one of grace all the way. One

¹⁵ "The need for a Cognitive Change," in Talks and Essays of Swami Dayananda, Compiled by Swamini Srividyananda, Vol. II, p.285, 1st edition 2006.

¹⁶ The joint Declaration of the Second Hindu-Jewish Leadership Summit, held in Jerusalem, February 17-20, 2008 by The Chief Rabbinate of Israel and The Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha. http://www.millenniumpeacesummit.org/Hindu-Jewish_Summit_Information.pdf

earns the grace by reaching out, recognizing a cause and contributing to it, acknowledging a situation where one has to do something and then doing it. One has to become a contributor by sharing one's time, talent and treasure.¹⁷ In reaching out one is bigger than what one thinks of oneself. This is the way to grow.

OBJECTIVE LIVING

To appreciate *Īśvara* is to appreciate all that is given to one.¹⁸ One has to learn to look at oneself in relation to the larger scheme of things. One can discover one's slot only when one's own likes and dislikes are kept to the minimum. Relating to *Īśvara* increases in proportion to the reduction of one's own subjectivity. One has to start with accepting all that is given to oneself and begin to contribute to the creation of the Lord, the *Īśvara sṛṣṭi*. Identifying oneself as the individual ego, one becomes small. This smallness has to be abandoned by building the relationship with the total. This relationship with the total is the fundamental relationship common to all beings.¹⁹ The *Īśvara sṛṣṭi* can be likened to a five-star guest house into which one enters.²⁰ All amenities are provided in the guest house. One enjoys the guest house as long as one is allowed to stay. When one leaves one cannot take anything from this guest house. However, for the duration of stay one has to share the amenities with other guests and make the stay enjoyable for all. One has to embellish it to the extent one can for the future guests. This five-star guest house, called the world, is a courtesy of *Īśvara* provided gratis to all in the creation. Every moment of stay in the guest house should be lived in the awareness of the owner and in gratitude. This is surrender to *Īśvara* with the awareness that all that is here is *Īśvara*.²¹ The whole life then becomes prayerful with the knowledge of *Īśvara* as the giver and the given. One becomes a simple person. The simpler one becomes, one comes closer to discovering the reality of oneself, *jagat* and *Īśvara*. Then, the purpose of life is fulfilled.

Om Tat Sat

¹⁷ Swami Vidadatmanandaji condenses contribution into the 3-Ts, Time, Talent and Treasure.

¹⁸ "Relating to *Īśvara*", in Talks and Essays of Swami Dayananda, Compiled by Gyanakumari, 1st edition 1999, p.274.

¹⁹ "What is devotion?" Swami Dayananda Saraswati, a booklet published from an excerpt of the lectures given by Pūjya Swamiji in Bombay, India, in 1978.

²⁰ Bhakti and knowledge of *Īśvara*, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, a book in Tamil, published in 1996 by P.R. Ramasubramanya Raja

²¹ Purpose of Prayer, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Moments with Oneself Series: 7, Arsha Vidya Centre Research & Publication, Chennai, India, 2013 .

Knowledge of Īśvara
By Swami Shankarananda

Continuation from previous month...

In this country there were many tribes each one had some *devatā* and all of them we accepted. As you just drive through Tamilnadu or Orissa or any place you go there are varieties of forms you can see standing there on the roadside. These roadside Gods, they all seem to receive daily worship because you see on their faces *kumkumam* and *chandanam*; whether you wear them or not they seem to get them alright, and therefore, I know they are worshipped. And how do they look? All kinds of odd looks they have got. Any form and any expression of worship is acceptable totally. It is acceptable to us. It is totally accepted and validated and then it becomes one of our forms of worship. There is no tribal God; there is only God. There is a tribal form of worshipping Īśvara. There is no tribal God. Therefore, we didn't try to modernise our tribal tradition because they are as valid as any other form. If someone calls him Jesus also I can accept him, if someone calls him Allah also I can accept him because I don't dismiss them as childish and tribal. And therefore, we can accept all of them. All forms of worship we can accept. We have no problem. They have problem. We don't have any problem. If they have problem they have to deal with them any way but we have no problem. Because my vision of God is such that every form is the Lord's form. And all the directions are *devatās*. All the elements are *devatās*. *Sūrya*, *Chandra* are *devatās*. All the *nakṣatrāṇi*, *aśvinī*, *bharaṇī* etc. are *devatās*. Even *nakṣatras* are Īśvara. What is not Īśvara?

Everything is Īśvara. *Sṛṣṭi-kartā* is Īśvaraḥ - Brahma, *sthiti-kartā* is Īśvaraḥ - Viṣṇu, *saṁhāra-kartā* is Īśvaraḥ - Rudraḥ.

Some people ask me Brahmaji of course some people worship, fine. Viṣṇu we can accept. Viṣṇu is worshipped; it is alright, because he keeps things going. But then why Rudra should be worshipped?

If Rudra is not worshipped the born baby will be born baby only. In fact, the baby will not be born at all because it has to grow inside. It has to grow inside. And therefore, I tell you, every growth also implies something dies away. All the old cells

die and new cells are born. For growth time is important. Time is something that is born, is and gone. Look at this. This moment is born. Due to whom? Born is Brahma. Time is expression. Through the time I look at the Lord, he is Brahma. Born is Brahma. Is is Viṣṇu. Gone is Rudra. Unless gone there cannot be new time born. Unless born it cannot be Is. Unless it Is is even for some time it cannot be going. Therefore, Born, Is, Gone, Brahma, Viṣṇu, Rudra. Born, Is, Gone, Brahma, Viṣṇu, Rudra. Born, Is, Gone. Even as I say Born, Is, Gone, even to say (the word) Born takes some time. In that interval of time itself, there is so many Born, Is, Gone instances! And therefore, if you really look into it, which is first? Born is first, Is is first or Gone is first? we have a problem. We can say Gone Is Born, Born Is Gone, Is Born Gone. All the three are OK. That is why we say Brahma, Viṣṇu, Rudra are all one and the same.

There is another problem that we encounter. Someone asks:

Are you a Viṣṇu *bhakta*?

Yeah.

I am a Śiva *bhakta*.

OK. There is no problem. You be a Śiva *bhakta*, there is no problem.

I am a Viṣṇu *bhakta*, you are a Śiva *bhakta*.

There is no problem. In fact we want some Viṣṇu *bhaktas*; then only we can have nice *prasādam*.

We want both *bhaktas*. Now and then you better be a Viṣṇu *bhakta* for four five days and Śiva *bhakta* for one or two days so that you can maintain your health!

You know whenever there is a problem the trouble-shooter is Nārada. Whether Nārada did shoot a trouble or not, whenever we find a problem and it is solved we think of Nārada. Any *sthala-purāṇa* starts with Nārada *uvāca*. Nārada is a figure; it is a name, which just parades everything. Whether he existed or not, Nārada is a trouble shooter. We think Nārada is a trouble-maker. No, he is a trouble-shooter. But in the beginning, it will look as though he is trouble-maker. But then he will troubleshoot later. If there is a simmering problem, he will surface it first and afterwards he will solve it. That is Nārada. The typical very colourful, beautiful character

with a *tamboora* in his hand goes up and down without a visa or passport. And he is Nārada. Just imagine. I love this Nārada.

Now Nārada had a problem. The problem was, there is a temple in south of India. Here in Tamilnadu, down below there is an Island, that is Rāmeśvaram. You all know Rāmeśvaram. There *bhagavān* is called *Rāmeśvara*. The name Īśvara is generally given only to Śiva. Śiva alone is called Īśvara. I don't know why. Īśvara is generally only Śiva's name. Rāma of course is *Bhagavān's avatāra*. *Avatāra* I am going to talk about later. Don't worry about that. Rāma is an *avatāra*. Rāma is Viṣṇu *avatāra*. Therefore, Rāma is Viṣṇu for us. If Rāma is Viṣṇu and here both Hari and Hara both of them are together. First word is Rāma and the second word is what, Īśvara. Therefore, Rāma and Īśvara in a Sanskrit compound is Rāmeśvara. It is a Sanskrit compound. A compound means there should be more than one word. Then only there can be a compound. There is more than one word here, Rāma and Īśvaraḥ; there are two words. Therefore, here what is the compound? Rāmeśvaraḥ. In Sanskrit there are many compounds. The beauty of Sanskrit language is you can create a new compound any time. That is why an exhaustive Sanskrit dictionary is impossible. Some words will be there, basic words. If you look into a Sanskrit dictionary for the words you see in the books etc. you will not find many one of them. Many compound words will not be there because anyone can make a new compound.

Therefore, Rāmeśvaraḥ being a compound he wanted to know how these two people are brought together here. That is the trouble. So he surfaces the trouble now. He surfaces the trouble not among the devotees where it is a problem. Nārada goes to the real authority. He goes straight to Lord Viṣṇu and asks him, “Bhagavān, in Rāmeśvaram there is a Lord and it is the Lord Śiva but his name is Rāmeśvara. How come he is called Rāmeśvara? How your name got attached to this Īśvara”, he asked. Then Rāma said, “Nārada, don't you know this very simple compound in Sanskrit. Simplest compound is called *Ṣaṣṭhi Tatpuruṣam* is a genitive case compound, the sixth case compound, and therefore, Hey Nārada this is a simple *ṣaṣṭhi* compound. *Rāmasya Īśvaraḥ*, Rāma's God. Rāma went and worshipped that Śiva, therefore, he is called Rāmeśvara. *idhula enna periya vishayam appa. Idhu easy samajaram Nārada. Yenna vandhu katkaraye ne.* (Says in Tamil. What is a big thing in this? This is an easy thing Nārada. You are coming and asking me.)

Then he went to Śiva. *Nāradan āche, viduvana?* (Says in Tamil - He being Nārada would he let it go?) So Nārada goes to Śiva and he asked him, “Bhagavān I went to Lord Viṣṇu, to get a compound resolved. There is one Rāmeśvara, that is of course your name only. Therefore, I asked him what is the compound meaning. He said Rāmasya Īśvaraḥ. It seems you are the Lord of Rāma. You are Lord of Viṣṇu. Rāma means Viṣṇu *illaya?* Therefore, are you Lord of Viṣṇu. Is that true?”. Śiva says, “Viṣṇu *cholradha eppodhum ketkadhe. Nān choldren kelu. Avan edhavadhu vambu panninduthan irruppan*”. (He says in Tamil. Never listen to what Viṣṇu says. Listen to what I say. He will always be creating some mischief.) He is a mischievous person. So don’t listen to this guy. I tell you what it is. *Rāmo Īśvaro yasya. Rāman yarukku Īśvarano.* (says in Tamil - to whom Rāma is Īśvara) It is a *bahuvrīhi appa idhu*. It is another compound *Ramo isvaro yasya*. This is one of the most beautiful compounds in Sanskrit, this *bahuvrīhi*.

Eka-karṇaḥ is a common example. The guru said *eka-karṇam ānaya*. The guru told this fellow, *śiṣya, ekakarṇam ānaya. Ivan enna panninan. Velila poi oru katha arunthundu vandhuttan.* (says in Tamil - What this fellow did, He went out, cut one ear and brought it). *Ekam* means one. *Karṇam* means ear. So he cut an ear and brought it. He is a great *śiṣya*, a great *bhakta*. *Chonna varthaya thattama chaiyaravan.* (says in Tamil – This is the fellow who does exactly as he was told). He did as he was told. Therefore, this *śiṣya* brought one ear. Guru asked, My god, what have you brought? *Eka-karṇam* is a *bahuvrīhi* compound. *Ekam karṇam yasya. Yarukku oru karnam irrukiratho avanukku peyar ekakarnam* ((says in Tamil – the one who has one ear is called *eka-karṇa*), the one who has one *karṇam* (ear) is called *eka-karṇam*. Even in Tamil you have got an equivalent compound - *otthakādhan* (the one with one ear) is different from *ottha kādhu* (one ear). *Oru kādhu evanukko avan otthakādhan* (says in Tamil – the one who has one ear is called *ottakādhan*) . *Eka-karṇaḥ* is not one ear; it means the one who has one ear. It is a *bahuvrīhi* compound. Therefore, *Ramo Isvaro yasya, rāman yarukku Īśvaranaha irrukirano* (Says in Tamil - the one to whom Rāma is the Īśvara) that means what? *Śivanukku* (for Śiva) Rāman Īśvaran, Viṣṇu Īśvaran. *Enakku avanthan Īśvaran.* (says in Tamil – Rama is the lord, means Viṣṇu is the lord, for me too he is the lord). Rāmeśvaraḥ. *Rāmo Īśvaro yasya*.

To be continued...



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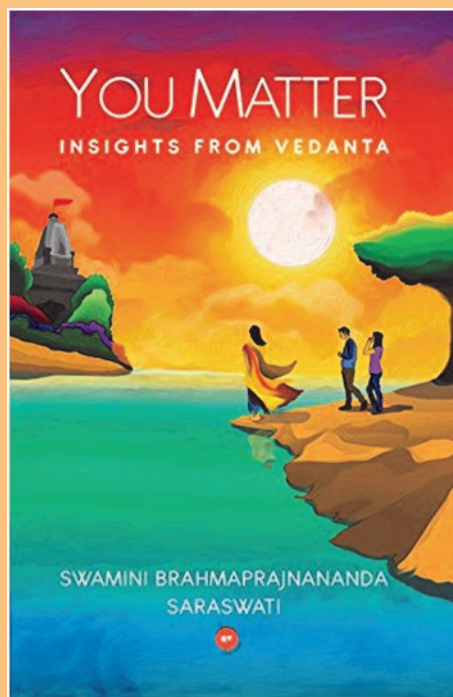
Phone : + 91 9487373635

E mail : arshaavinash.in@gmail.com

New Book - You matter – Insights from Vedanta
By Swamini Brahmaprajnananda

Dedicated to Pujya Swami Dayananda ji, this book was released by Swami Brahmaprajnananda ji online, on Guru Purnima, July 2020. The kindle version is available on Amazon worldwide and the paperback version is available in India through Amazon and Flipkart.

About the book



You feel that 'I am not good enough' despite your achievements. Vedanta reveals that you are purna, complete, in and of yourself.

You see the need to have a spiritual experience. Vedanta shines the light on you, the experience-r through all your experiences.

Your life feels like a burden. Vedanta shares that you are deeply blessed.

Which one is true?

You matter – Insights from Vedanta, is a direct, profound and easy to read guide to yourself. Guide to yourself? Yes! Much like the timeless Jnana-Ganga (the river of knowledge) this book helps you navigate

your life as you pause at some turns with life insights, apply practical suggestions, give up what is unnecessary as you reach the ocean of oneness, leaving you clear and refreshed.

Carefully and lovingly curated from Swamini Brahmaprajnananda 's podcast, The River of Wisdom, the topics include the purpose of life, blessings we have each moment, fighting the shadows of self judgment, being loved, how to be the best version of oneself, the dance of karma, the role of a guru, the relevance of Hinduism for the spiritual-but-not-religious, and much more.

About the Author: Swamini Brahmaprajnananda Saraswati has dedicated her life to sharing the teachings of Advaita Vedanta (non duality) and Dharma. A Hindu monk who currently lives in Mumbai (India) her teachings of self growth to self dis-

covery, include courses, videos, podcast, workshops and retreats in India and abroad.

She is a direct disciple of Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati, having studied Vedanta, Sanskrit and Vedic chanting at Arsha Vidya Gurukulam in a residential, intensive three year course in Coimbatore and Rishikesh. She studied part time with Swami Brahmavidananda for about twelve years. Her last leadership role was as the Country Head (India) of an international organisation which impacted the lives of 150,000 street children. www.discoveratma.com.

TRIBUTE TO SWAMI PRATYAGBODHANANDA

Swami Pratyagbodhananda was an embodiment of love, service and generosity. He truly loved Pujya Swamiji and sought every occasion to spend time with Pujya Swamiji, study from him and serve him.

Swamiji was instrumental in bringing many aspirants to Pujya Swamiji. He touched the heart of whoever came in contact with him and always displayed care and concern for their well-being. He loved to teach Vedanta as well as Srimad Bhagavatam and has left lasting impression in the hearts of many with his knowledge, devotion, generosity and humor.

Swamiji served his Guru till the last moment and departed at the feet of the Guru to merge into the Guru.

— Swami Veditatmananda



Pūjya Swamiji as *jñāna-karuṇā-samuccaya*, Combination of Wisdom and Compassion

During his last US visit, before being taken for his ambulance-flight, Pūjya Swamiji was brought inside the Gurukulam Temple for *darśana*. Looking at the emotion-laden faces of his devotees, even with his failing vision and voice, Swamiji mustered his strength to say several words of wisdom. One Gītā śloka Swamiji kept saying several times was “*jatasya hi dhruvo mr̥tyurdhruvam* (BG, 2.27), “Because for that which is born, death is certain...”

I found out later that this was not just a statement of wisdom combined with consolation, because when I looked at the above verse again, I found that in Pūjya Swamiji's commentary for that verse in the Bhagavad Gītā Home Study, which he taught in the 1980s, Swamiji said: “...*Fifty, sixty, or eighty-five years of life is nothing. By the time we are eighty-five most of our cells are already gone and the rest are old and worn out. They are unable to register anything new, and even what had registered previously does not come out. Regardless of what recall-button is pushed, nothing comes up. The floppy disk is all worn out. It was too flimsy to last very long anyway. What are a few more years? It is better to live only a few years with a floppy disk that works well, so that when you press the button, something happens.*”

I just wanted to highlight that Swamiji gave up his body when he was 85 years of age, just as he said in his commentary several decades ago, which we couldn't connect when Swamiji was repeating the above śloka to console us!

It is hard to completely understand and appreciate the messages of *mahātmas* or to grasp their vision. Even when Arjuna asked about *sthita-prajña* (wise person), Bhagavan in one of the śloka “*yā niśā sarvabhūtānām...*” (BG, 2.69), “The unwise is blind to the reality which the Wise sees like daylight...” This indicates that it takes a wise person to recognize another wise person. I am invoking the above śloka just to mention the impossibility for a *sādhaka* to present the wisdom of someone as great as our Pūjya Swamiji. Immediately following this, however, in the very next Gītā śloka, Bhagavān says, “*āpūryamāṇām acalapratiṣṭham...*” (BG, 2.70), giving the example of the fullness of the ocean, so that we can see and appreciate the *pūrṇatā*, completeness, of a wise person.

In this manner, Bhagavān diligently and compassionately leads us to grasp what constitutes a wise person. I am highlighting this much about Bhagavān's compas-

sion just to say a few words about my experience with Pūjya Swamiji, who was a combination of wisdom and compassion.

Pūjya Swamiji's acceptance of me into his Vedanta Course changed my course of life for the good. Although I felt encouraged when Pūjya Swamiji said I "had the vision" to join the course when I expressed my interest, I still think my admission was due more to Pūjya Swamiji's compassion than to my qualification. I should also add that Pūjya Swamiji surprised me by presenting to me other courses taught by other AVG teachers. This again was Swamiji's care extending to sustain other teaching programs in the AVG lineage as well. I remember when someone had a *satsanga* question about not being able to manage likes and dislikes even towards the end of the course, and would mention instances within the ashram where they felt like reacting to someone who was cutting the lunchline, for example. In response, Swamiji convinced the person not to be judgmental about themselves just based on situations within the ashram, and that the bigger outside world doesn't have such scenarios, which are unique only to ashram! I felt that there was so much care in Swamiji's response.

Sometimes people ask Swamiji about a problem, even though they have already decided what to do about it. This might not make sense to us – why would someone take Swamiji's time if they have already decided what to do – but it was not a problem for the compassionate and lending ears of Swamiji! At the end of my course, when I had my interview with Pūjya Swamiji, I told Swamiji how the course had changed me and asked him why won't Swamiji's other younger disciples give such long-term courses when Swamiji can do the same at his age? Pūjya Swamiji explained that in addition to teaching, such long-term courses also involve addressing peoples' "unconscious," and that might be one reason why there are only a few who take up this endeavor. This only made me appreciate Pūjya Swamiji's compassion even more. I would like to conclude that my experience is that Pūjya Swamiji was not about being lenient, but just being compassionate in the broadest scope – from man-making to organizing. Hence his compassion was difficult to grasp in its entirety, but was always a safe assumption to be discovered later. And that compassion which was natural to Swamiji, may it be my *sādhana*. *Hariḥ Om!*

- Article by Brhm. Suryanarayana

Gloria Arieira dedicates Padma Sri to the Shankara Sampradaya

On being awarded the Padma Sri this year, Brazilian Vedanta and Sanskrit scholar Gloria Arieira says the award belongs to “all of us from this sampradaya”.

She quotes:

Sadashivasamarambham shankaracaryamadhyamam

Asmadacaryaparyantam vande guruparamparam

In the 1970s, Gloria says she was “eager to understand about myself, the world and god. No philosophy or religion made sense to me,” until Swami Chinmayananda accepted her and welcomed her when she met him and attended two of his talks when he came to Brazil in 1973 and later when she visited India in 1974. “Even though I was very young and western, not knowing anything about India or Vaidikadharma, he received me and allowed me to be part of the on-going course at Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Mumbai. He taught me to focus on what was most important for me and bear with what was secondary, if necessary. He taught me that people will mostly criticize us but that is ok. Adversities give us strength and helps us define what are our priorities and to work for them. All along he supported me and trusted I would do well,” she writes in her blog.



Her second guru, Swami Dayananda Saraswati taught her all she knows about Vedanta and Vaidikadharma, “the most precious lessons on Ishvara and our basic rela-

tionship with Ishvara which we carry on on all other relationships. Swamiji taught me that Veda is a pramanam, a specific means of knowledge, and therefore it is for everyone independent of background. He taught me Satyam Brahman but also brilliantly made me understand that Brahman is easy to know, to understand Ishvara and bring Ishvara to one's life is the most difficult, and that makes a big difference in one's life. Swamiji made me appreciate, understand and love Sri Shanakara and his bhashyams."

Thanking her family and friends, Gloria says the award also belongs to her Gurubhais from the Sampradaya. "We, as students of the same teachers, are equal in blessings from our sampradaya. We are all blessed by the teachings and the teachers. But, as I was not born in India, in Vaidikadharma, I may look special, but it is not different from what is been done by many people of our sampradaya. The award belongs to all of us from this sampradaya." -

For Gloria, Vedanta is a "clear means of knowledge about the immutable reality - that is myself, the world and god at the same time. To understand this clearly we have to go for the study of the Upanishads because Vedanta is Upanishads, the last part of the Vedas. Vedanta teaches about the one reality, but at the same time makes one understand that there is an Order that is infallible, and that Order governs everything. This understanding changes one's attitude towards oneself and everything else. The study of Vedanta made me understand and accommodate my humanity and the whole world as it is, doing always the best I can."

After returning to Brazil, Gloria began, in 1979, teaching in Portuguese language all that she had learned in India. A few years later, in 1984, with the support of a few students, Vidya Mandir was founded. "At Vidya Mandir we keep Vaidikadharma alive through puja, annual festivals of the Hindu calendar, telling the stories of Mahabharatam, Ramayanam and Bhagavatam and enacting them, chanting and other activities, besides always inviting significant people from India to come to Brazil so people here can appreciate how Vaidikadharma is alive," Gloria told CSP.

In her blog titled, *The Knowledge of Brahman that is Ishwara*, Gloria writes about the path to Ishvara, whose form is hidden from us. "At first, there will be religion with a specific concept of god; in the second, a fuller and deeper understanding of god. And, finally, it may lead to the realization of Brahman's unchanging reality and, consequently, to the understanding of the perishable and changing reality that is Ishvara, through the power to create, maintain and transform that is Maya. The expres-

sion of Maya has beauty and enchantment. What is unchanging, but at the same time the basic truth of all that exists, is Brahman – the one who has no form or qualities is nirguna and arúpa, and at the same time is inherent in all that exists.”

Every Friday at Vidya Mandir, there is a puja to Saraswati performed by Professor Henrique Castro, who deepened his knowledge of Vedanta in southern India with Puja Swami Dayanandaji and other Swamis. All the festivals in India are celebrated at this ashram in Brazil including: Makara Sankranti, Mahashivratri, Rama Navami, Hanuman Jayanti, Shankara Jayanti, Narasimha Jayanti, Gurupurnima, Krishna Janmashtami, Ganesh Chaturti, Navaratri, Saraswati Puja, Durga Ashtami, Vijaya Dashami, Deepavali, Gita Jayanti and the end of the year Satsang.

Gloria's translation and commentary of the Bhagavad Gita has been translated into English and is available by India's oldest publisher of Indology books, Motilal Banarsidas. She has also translated a lot of the scriptures into Portuguese. Asked about how she translates texts, she says: “It took me some time first to choose words to use as I began translating from the Sanskrit into Portuguese. Even though I use words in translating from Sanskrit, my aim is to explain the meaning of the words and not only give a single word as a translation. Many times I explain the word and use it in Sanskrit itself.”

On her interest in Sanskrit as a language and as the key to the Veda, Gloria says that in her studies with her guru Swami Dayananda, Sanskrit knowledge was emphasized to understand the shastra, the Veda. “It is important to see for ourselves what shastram says as the teacher is analysing each Vedanta text.”

Gloria has spread Vedanta in Brazil for over four decades now. She says, “Vedanta deals with the sufferings and sense of limitation and inadequacy peculiar to a human being. Vedanta recognizes this fundamental human problem, but says it comes from not understanding our real nature. So, in the light of Vedanta, the human problem is due to ignorance about oneself and the world, and the solution is knowledge. Therefore Vedanta helps all human beings, independent of their origin, place and time of birth, in clearly understanding the fundamental problem and going for a proper definite solution.”

She says Vedanta helps in dealing with day to day existential issues by giving students, “a very objective mind capable of inquiry and focus in studies and in daily life and relationships.”

The Shankara Sampradaya was sustained by Swami Dayanand Saraswati, who Gloria

says would teach “with impressive profundity creating an unforgettable impact on his audience of common people as well as of students.”

Gloria explains, “To explain nirguna Brahman in a saguna world he would pretend a big clay pot would be talking to a small clay pot. And he would have two pots on his hands. The big wise pot would say, among many other things: you may feel small but that is because you have not understood that you are clay only and not pot. There is no reality in pot, it is clay all over. See, if I would keep clay and give you pot, what would you have? Nothing really. Clay is satyam, pot is mythya only; though it holds water! The dialogue would be very funny but would take home what he wanted to explain.”

This year, starting with the bestowing of the award, will continue with Gloria Ariera's translation and commentary on the Yoga Sutra of Patanjali in the light of Vedanta, as well as the e-book of her Bhagavad Gita translation.

Article by Aparna Sridhar

(Aparna M Sridhar is a senior journalist, editor for Center for Soft Power (www.centerforsoftpower.org) and consulting editor for arts at IndicToday.)

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**Pictures from the 5th Anniversary Aradhana Celebrations of
Pujya Sri Swamiji at Arsha Vidya Pitham, Rishikesh**

