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25 - 8

This is the *thirty eighth and final part of the serial article, continuation from July 2024 newsletter.*

## Upāsanā (Worship)

The teaching is essentially over. From the standpoint of the teacher and the teaching, nothing is left out, everything is taught: The *mahā-vākya* 'tat tvam asi' has been unfolded; the nature of the *tvam-padārtha*, the self, has been elaborately discussed; the nature of the *tat-padārtha*, *īśvara*, has also been elaborately discussed, and the similitude, identity or oneness between the two has been revealed very beautifully. This short Upaniṣad, in fact, contains everything that needs to be taught. Still, we find yet another passage here, because it is possible that in spite of imparting teaching that is complete in every way, the student may not gain the knowledge. The indication is that there still are some inhibiting factors, which prevent the student from seeing the truth or owning up to the truth. The teachers also consider it important to tell the students what to do in order to remove those inhibiting factors or obstacles. There may be knowledge, but it is knowledge that is yet to become fruitful. The final verse prescribes some *upāsanā* to remove some impurities of the mind that manifest as obstacles.

यः शतरुद्रियमधीते सोऽग्निपूतो भवति सुरापानात्पूतो भवति स ब्रह्महत्यायात्पूतो भवति ।

स सुवर्णस्तेयात्पूतो भवति स कृत्याकृत्यात्पूतो भवति तस्मादविमुक्तमाश्रितो भवति ।

अत्याश्रमी सर्वदा सकृद्वा जपेत् । अनेन ज्ञानमाप्नोति संसारार्णवनाशनम् । तस्मादेवं विदित्वैनं कैवल्यं फलमश्नुते

॥ कैवल्यं फलमश्नुते इति ॥ २४ ॥

yaḥ śatarudriyamadhīte so'gnipūto bhavati surāpānātpūto  
bhavati sa brahmahatyāyātpūto bhavati sa suvarṇasteyātpūto  
bhavati sa kṛtyākṛtyātpūto bhavati tasmādavimuktamāśrito  
bhavati atyāśramī sarvadā sakṛdvā japet  
anena jñānamāpnoti saṁsārārṇavanāśanam  
tasmādevaṁ viditvainaṁ kaivalyaṁ phalamaśnute

*kaivalyam phalamaśnuta iti*

यः - who शतरुद्रियम् - śatarudriya अधीते - recites सः - he अग्निपूतः - purified by fire भवति - becomes सुरापानात् पूतो भवति - becomes free from the sin of drinking alcohol सः - he ब्रह्महत्यायात् (ब्रह्महत्यायाः) पूतो भवति - becomes free from the results of killing a *brāhmaṇa* सः - he सुवर्णस्तेयात् पूतो भवति - becomes free from the sin of stealing gold सः - he कृत्याकृत्यात् पूतो भवति - becomes free from the sin of commissions and omissions तस्मात् - on account of that अविमुक्तम् - Lord Śiva आश्रितः - one who takes refuge भवति - becomes अत्याश्रमी - one who is beyond all duties of life सर्वदा - always सकृत् - just once वा - or जपेत् - should recite अनेन - by this ज्ञानम् - knowledge आप्नोति - obtains संसार-अर्णव-नाशनम् - which destroys the 'ocean' of the life of becoming तस्मात् therefore एवम् - thus विदित्वा एनम् - knowing the self कैवल्यम् - state of nonduality, liberation फलम् - fruit अश्नुते - attains कैवल्यम् - state of nonduality फलम् - fruit अश्नुते - attains इति - in this manner

He who recites the Śatarudriya becomes purified as by fire, free from the sin of drinking alcohol, free from the sin of killing a *brāhmaṇa*, free from the sin of stealing gold and free from the results of all commissions and omissions. On account of that he gains refuge in Lord Śiva. One who is free from all duties (stages) of life (i.e. a renunciate) should recite this always, or (at least) once (a day). By this one attains the knowledge that destroys *saṁsāra*, the endless life of becoming. Therefore, in knowing the self, one attains the fruit of liberation; one indeed attains the fruit of liberation. (24)

*Yaḥ śatarudriyam adhīte* means one who recites the Śatarudriyam, the *stotra* called Śatarudrīya, also known as the Rudram, beginning from the *mantra*, 'namaste rudra manyava uto ta iṣave namaḥ.' The hymn is called the Rudram or sometimes even the Śatarudriyam, one hundred *mantras* in praise of Rudra or Lord Śiva. This hymn is in both the rescensions of the Yajur Veda, which are the Śukla Yajur Veda and the Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda, the 'white' and the 'black' Yajur Vedas. It is considered very holy and is recited everyday by thousands of Hindus. This brings about purity of heart and produces *vairāgya* or dispassion. Thus, this Upaniṣad prescribes the re-

citing of the Rudram as a means of preparation, a means of purifying the mind.

In the commentary on the text of this Upaniṣad, the commentator, Nārāyaṇa, is of the opinion that Śatarudriyam refers to the verses of the Kaivalya Upaniṣad itself. Therefore, *yaḥ śatarudriyam adhīte* means that one who recites the *mantras* of the Kaivalya Upaniṣad becomes pure of heart. This implies that he is relieved of all the sins that he may have accumulated over various earlier births.

Every living being has been passing through several cycles of birth and death; each one of the *jīvas* has taken innumerable births, perhaps many as a human being and, in each humanembodiment, he would have performed different kinds of actions. Certainly, a lot of *punya-karmas* or virtuous actions must have been performed, because of which the present human birth has been obtained, and because of which there is exposure to Vedānta; this does indeed call for a great amount of *punya*. At the same time, it is possible that over all the past births and, perhaps, even in the present birth, some *pāpakarmas* or vicious actions may also have been performed. Those are the actions that result in obstacles in the present, such as various likes and dislikes, various emotional difficulties, and various impulses. Sometimes, these impulses or emotions take hold of the mind. We get swept away by the current of thoughts and cannot maintain focus or concentrate. In short, we are not able to do what we want to do. Sometimes, the mind is not sharp enough and so there may be difficulties in understanding the teaching, in retaining it, and assimilating it. Only when we understand, retain, and assimilate it does the knowledge truly become ours.

If the obstacles to learning are the result of past *karma*, what type of actions were these? These are what we may call sins or unbecoming actions, *adharma*, actions that are in violation of the order, which is called *dharma*. Even today, whenever we act out of anger, greed, or other passions, our actions are bound to be *adhārmic*.

When a person acts out of anger, his action is bound to be violent, at the level of body, the level of speech, or the level of the mind. This happens when we are not alert or strong enough. Sometimes, we fall for our own weaknesses, like temptations. The doctor may have told me not to eat sweets, but a student offers me a cookie and says that this is an exceptional cookie with a hint of orange in it. It may be very tempting and I may eat it. Thus, there are temptations. There is sometimes greed and sometimes anger. Sometimes, these impulses arise and take hold of us to the extent that we do things that are in violation of *dharma*.

It is the violations of the past that manifest at the present moment in the form of various obstacles, various irritants, various distracting factors, various conflicts, and various pressures or compulsions.

So what do we do? We get rid of these pressures by deliberately performing virtuous actions and also reciting the Rudram or reciting the *mantras* of the Kaivalyopaniṣad. The present *mantra* says that if this is done, one will be free of the negative effects of the actions that may have been performed in the past. One who repeats the Rudram or the Kaivalyopaniṣad, *agnipūtaḥ bhavati*, gets purified as by fire. This is said because fire is a great purifier. Many things are held in the heat of fire for the purpose of purification. *Surāpānāt pūtaḥ bhavati*. *Surāpāna*, the drinking of alcohol, is considered a *mahāpāpa*, a great sin, as is also the killing of a *brāhmaṇa*. In the past, we may well have done these things. Who knows what we did in which birth? We do not know the reasons for what we are experiencing today, although we ask, “Why is this happening to me?” We do not know what we did in the past and how those actions are fructifying now. But the verse says that by reciting the Rudram or the Kaivalyopaniṣad, the mind slowly becomes free from the effects of any negative actions that we may have committed.

*Kṛtyākṛtyāt pūtaḥ bhavati* means one becomes free from the sins of commission and omission. Sometimes, we do not do what needs to be done; that is also a sin, just as much as sometimes doing what should not be done. All this happens because

we are not perfect and not always in control of ourselves. Very often, we are controlled by our *rāgas* and *dveṣas* or emotions, and, therefore, there will be inadvertent sins of omission and commission. One is relieved of those sins as well.

The verse now presents an *upāsanā* or worship in the form of a recitation or chant. A *mantra*, like *om namaḥ śivāya*, can be repeated in the mind, but oral repetition is usually recommended for *sūktas* and hymns. The Rudram should be recited orally. The oral recitation of the Rudram or the Upaniṣad itself has a very healing effect; the mind carries many wounds created by unknown past actions, and these will be healed.

When we repeat the Kaivalyopaniṣad, the very subject matter of the *mantras* will have some impact on the mind, because these *mantras* only deal with or reveal the nature of the self, the highest reality, the most pure and the most auspicious. Therefore, these *mantras* or words, sentences or statements, which talk about the most auspicious, are themselves also auspicious. So repeating them also creates an auspicious effect in the mind. It is said that reciting the Vedas has a beneficial effect, even if you do not know the meaning of the *mantras*. *Śikṣā*, the science of phonetics, explains to us that during audible recitation, each breath of air originates from the region of the naval, rises upward, strikes the skull, and passes through different *sthānas* or parts of the organ of speech as it emerges from the mouth. That is how words are articulated or uttered. Every articulated word involves the movement of air through certain places in the head. For example, when I say, “Rāma, Rāma, Rāma,” the air originates from the navel and strikes the skull. So every time I say, “Rāma,” it has some effect on my brain or some effect on my personality and that is how these recitations become very healing. They have a very positive effect upon our entire being. You can see an inner shine on the faces of many *brāhmaṇas* who recite the Vedas regularly, because the recitation creates a certain effect that impacts one’s mind and one’s personality. Therefore, it is understandable that reciting the Kaivalyopaniṣad will also nullify the inauspicious effects of past actions.



*Tasmāt avimuktam āśritaḥ bhavati*, as a result of that one comes under the protection of Lord Śiva. Avimukta is one of the names of Lord Śiva. Lord Śiva is known as Paśupati, the Lord of animals. Animals are liberated ones, meaning that they have no duty or responsibility. They have no stresses because they have no responsibilities. They live their lives by instinct. A cat, a dog or a cow is *vimukta*, ever free. No *dharma* or *adharma* attaches to their actions. They can never do anything wrong; whatever they do is automatically right, because they are programmed in that manner.

There is an interesting story about Lord Śiva and Pārvatī in this context. As the story goes, Lord Śiva and Pārvatī were once walking through a forest. At that time, the four child-sages known as the Sanatkumāras—Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana, and Sanatsujāta—happened to be coming from the opposite direction. They were in deep concentration as they approached and neglected to offer their prostrations to Lord Śiva. Pārvatī noticed that the four sages did not bow down to salute Lord Śiva. She became quite upset that they had failed to show due respect to the Lord. She said, “Since you did not bend your heads down, from now on you will always only keep your heads up.” Her angry words turned the four sages into camels. Śiva and Pārvatī then continued their walk and left the location. Quite a while later, there came a time when Lord Śiva asked Pārvatī, “Do you remember those four sages that were cursed? Did you ever find out what happened to them?” “No,” she replied, “Let’s go and find out what happened to them.” So Śiva and Pārvatī went back to the forest where the four sages had been cursed. Over there, they saw four camels resting and leisurely munching on some grass. Pārvatī asked them how they were. “We are doing just fine,” they replied. Pārvatī asked, “How can that be? You are just camels.” They said, “First of all, we do not have to take a bath regularly because there is no need for *śuci*, purity. Secondly, we can eat whatever we want and whenever we want. There are no rules or regulations. We are ever free; we have no problems at all.” Pārvatī saw that it had been pointless to curse the sages! Thus, we can see how all animals are truly *vimukta*.

As their overlord, Lord Śiva is also called Avimukta. By reciting the Śatarudriya or reciting this Kaivalyopaniṣad, one secures the protection of Lord Śiva<sup>1</sup>. Here there is a recommendation, that the *atyāśramī* or one who transcends all the stages of life, meaning a *sannyāsī*, a renunciate, must repeat this text all the time or at least once a day. Many *sannyāsīs* do that. One of the texts that they repeat every-day is the Kaivalyopaniṣad; another is the Dakṣiṇāmūrti Stotra, and the third is the Māṇḍukyopaniṣad.

*Anena jñānam āpnoti.* By reciting the Śatrudriya or the Kaivalyopaniṣad one attains the knowledge. One gains the knowledge that destroys the ocean of *saṁsāra*, meaning one becomes free from *saṁsāra*. *Saṁsāra* is the repetitive cycle of birth and death; a life of becoming, a life of seeking, a life of death, ignorance, and sorrow. Such a life is called an ocean; it is as endless and boundless. It is only by gaining the knowledge that one comes to cross this 'ocean' of *saṁsāra*. This repetition enables one to gain the knowledge by which he or she breaks free from *saṁsāra*.

*Tasmād evaṁ viditvā enam*, therefore, having known the self in this manner, meaning the manner in which it is unfolded in Kaivalyopaniṣad, *kaivalyaṁ phalam aśnute*, one attains the fruit of *kaivalya*. This text is called the Kaivalyopaniṣad because the concluding verse says, *kaivalyaṁ phalam aśnute*, one attains the the fruit of *kaivalya*. *Kevala* means only, alone. *Kaivalya* is the state of being *kevala* or by oneself in oneness, the state of being the self of all, the nondual, and the state of being free from every limitation. This *kaivalya* is the result that one attains. *Iti*, in this manner, the Upaniṣad comes to a conclusion. We find that the last sentence is repeated, *kaivalyaṁ phalam aśnute, kaivalyaṁ phalam aśnuta iti*. That is the style of the oral tradition of the ancient texts; the last sentence is repeated so that the student

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<sup>1</sup> Avimukta is the name of Lord Śiva in the sense of one who never deviates from his innermost essence of oneness, never mixing up with *māyā*. Avimukta is also the name of a place in Vārāṇasī which, it is believed, is never abandoned by Lord Śiva and Pārvatī, even at the time of *pralaya*, or dissolution.

would know that it was the conclusion. The texts were not written down, but passed on in the oral tradition, from teacher to student. The Kaivalyopaniṣad is also concluded in this manner, with the last sentence repeated twice.

The completion of our study has been possible entirely by the grace of *īśvara* and that of all the teachers of our tradition. We are happy that we have enjoyed this grace and pray that we might assimilate and imbibe all that we have learned. We pray that the blessing of the Lord and our teachers may prevail in our lives. May each one of us gain the benefit of the study of the scriptures, *kaivalyam phalam aśnute*. May each one of us also gain the knowledge and attain the state of *kaivalya* in the true recognition of nonduality and the ultimate achievement of liberation.

*Om tat sat*

शान्तिपाठः

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवाः । भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः । स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवाँसस्तनूभिः । व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः ।  
स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो वृद्धश्रवाः । स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्ववेदाः । स्वस्ति नस्तार्क्ष्यो अरिष्टनेमिः । स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु ।

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ।

*In the last month's (July 2024) newsletter, in the serial article 'Kaivalyopaniṣad - Swami Veditatmananda Saraswati's transcribed talk', in the page #8, in the sloka #23, the first line was missing.*

(न भूमिरापो न च वह्निरस्ति  
न चानिलो मेऽस्ति न चाम्बरं च )

*The full sloka is as given below:*

न भूमिरापो न च वह्निरस्ति  
न चानिलो मेऽस्ति न चाम्बरं च ।  
एवं विदित्वा परमात्मरूपं  
गुहाशयं निष्कलमद्वितीयम् ।  
समस्तसाक्षिं सदसद्विहीनं  
प्रयाति शुद्धं परमात्मरूपम् ॥ २३ ॥

*The transliterated text and word meanings of this sloka, were all OK. We apologize for this oversight from our part.*

- Editor

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

*This is the thirty sixth part of the serial article, continuation from July 2024 newsletter.*

तमार्जवसमायुक्तमनार्या सत्यवादिनम् । उवाच रामं कैकेयी वचनं भृशदारुणम् ॥ २-१८-३१  
पुरा देवासुरे युद्धे पित्रा ते मम राघव । रक्षितेन वरौ दत्तौ सशल्येन महारणे ॥ २-१८-३२  
तत्र मे याचितो राजा भरतस्याभिषेचनम् । गमनं दण्डकारण्ये तव चाद्यैव राघव ॥ २-१८-३३  
यदि सत्यप्रतिज्ञं त्वं पितरं कर्तुमिच्छसि । आत्मानं च नरश्रेष्ठ मम वाक्यमिदं शृणु ॥ २-१८-३४  
संनिदेशे पितुस्तिष्ठ यथानेन प्रतिश्रुतम् । त्वयारण्यं प्रवेष्टव्यं नव वर्षाणि पन्च च ॥ २-१८-३५  
भरतश्चाभिषिच्येत तदेतदभिषेचनम् । त्वदर्थे विहितं राज्ञा तेन सर्वेण राघव ॥ २-१८-३६  
सप्त सप्त च वर्षाणि दण्डकारण्यमाश्रितः । अभिषेकमिमं त्यक्त्वा जटाचीरधरो भव ॥ २-१८-३७  
भरतः कोसलपतेः प्रशास्तु वसुधामिमाम् । नानारत्नसमाकीर्णम् सवाजिरथसंकुलाम् ॥ २-१८-३८  
एतेन त्वां नरेन्द्रोऽयम् कारुण्येन समाप्लुतः । शोकैः संक्लिष्टवदनो न शक्नोति निरीक्षितुम् ॥ २-१८-३९  
एतत् कुरु नरेन्द्रस्य वचनं रघुनन्दन । सत्येन महता राम तारयस्व नरेश्वरम् ॥ २-१८-४०

*tamārjavasamāyuktamanāryā satyavādinam |*  
*uvāca rāmaṁ kaikeyī vacanaṁ bhṛśadāruṇam || 2-18-31*  
*purā devāsura yuddhe pitrā te mama rāghava |*  
*rakṣitena varau dattau saśalyena mahārāṇe || 2-18-32*  
*tatra me yācito rājā bharatasyābhiṣecanam |*  
*gamaṇaṁ daṇḍakāraṇye tava cādyaiṅva rāghava || 2-18-33*  
*yadi satyapratijñāṁ tvaṁ pitaraṁ kartumicchasi |*  
*ātmānaṁ ca naraśreṣṭha mama vākyaṁmidam śṛṇu || 2-18-34*  
*sannideśe pitustiṣṭha yathānena pratiśrutam |*  
*tvayāraṇyaṁ praveṣṭavyaṁ nava varṣāṇi panca ca || 2-18-35*  
*bharataścābhiṣicyeta tadetatdabhiṣecanam |*  
*tvadathe vihitaṁ rājñā tena sarveṇa rāghava || 2-18-36*  
*sapta sapta ca varṣāṇi daṇḍakāraṇyamāśritaḥ |*  
*abhiṣekamimaṁ tyaktvā jaṭācīradharo bhava || 2-18-37*  
*bharataḥ kosalapateḥ praśāstu vasudhāmimām |*  
*nānāratnasamākīrṇam savājirathasaṅkulām || 2-18-38*  
*etena tvāṁ narendro'yam kāruṇyena samāplutaḥ |*  
*śokaiḥ saṅkliṣṭavadano na śaknoti nirīkṣitum || 2-18-39*  
*etat kuru narendrasya vacanaṁ raghunandana |*  
*satyena mahatā rāma tārayasva nareśvaram || 2-18-40*

Queen Kaikeyi spoke to Rama, "Once, your father, in support of Lord Indra, king of the gods, went to do battle in the Dandaka forest. I was with them there. Your father was injured in battle, and it was I who drew him away from the enemy fire and treated his wounds and healed him. As a result he granted me two boons. It is all very simple. I encash those two boons right now. Today it is Bharata who should be installed as the successor to the throne. You, Rama, are to go to Dandaka forest. If you are really interested in upholding the words of your father, you must start for the forest today and live there for fourteen years. While there, you are not to wear any of the royal clothing. Let your hair grow free and use that tree gum on it to mat it. Dress in the simple clothes of the forest dwellers. Let no one know you as a king, and let no one cause disturbance to the rule of Bharata or feel you are more worthy than he. It is due to your father's affection for you that he cannot say these things to you himself. But this is exactly what he wants you to do, Raghunandana. This is how you will fulfill the words of the king and save him from fall from his *dharma*."

तदप्रियममित्रघ्नो वचनं मरणोपमम् । श्रुत्वा न विव्यथे रामः कैकेयीं चेदमब्रवीत् ॥ २-१९-१

एवमस्तु गमिष्यामि वनं वस्तुमहं त्वितः । जटाचीरधरो राज्ञः प्रतिज्ञामनुपालयन् ॥ २-१९-२

इदं तु ज्ञातुमिच्छामि किमर्थं मां महीपतिः । नाभिनन्दति दुर्धर्षो यथापुरमरिदमः ॥ २-१९-३

*tadapriyamamitraghno vacanam maraṇopamam |*

*śrutoā na vivyathe rāmaḥ kaikeyīṁ cedamabravit || 2-19-1*

*evamastu gamiṣyāmi vanam vastumaham tvitah |*

*jaṭācīradharo rājñah pratijñāmanupālayan || 2-19-2*

*idam tu jñātumicchāmi kimartham mām mahīpatiḥ |*

*nābhinandati durdharṣo yathāpuramarindamaḥ || 2-19-3*

Being an *avatāra* is a very big thing. Rama did not even bat an eyelid. He was like a *ṛṣi*. He did not think that he was losing anything. The only question he had was why Dasharatha himself could not tell these things to him. That was his only concern. "Let it be. Today I will leave this place for the forest. I will fulfill the words of the king exactly as he desires. I have no problem with this, my only problem is that my own father cannot speak to me. It seems he is angry with me. I do not want to leave him in this condition, there should be no contention. If he

would just cheer up a bit it would be easier for me. But either way I will do as he says. Noble Bharata can well rule the kingdom, and I can live in the forest.”

यावत्त्वं न वनं यातः पुरादस्मादतित्वरन् । पिता तावन्न ते राम स्नास्यते भोक्ष्यतेऽपि वा ॥ २-१९-१६

धिक्कष्टमिति निःश्वस्य राजा शोकपरिप्लुतः । मूर्च्छितो न्यपतत् तस्मिन् पर्यङ्के हेमभूषिते ॥ २-१९-१७

*yāvattovaṁ na vanaṁ yātaḥ purādas mādatitvaran |*

*pitā tāvanna te rāma snāsyate bhokṣyate'pi vā || 2-19-16*

*dhikkaṣṭamiti niḥśvasya rājā śokapariplutaḥ |*

*mūrcchito nyapatat tasmin paryaṅke hemabhūṣite || 2-19-17*

Kaikeyi said, “Rama, you had better go. Your father will neither get up nor get going while you are here.” This woman actually said that.

Dasharatha had heard all this but he was dumbstruck. All the king could do was sit up, grab a quick breath, and blurt out, “What a shame.” Then again he fell down on his golden cot.

नाहमर्थपरो देवि लोकमावस्तुमुत्सहे । विद्धि मामृषिभिस्तुल्यं विमलं धर्ममास्थितम् ॥ २-१९-२०

यत् तत्रभवतः किञ्चिच्छक्यं कर्तुं प्रियं मया । प्राणानपि परित्यज्य सर्वथा कृतमेव तत् ॥ २-१९-२१

सर्वोऽप्यभिजनः श्रीमाञ् श्रीमतः सत्यवादिनः । नालक्षयत् रामस्य किञ्चिदाकारमानने ॥ २-१९-३६

*nāhamarthaparo devi lokamāvastumutsahe |*

*viddhi māmṛṣibhistulyaṁ vimalaṁ dharmamāsthitam || 2-19-20*

*yat tatrabhavataḥ kiñcicchakyaṁ kartuṁ priyaṁ mayā |*

*prāṇānapi parityajya sarvathā kṛtameva tat || 2-19-21*

*sarvo'pyabhijanaḥ śrīmāñ śrīmataḥ satyavādinaḥ |*

*nālakṣayat rāmasya kiñcidākāramānane || 2-19-36*

Rama said, “Never forget, I seek neither wealth nor comfort. Neither do I seek to conquer worlds. Understand me, I am the equal of the ṛṣis and the forest is the right place for me. I am pure and committed to *dharma*. Nothing else is important to me. All you have asked of me is not a problem. I have not heard anything I object to. I ask to be given time to seek the permission of my mother and of Sita.” Without rancor or sense of mistreatment or abuse, without anger, he took leave of Kaikeyi. With that he walked out. No one who saw him then could see any change in his face. Still they thought Rama would that day be installed.

*To be continued...*

**Mahābhārata**  
**As Taught by Swami Dayananda Saraswati**

*This is the twelfth part of the serial article, continuation from July 2024 newsletter.*

The people were all excited, and then the resounding clang of Arjuna's bow startled them. The release of Gandiva's string would itself chill the hearts of people. At that very time a similarly terrific sound was heard emanating from the entrance gateway. All the contestants jumped up at the sound, and the spectators were goggle-eyed. A man strode forth after the sound and announced, "I can do exactly what Arjuna did. You all think he is great, but he is nobody. I can kill him at any time. I can do all he can and more." Then the challenger began to show off what he could do. Duryodhana sprang up immediately to champion the newcomer, whoever he was. He had been waiting for a fellow like this, someone to challenge Arjuna. While Arjuna had been performing, everybody applauded except Duryodhana's gang. They were simply unmoved, disdainful. At the start of the tournament, when Bhima and Duryodhana had been fighting, the princes had divided into gangs and cheered for their respective champions.

One person shouted, "Bhima is great." Another proclaimed, "No, not Bhima, we want the Kuru king Duryodhana." Like this the partial crowd rooted. Even some women joined in the shouting match. It became a divided house, two houses divided. Among the people there was division already.

It was Karna who had entered, matched the clamor of Arjuna's majestic bow, and caused Duryodhana to jump up. Then Karna with all eyes on him matched all that Arjuna had done. All the weapons and the *astras* and the magic - he did all the same things. Then Karna announced, "I am challenging Arjuna. Let him fight me today." Karna was angry for no known reason. His anger was because he was born. Arjuna did not even know who the guy was. Duryodhana was waiting for a person like Karna. Duryodhana was said to have been very fond of Karna. But he befriended Karna mostly because of his enmity toward Arjuna and because he had been looking for a person to go up against Arjuna. Arjuna was the one who made the difference between the Pandavas and the Dhartarashtras. Without Arjuna it would have been no problem for the Dhartarashtras. They

could be victorious just by outnumbering their foes, but to Arjuna numbers did not mean anything. To Arjuna it was all just a matter of what number of his unlimited arrows were required and any army was gone. He had that kind of destructive power.

Fired up, Arjuna heard the challenge from Karna and entered the arena to fight. He spoke up and said, "I should not fight against one whom I do not know, but you have asked for it. You come from nowhere, and you talk without speaking and you make no sense. All right, if you want to fight I will send you to that place where people go, people who talk when they are not asked to talk. Come on and fight."

Krpa, the original teacher of all the Pandavas, stood up and announced, "This is Arjuna; he is *kaunteya*, born of Kunti, he is a disciple of Drona." The duel was set, the fighters presented, and the rules told - the same customs as are seen today in the boxing ring. Krpa addressed the challenger, "Please, Sir, tell us your *kula*. Where are you from?"

Karna put his head down. He could not say anything. What could he say?" Kunti peered into the arena and saw Karna properly. She saw the *kavaca* and *kuṇḍala* of the sun god. Her words came back to her, "I will meet you one day, dear baby. I will know you by this *kuṇḍala* and *kavaca*." Overcome with her realization, Kunti fell down unconscious.

Duryodhana was up. He roared to the crowd, "This challenger need not be a Kshatriya. He need not be a prince or *rājā*. There are different types of kings, and I say he is a king. By birth in a royal family one may be a king, but by valor too one may be a king. By defeating an army and assuming power one can become a king. This challenger has already proved himself, and I want him to fight Arjuna. I declare him the king of Angadesha." Duryodhana worked to claim the stranger's friendship. He worked to control him. Duryodhana did not know what love was, he only knew what control was. Now, Karna was a naive fellow. I have never seen such a naive person. Karna fell for Duryodhana's gesture, because he was starving for some love, some claim, some name. He fell flat for Duryodhana and went and embraced him and thanked him excessively. "Now he is a king. Now let him fight," said Duryodhana.

*To be continued...*



## Guru-Poornima celebrations at AVG Anaikatti, Coimbatore

Talk by Swami Sadatmanandaji, chief acharya

Today we are celebrating Vyaasa Purnima which is otherwise called Gurupurnima. Today is supposed to be the birthday of Ved Vyaasa who is a well-known guru in our tradition. His contribution to our tradition is unparalleled. As his name itself suggest, Ved Vyaasa is the compiler of vedas. He did not compose the vedas, but with the help of his 4 disciples- Paila, Vaishampayana, Jaimini and Sumanthu he compiled the vedas. Vedas include Upanishads, so he has contributed in our getting the Upanishads. He has compiled Bhagavad Gita dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna. He has written the Brahma sutra . These 3- are considered to be prasthanatraya for getting self-knowledge. He also wrote the Mahabharata with 100,000 verses and he wrote the yoga sutra bhashyam and composed the 18 puranas, a huge literature with thousands of verses. . Therefore we celebrate his birthday today. Infact Veda Vyaasa is so great that in our tradition, he is considered to be an avatara of Maha Vishnu himself and he represents the guruparampara. Therefore Vyaasa Purnima is also known as Gurupurnima . On this day, we express our gratitude to the entire tradition of gurus by kayika, vacika and manasa. We today in all these 3 ways remember the contribution and grace of the gurus we had in our life and express our gratitude to them.

**There are certain misconceptions regarding guru-bhakti or grace of guru.**

In our tradition so much glory is sung of the guru. The person who has devotion to guru and the Lord, to him alone sastra will be revealed. Infact Bhashyakara himself says , without guru, vidya is not at all possible. Brahma vidya is received only by the grace of the guru. We have so many verses in our scriptures which are praising the place of guru in our life. Based on that , there are some misconceptions about guru which I thought I will clarify.

Some say guru bhakti is gurudom. Really if you analyse the 2 words – guru dom, it means being a guru. Like being free is called freedom, being wise is called wisdom. But the word gurudom is used in the sense of exaggerated importance given to guru. Guru is presented as a super-human being who cannot be questioned and whom you cannot afford to displease in any manner. There is a cult around that person. That is called gurudom. This is a misconception many people have about guru. We clarify that guru bhakti which sastra talks about is devotion to guru who is a representative of the tradition or Parampara of teachers. Guru does not claim this vision or teaching methodology to be his or her own creation. Guru does not claim any super-human status.

Our Pujya Swamiji was an ordinary person with ordinary upbringing and in his videos he says – I am a normal person. In fact too normal. So we are talking about guru as one who is representing the tradition of teachers and there is no cult around the person. One looks upon one's guru as the last link because of which I connected to the Parampara.

Second thing is , some people think by doing devotional activities of chanting, gurupaduka puja and do morning and evening guru puja and serving guru, by that itself one gets moksha. No other separate sadhana is required . That is not correct. The devotional activities and serving guru are all useful , but that itself will not give you moksha. Another thing is that some think that by effort of study of sastra, etc. , one does not get vidya, so no point in making effort. Just by mere grace of guru, vidya will get transmitted . We expect some mystical happening that one day guru will put his hand on my head and I will be enlightened. We do not encourage or endorse such thinking . One has to make effort to study sastra . Gurus's blessing is not a replacement for that. A real guru will never encourage that.

### **Then what is the grace of the guru?**

Grace of the guru is in the form of the teaching given to us. His availability to guide us is his grace. Of course his blessings will help in removing any obstacles in the pursuit. We should not expect any miraculous power which will get us moksha.

Some people think that : *atmanah guruh atma* – the self alone is the guru for oneself. One does not need external guru. You become your own guru and some sentences in Bhagavatam which encourage this sentiment. But that particular thinking is not accepted by our tradition. Mundaka Upanishad clearly mentions- *tad vijnanartham gurumevabhi gacchet-* to know that (brahman) one should go to a guru only. Bhashyakara says – *evam (only) means sAstrajnopi svAtantrena brahmajnAna-anveshanam na kuryAt-* Even if you are a scholar in sastra , mimamsa, etc. don't attempt to get this vision by yourself. So guru is a must for every student.

Question is asked- what about Ramana Maharshi who did not go to guru.

To this we say- Ramana Maharshi did not ask this question. You are asking this question means you are not Ramana Maharshi. He did not require a guru, but you require. So better take the help of a guru. Thus guru is a must. But the role of the grace of guru should be placed properly in our pursuit. This spiritual pursuit is full of obstacles and at every juncture, we require the blessing and guidance of the guru. It makes somuch difference . Those who have a guru knowhow much difference it makes in their pursuit.

That is why we express our gratitude to our guru. That is the significance of gurupurnima because when we express our gratitude , we have more and more value for the

knowledge we receive and it will have more impact on our life.

### **Caturmasa vratam-**

Another significance of this special day is that it is the beginning of caturmasa when sanyasis take vratam. Caturmasa means four months . But nowadays that is too much, so they made it two months. These two months sanyasis don't go out. But it is not so much relevant to us.

Another significance is that it is mentioned in puranas and other sastras that we take some vratam during this period . vratam means vow or some commitment. Vratam is of two types- pravrttyAtmaka and nivrttyAtmaka. PravrttAtmaka means we positively do something extra. Like we take a vratam to chant purusuktam everyday which is very good for buddhi. Or you decide to chant Vishnu sahasranam or do pradaksina which you were not doing before. If your life is already disciplined and full of spiritual activities , then you do not require any vratam. But for those who want to stabilize their commitment, vratams help to discipline you and keep you in track.

Another type of vratam is *nivrttyAtmaka vratam*. Where we drop something. I take a vow that I will not take sweet or watch TV , or get up early (forgoing sleep is nivrtty) and do sandhyavandanam, etc. for 2 or 4 mths. It is said in sastra that what you drop like sweets, you give it to others.

So this particular day helps you to come back to the track to start something new or resume what you have missed, so that you have more commitment to the pursuit of Paramatma which is called moksha. We pray to the Parampara of gurus starting with Lord Dakshinamurti. We are all blessed to be exposed this tradition of teachers directly or indirectly. We invoke the grace of all the gurus so that we succeed in our pursuit of discovery of inner freedom.

*Om tat sat*

### Talk by Swamini Brahmaleenanandaji

I share some thoughts and reminiscences on this special day of Gurupurnima. Veda Vyasa has contributed to this tradition in so many ways. Two important things I would like to mention today is-Veda Vyasa was a contemporary of Lord Krishna. Krishna's time is said to be about 5000 years ago when he gave the Bhagavad Gita to us and Vyasa wrote the Mahabharat with the Bhagavad Gita in it. So for atleast 5000 yrs or more it has been coming to us generation after generations from guru to shishya. So how many teachers should have been there from that time?

Again we have the Brahma sutra which Veda Vyasa has written to establish the meaning

of some conflicting sentences in the Upanishad . That means the Upanishad teachers were there even before Vyaasa. After that we have Sankaracarya who even if we take him to be in the 7th century AD , has witten Bhashyam on the prasthanatraya and also taught them to his disciples. Moreover imagine how many people have written commen- tary, sub-commentaries and sub-sub commentaries on his bhashyam analysing every as- pect in minute detail. They have dedicated their whole life to this. After so many centu- ries, even now the teaching is there in an unbroken tradition of guru-shishya Parampara. There is a story of how Vacaspati Mishra wrote a commentary on the Brahmasutra bhashyam after his marriage to Bhamatidevi.. He was so absorbed in his writing that he did not remember that he had a young wife. His wife was also so committed that she served him without complaining. Later after he finished his work, he is surprised to see an older looking lady with white hair . He realized how he had neglected her , but she had served him so well. So he gave her the highest complement by naming his commentary on brahmasutra as Bhamati. This is how people spent their life and now today we have an unbroken tradition of student-teacher lineage.

In a text called Satasloki, written by Sankaracarya , in the very first sloka he pays a comple- ment to his guru. Gist of sloka- In all the three worlds if you were to search for an upama to compare to sadguru. After searching a lot, you think this sparsha stone is a good comparison which converts anything it is rubbed with ,into gold . But even here the Sparsha stone does not transfer its property to another stone of converting things into gold. Even that Sparsha stone falls short as a comparison for guru.

A sadguru is one who can teach and give the vision to his students and in turn create a teacher out of his students who becomes a guru and can in turn teach and create stu- dents. Such is the mahima of a guru who is nirupamah, alaukikah ie, no comparison to anything else , extra-ordinary and one commentators says it means he is equal to Bhaga- van only!

Thus we have the whole unbroken chain of teachers starting with Bhagavan . This lineage is mentioned in the sloka-*sadashiva samaramba, sankaracarya madhyamam* and also the rishi-son/student lineage is mentioned in the beginning of Mundaka Upanishad to glorify the guru parampara.

Out of his many students, four students of Sankaracarya are well-known who became mathadipati and through their guru-shishya parampara propagate the teaching to this day. Present day, in our own Arsha Vidya tradition, we have Swami Shivananda who was a guru to Swami Chinmayananda who was guru to Pujya Swamiji who also learned from other teachers like Sri Pranavananda and Sw Tarananda. Pujya Swamiji in turn created so

many teachers all over the world.

The uniqueness of Pujya Swamiji was that he was always interested in giving the Advaita vision in all his courses and public talks. He wanted the vision to reach the hearts of all people and even children. He would clearly say that this is not my vision, but I am only a link passing on the vision which has come down from the rishis. That is why he created centers of learning- Arsha Vidya - to impart these teachings , especially the teachings of Sankaracarya. The Sringeri matha conferred on him the Shankara award for his commitment to teaching Sankara- bhashyam to so many students always keeping the vision and nuances of Shankaras bhashyam in his talks. He always taught his students to be true to the sastra and bhashyam and teach with a sense of responsibility and respect for the student. He never quoted unnecessarily and taught with great awareness to the students levels.

In the whole Parampara one considers guru as equal to Isvara. Isvara bhakti is very important to gain right guru and get knowledge . In the same way gurukrpa is equally important without which teaching will not bless us. It is very important for the student to have faith that Isvara has come to me in form of my guru.

There is another sloka which says – Ignorant people have fallen into the deep pit of ignorance and are being scorched by the samsara fire. In order to protect them, Dakshina-murti who always resides at the foot of a banyan tree moved away from there and gave up his maunam and took the form of Sankaracarya and travelled all over by the country, spreading atma vidya to remove ignorance which is the cause for samsara fire.

Similarly Pujya Swamiji out of compassion, has gone all over the world and untiringly taught so many people and made a difference in their life. He has imparted these values to all his students . That Parampara continues even today through his students who have become teachers and teach with the same commitment in different places. The Parampara thus flows unabated . We are indeed blessed on this particular day that we can also be one link in this parampara. We have the blessings of gurus who have passed on this knowledge for centuries, which comes to us even today. My heartfelt gratefulness to all gurus of this tradition.

*Om tat sat*

**- Report by Mr. Venkatasubramanian and Ms. Padma**

## Guru-Poornima celebrations at AVP, Rishikesh

The Gurupurnima celebration at the ashram was truly memorable. It commenced with a serene and elaborate puja at the adhishtanam, paying homage to the padukas of Pujya Sri Swamiji and Bhagavan VedaVyasa. Later, the 6-month course students organized a special function to honor the acharyas, which was a touching display of respect. During this event, Sri Swami Satswarupananda ji and Sri Swami Sakshat ji delivered an anugraha bhashanam, emphasizing the importance of the parampara and the Guru as the embodiment of Purna - wholeness, who imparts self-knowledge to the disciples. The day continued with five bhandaras, where approximately 500 sadhus gathered to enjoy delicious food and celebrate together. It was a heartwarming occasion filled with spiritual enrichment and a profound sense of community spirit. - **Report by Shambhavi**

### GURUPURNIMA 2024



## Arshabodhini camp at Jnana Pravaha, Manjakkudi

Arshabodhini conducted their 9th camp successfully at Jnana Pravaha, Manjakkudi, in the month of August from 13th to 17th.

Acarya Lavanyaji taught the 6th Chapter of Chandogya Upanishad and Pratahsmaranam text to over 50 vidhyarthhis. The inauguration function was specially graced by both HH Swami Ramesvaranandaji and Swamini Sumatmanandaji. This camp was very special, with the occasion of Independence Day and also Pujya Swamiji's janmadinam falling on August 15th. Jnāna Pravaha was specially decorated on this account, and a special pooja was offered to Pujya Swamiji on the occasion.

Adding more to the occasion, there was also a special book launch event, where the book, "Brahmalakṣaṇam", was released. Acarya Suryapriyaji of Advaita Bharati has transcribed this book from Pujya Swamiji's classes. The book was released in the presence of HH Swami Ramesvaranandaji, Swamini Sumatmanandaji, Acarya Rangaji of Brahma Vidya Mandir, Acarya Lavanyaji and Shri Ramgopalji of Arshabodhini.

At the end of the camp, all vidhyārthhis appreciated the camp facilities and that they made full use of the classroom sessions, satsangs and Question and answer sessions. They conveyed their gratitude to Swamiji, SDET and Shri Prasenjitji for their hospitality and were looking forward for further camps at Manjakkudi. - **Report by Ramgopalji**



## Vedanta camp at Jnana Pravaha, Manjakkudi

Swamini Sumatmanandaji conducted a 3-day Vedanta camp on Ishavasya Upanishad at Jnana Pravaha, Manjakkudi from August 8-10, 2024. Students were happy to experience the traditional village lifestyle at the birthplace of Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati. Swami Ramesvaranandaji gave us a nice overview of the Jnanpravaha infrastructure – Hall, reading room, archives and institutions in Manjakkudi -the College, schools, 3 Chaatralayas, Goshala with indigenous cows, Dayananda farms, Mill for milling, Vermicomposting, 200 varieties of seeds for farmers, etc.

Swamini Amma began the teachings with profound Shanti Mantra – ‘Purnamadah Purnamidam..’ which is a mahavakyam in itself. The opening first mantra states - Ishavasyamidam sarvam. The entire universe is manifestation of Ishvara and pervaded by Ishvara.

Retreat included guided meditations, lively bhajan sessions, visit to the new block of college campus, local temples, AIM for Seva Girls’ Chaatralaya at Semmangudi village and the ancient Kudavasal temple. By Ishvara kripa and Guru kripa, all activities went off smoothly and made it a memorable retreat. We take the opportunity to thank Swami Ramesvaranandaji, Smt Sheela Balaji, Prasenjitji and entire Manjakkudi team for creating a congenial & stress-free atmosphere which allowed us to learn and contemplate on the lofty teachings taught by our Gurus. - **Report by Deepa Shalendra & Sudha Ramanathan**







**Arsha Vidya Gurukulam**  
(Sruti Seva Trust), Anaikatti

*is pleased to announce a 15-day residential retreat  
from*

**Sunday 8th Dec – Sunday 22nd Dec, 2024**



**Swami Veditatmananda Saraswati**  
will be teaching  
*Kenopaniṣad with Bhashyam*

**Swami Sadatmananda Saraswati**  
will be conducting  
*Guided Meditation*



For registration, please go to <https://arshavidya.in/camps-retreats/>

For further details, kindly contact the office through phone or email  
Email: [office@arshavidya.in](mailto:office@arshavidya.in) | Phone: +91-9442646701

**Note:** Familiarity with Sanskrit and some Vedanta study will help to get more benefit from the retreat.

## Rishikesh camp by Sri Uday Acharya ji

Vedanta Teacher Shri. Uday Acharya Ji conducted spiritual camp at Rishikesh in June 2024 (17th to 21st). All the participants met in the evening at the Swami Dayananda Adhishtanam for puja, followed by the puja at Swami Gangadhareshwar temple and the Ganga Arati. Our respected Teacher Shri. Uday Acharya Ji briefed us about the ashram timings and a schedule of the camp for next five days.

With the blessings of Swamiji and after the puja in the Swami Dayananda Adhishtana Sthal, we received the printed text material for our camp. He blessed us all for success of the camp.

The guided meditation by Shri. Uday Acharya ji helped us to make the mind calm and receptive to knowledge imparted in subsequent sessions. The main text taken up was BhriguValli from Taittiriya Upanishad (Chapter – III) which made us aware that “anando brahmeti vyajanat” – you are that brahman which is nothing but ananda. The teaching on Nirvana shatkam also made us aware that you are ananda, the limitless, you are shiva, the pure (untainted).

During the chanting session, we chanted Prayers, Shanti Mantras, Dayananda Panchakam, shlokas of Chapter-III - Bhrigu Valli and Nirvana Shatkam. Chanting effectively reduced stress, increased calmness and invoked the divinity and sense of oneness with the divine. Interactive Workshops gave insights and made us think where we are; what we are; and made us aware about our spiritual, emotional, and financial goals; our weaknesses and strengths in these aspects and what and how we should plan and try to meet our goals. We shall certainly do our best to achieve them and live up to our own expectations.

On the last day of our camp, the Swami Sakshatkritananda ji, who is in-charge of the Swami Dayananda Ashram at Rishikesh, gave a small talk on Vedanta and explained us about ‘I’ and ‘This’ and the error of superimposition of ‘This’ on ‘I’ which needs to be corrected with the knowledge of the self from a teacher who knows shastra. He also gave his blessings to all of us for our learning Vedanta and gave lovely chocolates in the form of prasada.

Apart from above camp schedule, I would like to mention that during our stay at Rishikesh, we utilized afternoon free time for visiting few prominent places. It was nice experience to watch and attend all pujas performed by Shri. Matrubutham ji and Smt. Uma Madhu ji on 19th June 2024, including the mandir puja / Arati, Ganga Arati.

The main takeaway from the camp is the realization that “You are the only one whole, undivided, timeless, limitless, conscious reality. What IS is Brahman, here and now. Brahman is Kaaranam and kaarya both. Brahman is a cause of all. Brahman alone is. There is nothing other than brahman which is Ananda. Everything else is negatable.”

Our gratitude and thanks to our respected teacher Shri. Uday Acharya Ji, who has organized and conducted this camp so well. Thank also to Smt. Kalpana madam for meticulous planning and coordinating the activities of the camp. I must also thank all my co-participants.

- Report by Satish Kharche, Mumbai

## **Anugraha bhashanam of Swami Sakshatkritananda ji:**

Swamiji blessed us with a short talk at the first opportunity he could manage after returning to the ashram from his trip. Within a short time, he covered many aspects of Vedanta in a very interesting way. After explaining about Shruti Prasthana (e.g. all Upanishads), Smriti Prastana (e.g. Bhagavat Geeta) and Gyana Prastana (e.g. Brahma Sutra) he moved on to Vishaye Vishaya vichara to clarify the error in the mix up between them. 'I' is Vishaye while 'This' covering the word of things, people including my body is 'Vishaya.'

What I have is this body, mind, and intellect complex. Unfortunately, an error is committed by superimposing the 'I' Vishaye on 'What I have' the body-mind complex and the limitation of Vishaya is mapped on to 'I' Vishaye due lack of clarity. The error that 'I am this' and 'this is mine' is age old, Anadi. I am born ignorant of self and the world. Any amount of knowing about the world is insufficient as 'to be known' is ever increasing exponentially and our life time is very limited. So, it is better to know the essence of all knowledge 'I.' This knowledge is gained by using the means of knowledge by exposing us to it.

Shruti Prastana (e.g. all Upanishads); for understanding this one should be prepared like Nachiketas, Satyakama, Swetaketu et al. Upanishads are for eligible students. Hence one may start with Smriti Prastana (e.g. Bhagavat Geeta). Arjuna's problem is very much like ours (shoka) sorrow, (moha) delusion and (bhrama) confusion. Krishna had brilliantly addressed this

in Bhagavat Geeta. In chapters 1 to 6, Krishna explains about I and Me, in chapters 7 to 12 he describes the aspects of Ishwara and in chapters 13 to 18 Krishna explains the merger of 'I, world and Ishwara'. Gyana Prastana (e.g. Brahma Sutra) clarifies why Vedanta is required.

### **EPILOGUE:**

The grandeur of Gangadhareshwar temple, majestic and lively Pujya Swamiji's Adhishtanam, gushing and gurgling Ganga, towering Himalayas and the peaceful ambience of the Ashram were all super delicious. Acharya ji's camp prasadam to us of three wonderful books of Pujya Swamiji 'Danam,' 'Japa' and 'Hinduism...its uniqueness' are valuable take home blessings.

**Report by Uma Mathrubutham, Navi Mumbai**

Vidyaranyam is known for its core unique and trusted framework of teaching Vedas along with modern education, patriotism, physical education etc. It is in Bhagyanagar (Hyd), Telangana with 100+ students currently learning Krishna Yajur and Rugveda sakhas.

Arsha Vidya Pitham (Swami Dayananda Ashram) at Rishikesh felt a need for implementing Vedic Heritage course curriculum to Vidyaranyam students on a periodic basis with an objective to produce truly inspiring vedic pundits, scholars and professionals to propagate Sanatana Dharma to future generations. Swami Sakshatkritananda Ji, Chief Acharya of Arsha Vidya Pitham, Rishikesh, while blessing the participants with certificates, expressed his happiness in his speech as follows:

### Anugraha Bhashanam by Swami Sakshatkritanandaji

*"All of you have Brahma Varchas. "Varchas" means brilliance. "Brahma" means Veda. Brilliance is born out of Veda adhyayanam. That Brahma Varchas that all of you exhibit is a testimony of what Vidyaranya Vedapathashala is. Generally, you don't get this education in Vedapathashala. You are all blessed and are exposed to different fields of knowledge and skills. On top of it, the Vidyaranya Pathashala has got association with Swamini Satyavratanaanda. That is a beautiful addition to the Vedapathashala. So, you are exposed to our Sanatana Dharma. One has to have knowledge of our Sanatana Dharma, our achara and values along with education. This is one of the most beautiful learning. And, this camp is well run, and very well administered. I heard all about it. We are also happy as a part of it. I pray to Lord Gangadhareshwara and Pujya Swamiji to bless all of you to continue to learn and finish your education. Be a model to a Brahmana, how a Brahmana should lead his life. And be a model to other students coming out from Vedapathashala. I pray for the wellbeing of the Pathashala and for those who are connected to the Pathashala. Om Tat Sat."*

As a part of this initiative, the ashram had conducted the Vedic Heritage course to the first batch of students of Vidyaranyam Veda Pathasala. The course for the batch will be taken in multiple stages. The current batch of students from Vidyaranyam had been represented by it's founder Shri Madugula Sasi Bhushan Somayaji Ji, CEO Smt. Sirisha Pingaliji, 2 Adhyapakas and 33 Vedic students from the Pathasala.

Swamini Satyavratanaanda Saraswatiji, Shri Acharya Kota Maheshji from the ashram led the entire program starting from evaluating and understanding the Vidyaranyam pathasala, its objectives, its worthiness and then planning the alignment of the objectives with a course that can complement the students with a comprehensive learning track.

Swamini Satyavratana Saraswati (managing trustee of Akshara Vidya Trust) had made a personal visit to the pathasala in order to establish the true connect with the pathasala, its students, its founders and karyakartas. Akshara Vidya Trust had also provided great deal of help in the program execution, logistics planning etc.

The course for the first batch went for 2 weeks starting on July 7th, 2024 and concluding on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2024. The course covered the main topics such as foundations of Sanatana Dharma, its value system, Yoga, Responsibilities of a Brahmin, Bhagavatham, Ramayana, Mahabharatha, and Bhagavad Gita etc.

Students participated and learned the topics with utmost discipline and hard work covering their regular vedic practice along with Vedic Heritage classes paying un-scattered attention to both.

An examination had been conducted to all the students on the last day of the program to assess their understanding and grasping. All the students had done very well in the exam and given confidence to both the institutions that the path that is envisioned is the right path and we should continue the same with more dedicated focus and devotion. In her concluding words, Swamini Satyavratana Saraswati pointed out that “The vision of Pujya Swamiji should be carried forward to the future younger generations to inculcate more reverence towards our Sanatana Dharma”.

We thank everyone involved with a great sense of gratitude. Namaskar.

• **Report by Smt. Sirisha Pingali, CEO, Vidyaranyam**



## Pujya Swamiji birthday celebrations at AVP, Rishikesh

*Sri Gurubyo Namah*

August 15 marks the auspicious occasion of the birth of our Pujya Swami Dayananda ji. This remarkable day was celebrated at the ashram with a special puja at the Adhishtanam, followed by a large Bhandara with 300 attendees. The students of the six-month Vedanta course honored the day with an additional puja for Dakshina Murti, by screening some of Pujya Swamiji's inspiring talks, and with a delightful birthday cake. This day serves as a powerful reminder of Pujya Swamiji's memorable life and mission, his profound impact on individuals, his contributions to Bharat, and his service to humanity as a whole. May Pujya Swamiji continue to guide and bless us with his wisdom and grace. May we show our gratitude by following his example and divine life to the best of our ability.

Namaste,

The new name, "Arsha Vidya Monthly Journal", has been introduced to better reflect the mission of Arsha Vidya Gurukulams, in line with the print media guidelines. Thanks.

- Editor

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