

Chinmaya Smrithi



A Bi-Monthly Newsletter of the Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center (CMWRC)

Volume 21, Number 2 - March 15, 2011

Happy Ugadi, Gudi Padwa, Tamil New Year



Nine Acharyas Initiated into Sannyasa Diksha by Pujya Guruji on March 2nd 2011

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Calendar and Upcoming Events (www.chinmayadc.org, Link – CMWRC Events)

- Saturday, April 2nd – Spring Carnival from Noon through 8 PM, at Chinmayam
- Tuesday, April 12 – Sri Rama Navami
- Saturday, April 16 – National & Global Youth Seva Day
- Sunday, April 17 – Hanuman Jayanthi Celebration at Chinmayam. Look for event announcement
- Saturday, April 30 – Gita Chanting Competition, held locally at CMWRC chapters
- Saturday, May 7th – Chinmaya Seva Day. Look for event announcement.
- Saturday, May 14th @ 5PM – Tabla Annual Day at Chinmayam
- Sunday, May 15th @ 4PM – Language Annual Day
- Saturday, May 21st @ 3PM – Bala Vihar Graduation Tilak Ceremony at Chinmayam
- May 28-29 – Memorial Day Weekend Spiritual Camp by Acharya Dr. K. Sadanandaji on Rama Gita. Watch for announcements.

Study Groups

- Please contact Sri Vijay Kumar ji by email at vijaykumar@rocketmail.com, if you are interested in forming or learning more about study groups.

Bookstore/Library

- Please contact Mr Vijay Singh by email at publications@chinmayadc.org to order any books, CDs, DVDs, etc.. Browse online at www.chinmayadc.org; and http://www.cybermatics2.com/acb/webpage.cfm?&DID=6&WebPage_ID=2. Review list of Chinmaya Publications by downloading <http://www.cybermatics2.com/Catalog2008.pdf>
- Srimad Bhagvad Gita is online at www.myholygita.com

Next Issue

- Articles for the next regular bi-monthly issue – May 2011, are due by May 1st, 2011
- Email submissions to smrithi@chinmayadc.org. Submission instructions at www.chinmayadc.org, Smrithi link, “Information on publishing in Smrithi”

Useful Links:

CMWRC – Washington Regional Center
Chinmaya Mission Trust
Chinmaya Mission West
Chinmaya International Foundation, E-Vedanta Course
Washington Region – Dulles VA Chapter website
Washington Region – Frederick MD Chapter website
Washington Region – Springfield VA Chapter website

www.chinmayadc.org
www.chinmayamission.com
www.chinmayamission.org
www.chinfo.org
www.chinmayadulles.org
www.chinmayafrederick.org
www.chinmayava.org

Please Note

The opinions expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of Chinmaya Mission or CMWRC

Editorial Staff: (smrithi@chinmayadc.org)

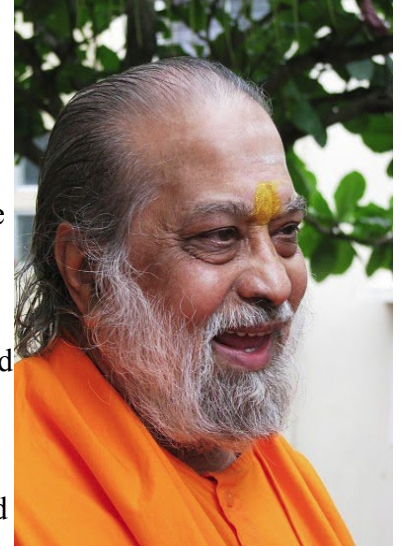
Sitaram Kowtha, Raju Chidambaram, Acharya Vilasiniji, Acharyas, Chapter Coordinators and Teachers. & BV students - Vishnupriya Krishnan, Asmi Panigrabi, Atman Panigrabi, Harsha Neerchal and Srikanth Kowtha

Please contact us if you are interested in joining the editorial staff!

News

- ◆ Pujya Swami Purushottamananda, one of the foremost senior disciples of Pujya Swami Chinmayananda, attained Mahasamadhi on 17th January 2011, at 7:40 AM in Mumbai.

Swami Purushottamananda was Chinmaya Mission's Regional Head for Maharashtra, Goa and Gujarat. For more than 40 years Swamiji taught and held spiritual retreats all over India. Swamiji was the driving force behind the beautiful Chinmaya Mission Ashram at Kolhapur, which houses Chinmaya Ganadhish, the world's tallest idol of Lord Ganesha. Countless spiritual seekers have benefitted from Swamiji's teachings. He will be greatly missed by his devotees. He will live on through his books, audio recordings and through all those whose lives he has touched and transformed.



- ◆ **Sannyasa Diksha of 9 Brahmacharis At Sandeepany Sadhanalaya - Mahashivaratri 2011**
News date : 2011-03-02 Today 9 more Chinmaya Mission Brahmacharis cast off their yellow robes to enter the Sannyasa ashrama with the blessings of Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda at Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Mumbai. (See picture on Cover)

Brahmachari Prasad Chaitanya is now Swami Anantananda
Brahmachari Uddhav Chaitanya is now Swami Sarveshananda
Brahmachari Jaganmitra Chaitanya is now Swami Raghavananda
Brahmachari Ashok Chaitanya is now Swami Jagadeeshananda
Brahmachari Vishrut Chaitanya is now Swami Atmavidananda
Brahmachari Veda Chaitanya is now Swami Satyatmananda
Brahmachari Sattivika Chaitanya is now Swami Swatmananda
Brahmachari Puneet Chaitanya is now Swami Shuddhananda
Shri Shiv Swarup Aggrawal is now Swami Yogasthananda

The new name indicates a new birth, a new purpose, and a new vision. Being initiated into the orange robe signifies a milestone in one's journey to realising the Self.

CMWRC Events Held

- Shraddhanjali for Pujya Swami Purushottamanandaji was held at Chinmayam on February 1st
- Maha Shivaratri was observed at Chinmayam and at homes of the members under the guidance of Pujya Swami Dheeranandaji on March 2nd

Chinmaya Somnath Project

You can follow the progress on Chinmaya Somnath project – new center in Northern Virginia at www.chinmayasomnath.org

The page is continually updated to show progress and designs. Please review the fund raising appeal and use the pledge form, available for your convenience at the site, to support this important CMWRC initiative.

Chinmaya West Newsletter

Be sure to read the March 2011 newsletter from Chinmaya Mission West.

Browse and download at www.chinmayamission.org/newsletter:

<http://www.chinmayamission.org/newsletter.php>



"CHINMAYA SOMNATH"

-- Phase-1 Construction Contribution (Tax-Deductible) Pledge Form --

From:

Mr. /Mrs. / Miss : _____

Date: _____



To:

The Treasurer,
Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center
46 Norwood Road,
Silver Spring, MD 20905

I/we Mr/Mrs/Miss _____ wish to pledge pay my/our tax-deductible contribution toward the construction costs of Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center's "Chinmaya Somnath" building to be built at 4300 Pleasant Valley Road, Chantilly, Virginia, as indicated below.

I/we understand that this contribution is in addition to my/our annual membership contribution.

<input type="checkbox"/>	\$30.00 per month*	For two / three / five years	For a Total of \$ _____ per year
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$50.00 per month*	For two / three / five years	For a Total of \$ _____ per year
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$100.00 per month*	For two / three / five years	For a Total of \$ _____ per year
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$200.00 per month*	For two / three / five years	For a Total of \$ _____ per year
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____ per month*	For _____ years	For a Total of \$ _____ per year
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____	Lump sum payment	Enclosed Check# _____ Dated _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____	Pledge	Payment will be mailed by date: _____

*** BANK DEBIT AUTHORIZATION**

I hereby authorize CMWRC to initiate debit entries for the amount of \$ _____ every month for a period of _____ years, starting from _____ 20____, till _____ 20____ to my Checking account indicated below for credit to CMWRC's account with the Washington First Bank or such other bank as CMWRC may deem appropriate. I will notify CMWRC immediately if there is any change to my Bank information.

Name of Bank: _____

Transit/ABA Number: _____ Account Number: _____

Note: Please attach one of your checks, marked "VOID," for verification of bank particulars.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____ Email: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____ Email: _____

Home Phone: _____ Mobile Phone #: _____

*** Please mail this form to the address above and mark to "ATTN: Treasurer. Make Checks payable to "CMWRC" ***

"Chinmaya Somnath"

~~~~~ Phase-1 Construction Contribution (Tax-Deductible) Pledge Form ~~~~~

Announcements

Weekly Discourse by Swami Dheeranandaji on “Drig Drisya Viveka”

Text: Drig Drishya Viveka (Insight into the Nature of Seer & Seen).

Day: Thursdays from September 16, 2010.

Time: 7:45 pm to 9 pm.

Place: Kailas Niwas 46 Norwood Road, Silver Spring, MD 20905.

Vedanta Dhara – Regular Discourse by Acharya Anantji at Dulles VA

Topic: Isavaya Upanishad. Starts Sep 18. Held 1st & 3rd Saturday of every month at 9:30 AM

See attached flyer for more details

Gita Chanting 2010-2011

Register for Gita Chanting Competition, to be held on April 30, 2011 at CMWRC chapters. This year, the chanting is on Chapter 12 of the Gita – Bhakti Yoga. Please review Sri Nilkanth Bhatt's summary on Chapter 12 in September 2010 issue. Also, please review Acharya Sadanandaji's article on Bhakthi Yoga in the July 2010 issue. Audio discourses of Pujya Swami Dheeranandaji's Jnana Yajna in December on Chapter 12 are available at the website, and DVDs will be available at the bookstore for a nominal \$25.00. Registration fee is \$30.00 per participant. Study materials – book and audio CD will be provided upon registration. Register online at www.chinmayadc.org, 2011 Gita Chanting Registration link.

TGIF- Thank Gurudev It's Friday Socials

TGIF socials are held on Friday evenings for CHYK and Chinmayam students/parents. TGIFs are get-togethers hosted by a CMWRC family. The agenda is simple: free-form discussions, mentorship time, potluck dinner, and fun activity or hangout time. While Chinmayam kids and CHYK hang out, parents have their fun. TGIFs will be held each month, alternating between Maryland and Virginia.

Upcoming TGIFs (All TGIFs start at 6:30 PM and end around 10 PM)

Friday, February 11th in Virginia

Friday, March 25th in Maryland

Friday, April 29th in Virginia

Friday, May 27th in Maryland

Friday, June 24th in Virginia

Contact: Email chinmayamTGIF@gmail.com and/or call Abdulla Meer at (240) 381-1984 to RSVP or for further information, or with any questions, comments or concerns.

Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center

2011 GITA CHANTING COMPETITION

INVITES ONE & ALL TO PARTICIPATE

Let us understand the grand vision behind the seemingly simple program. Chanting initially introduces one to the world renowned Bhagavad Gita. Naturally this leads to the study of the text, resulting in the gain of the knowledge revealed therein. Knowledge translated into action becomes a way of living one's life successfully and joyously.

When:

Saturday, April 30th 2011

Where:

Chinmayam - Silver Spring Md
Frederick MD
Dulles VA

Who Can Participate:

- Children from Grades Pre-K to Grade 12
- Youth, Chinmaya Yuva Kendra Members
- Adults

What:

Bhagvad Gita - CHAPTER XII

Study Materials:

Practice CDs and booklets will be provided upon registration

Judging Criteria:

Sanskrit Chanting of verses in order
with proper pronunciation, memorization & presentation

How to Participate:

Please register and submit your form and fees of \$30 online at
www.chinmayadc.org



For More Information

Visit Chinmaya Mission DC Area Chapter websites

www.chinmayadc.org, www.chinmayava.org,
www.chinmayadulles.org, www.chinmayafrederick.org



CHINMAYA MISSION WASHINGTON REGIONAL CENTER

(A non-profit religious organization registered in Maryland)
Kailas Niwas, 46 Norwood Road, Silver Spring, MD 20905

Vedanta Dhara

By
Acharya Anant Sarma

TIME

9:30 AM—10:30 AM
1st and 3rd Saturday's of
every month
Starts September 18, 2010

LOCATION

Vibha and Vinod Kulkarni
25467 Gimbel Drive
South Riding, VA 20152

CONTACT US

Phone
703 327 6776

E-mail
vibhakulkarni@hotmail.com
vish.ramabhatta@gmail.com



Yahoo! Group

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/vedantadhara/>



Isavasya Upanishad derives its title from the opening words "Isa and vasya", "God-covered." Isavasya forms the closing chapter of the Shukla-Yajur-Veda.

The use of Isa (Lord) – a more personal name of the Supreme Being than Brahman, Atman or Self, the names usually found in the Upanishads – is the uniqueness of this Upanishad.

Oneness of the Soul and God, and the value of both faith and works as means of ultimate attainment are the leading themes of this Upanishad. The general teaching of the Upanishads is that works alone, even the highest, can bring only temporary happiness and must inevitably bind a man unless through them he gains knowledge of his real Self. To help him acquire this knowledge is the aim of this and all Upanishads.

Vedanta Dhara is a bi-weekly event that is an extension of the e-Vedanta classes that Acharya Anantiji has been taking and plans to begin with Isavasya Upanishad and continue on to the other upanishads interspersed with prakarana-granthas such as Panchadashi in order to take students deeper into Vedantic expositions.



Acharya Anant Sarma was initiated as an Acharya of Chinmaya Mission after completing the Mission's two-year, residential Vedanta course at 'Sandeepany Sadhanalaya' Mumbai, in 2007. He was then posted to the Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center (CMWRC).

When he moved to the Washington DC area in 1989, he came under the tutelage of our Pujya Swami Dheerananda who inspired him to undertake serious study of Vedanta in Sandeepany under Pujya Gururji Swami Tejomayananda. Anantiji now shares this scriptural knowledge with the members in the Greater Washington Metropolitan area.

Presently, Anantiji serves as the resident Acharya of CMWRC's Dulles (Virginia) chapter. He also conducts Vedanta classes in Frederick and Salisbury in Maryland, as well as Ashburn and Fairfax in Virginia. Anantiji, in the past 2+ years, has been active in various forums taking on texts such as Bhaja Govindam, Atma Bodha, Upadesa Sara, Isavasya, Vishnu Sahasranama, Bhagavad Gita and Self Unfoldment.

Please register by sending an email to vish.ramabhatta@gmail.com. This is mainly intended for planning and communication purposes

CHINMAYA MAHASAMADHI FAMILY CAMP 2011

Chinmaya Mission Chicago

Chinmaya Mission Northwest Indiana

Mind and Beyond: The Gītā Way



Discourses on
Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā
Chapter IX

by

His Holiness
Swami Tejomayananda
Head of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide

July 29 - August 3, 2011

Camp Highlights

- Additional Discourses: *Jñāna Sāra* by Swami Shantananda
- Bala Vihar Classes for Children • Cultural Program • Recreation: Golf, Mini-Golf, Tennis, Swimming
- Yuva Kendra (CHYK) Program for College Students and Young Professionals • Vegetarian Meals
- *Upanayanam Ceremony* in Holy presence of Swami Tejomayananda — website for details

Camp Fees

(Rates Effective until March 31, 2011)

Double Occupancy: \$700/person

Children: \$275/child

CHYK: \$475/person (Quad)

Contacts

Ach. Shanker Pillai (630) 789-6607

Rajul Bhalala (847) 302-2383

Padmini Makam (219) 924-7268

For Camp Details and Registration go to: www.chinmayamahasamadhi.com

E-mail: info@chinmayamahasamadhi.com



Camp Venue

Hilton
Indian Lakes Resort
250 W. Schick Road
Bloomington • IL 60108





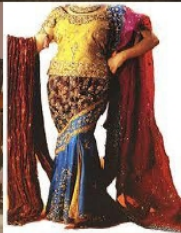
Spring Carnival

@

Chinmaya Mission®
Washington Regional Center



on
Saturday
April 2nd 2011
from Noon onward



At
Chinmayam
46 Norwood Road,
Silver Spring, MD



Admission is Free

Rain date: April 9th 2011

Contacts:

Chandrika Sriram: 301-801-1506

Lakshmi Linga: 301-254-2137

spring2011carnival@yahoo.com

Cultural Showcase:

Starting at 5pm

Winter Youth Camp - 2010

Nirav shah

Tapovanam, Silver Spring Chapter

I was stuck in November with tons of homework, when one of my friends encouraged me to go to the junior CHYK Winter Camp at Chinmaya Mission for the winter holidays, since it was opened to freshmen (9th graders) for the first time. At first I didn't feel like going, because I thought I would be the only ninth grader going but my parents told me that they didn't want me sleeping in the house throughout the holidays. Also, I thought that we weren't going to get active at any point in the camp, and that it was just going to be boring lectures the whole week. I came back from the five-day camp on Friday reminiscing about how it went. I thought, "Hey, that was actually pretty good!" We watched The Dark Knight, 3 Idiots, and Inception, and we discussed the spirituality in each of the movies. I learned how you can find spirituality in other things such as books, newspapers, songs, websites, and even Facebook! We did our daily devotion not just with bhajans, but also with dance, games, and mouna (quiet time tooneself). Friday had to be the best day, because even though it was the last day of camp, we made hilarious skits(which we only had 25 minutes to prepare for), and we had a lunch potlock at the end of the day during which everyone found time to socialize. Acharya Vivekji, who coordinated and led the camp throughout, is a really fun (and funny) Acharya. He was the main source of the awesomeness from Wednesday to Friday. His lectures are so amazing that even the sleepest kid would never fall asleep during them. Monday and Tuesday, when Vivekji was absent, the CHYK's did an excellent job of leading the camp. Overall, I had a blast, and I'm happy I went as a freshman, because I get to learn all this stuff before the main stress of high school hits me. Also, special thanks to my parents for driving me there everyday, and for my friend that encouraged me to go. I encourage other high school students to attend this camp (not just Bal Vihar students - invite your other friends) whenever the next winter camp is!

Chinmayam Class Summaries

Silver Spring Chinmayam Bala Vihar Students

Sanjay Kunchakarra

The entirety of the Gita can be summarized into three words, "That Thou Art". So far this year, we have covered the first six chapters of the Gita which highlight the meaning of the term "Thou" and expound on the technique of realization. Today, however, we began an entire new section of the Gita with chapter seven which begins to define the term "That", the goal of spirituality. We started off class by reading verses 4-13, which explain the relationship between our gross body, the process in which our biological bodies develop and become specialized, and our subtle body, the actual functions and purposes of our cells. Everybody is originated from a cell and goes through various biological processes causing us to develop and grow. Nonetheless, despite similar physical beings, the Self that is contained within our bodies is an individual phenomenon in its own existence. The topics in these verses led us to the question, "What is god?". We got multiple definitions from the class such as the manifestation of all that is unknown to man, and the principle or the entity we look to for assistance. The most common answer we agreed upon was that god is the essence of everything and we felt that this was represented in the verses where the Lord Krishna describes himself as the "strength in the strong" or the "austerity in the austere." It is this consciousness that is the goal we aim to reach in meditation. We moved on to verse 16, which said that there are four types of people who pray, the dissatisfied, the seeker of knowledge, the seeker of wealth, and the wise. After bouncing around theories behind the purpose of prayer, we reached the conclusion that prayer can be utilized to shed one's ego and surrender itself to the Divine Spirit.

Mayank Bapna

In the class on Sunday, we talked about meditation. At the beginning of class, everyone said what they thought meditation was. People came up with answers such as focus, relaxation, and disciplining one's mind etc.

Anil Uncle and Aniket Uncle later on discussed the purpose of meditating. The ultimate purpose of meditating is introspection. The importance of this in today's world is that it helps us set goals and fulfill them.

After this, we read the verses in chapter 6 of the Holy Geeta which deals with meditation. Swami Chinmayananda's main point is summarized in pages 380-381. "So far Bhagwawan has indicated an exhaustive treatment which may be, in many of its aspects considered as equivalent to the modern psychological process called introspection. Realizing our own weaknesses, rejecting the false, asserting the better, and trying to live, generally, as best as we can, the higher way-of-life, is the process of introspection...We must also see to it, that, whatever little conquests we might have made out of Satan's province are not again handed back to Satan's dominion. Krishna warns, almost in the same breath, "DO NOT ALLOW THE SELF THEREAFTER TO FALL DOWN AND BE DRAGGED AGAIN".

After this, we digressed for a bit and talked about the upcoming Super Bowl between the Green Bay Packers and the Pittsburgh Steelers. 13 people predicted that the Packers would win and 9 people predicted the Steelers would win. Later in the night, the Packers won 31-25.

We ended the class by discussing how to meditate. Meditation doesn't have to be in front of an altar, but just has to be done somewhere where one can focus.

Purvi Nanavaty

Before we started talking about our play for annual day, Aniket Uncle brought to our attention an article on the New York Times website. There was an article called Mind & Body: Investigating the Health and Science of Meditation. The article is about studies that show how meditation affects the brain and body

(<http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/01/28/how-meditation-may-change-the-brain/?scp=2&sq=Meditation&st=cse>).

We then discussed the play and our script. Anil Uncle told us two preconditions for the play: Nothing goofy on stage, and no fake Indian accents. Kisshan gave out copies of the play and the whole class read through it. The story is about Kaun Banega A Realized Person. As the contestant is asked questions, he has flashbacks. The flashbacks relate to the geeta and also provide the contestant with the answer. The main point of the game is to get 1 million Karma Points. As a class, we came to the conclusion that we will have the skit and a dance at the end which includes everyone who did not get parts in the play itself.

After the read through, we went back and commented on parts of the play. Some things we discussed included the transitions between the game show and the flashbacks. We decided that we will have people carry signs that say Flashback to let the audience know. We also talked about having easily movable props such as rolling chairs and rolling desks.

After looking at the flashbacks, we were unsure of how to convey the big ideas. We decided to incorporate them into the lines of the characters rather than having the narrator say it (this applied to both the Cambridge Circus scene and the Taj Mahal scene).

Coming up to an end of the conversation, we came to a conclusion that we wanted the Who Wants to be a Millionaire soundtrack. We also discussed that once you pick a role, you must stay committed. We finally ended the class with closing prayers.

Acharya Vivekji also pointed out this reference on Meditation

<http://www.massgeneral.org/about/pressrelease.aspx?id=1329>

Kisshan Sankar

In class on Sunday, we discussed True Renunciation. This was the topic of Verses 27 and 28. Infinite joy as opposed to finite joy is how one can achieve “true renunciation”. For most of us, this sounded like a lofty ideal, so a practical approach that applied to us was naturally the main topic of discussion. When we analyzed Verses 27 & 28, we read that to truly renunciate ones self we must use tools such as meditation, which calms the mind. By calming the mind we are able to make physical changes which in turn change our mental atmosphere. Meditation for example, works as a tool in renouncing fear, anger, and desire, all of which cause mental turmoil, and prevent us from reaching “true renunciation”.

Next we revisited the idea of Fear. We discussed the most common ideas which caused fear among the class. The reoccurring theme was fear of the unknown and things which were out of our control. When we feared things like “success” which essentially is out of our control many times, we debilitate ourselves with inaction. We then concluded that the only way to combat fear was through knowledge and the elimination of ignorance. The example Vivekji, often refers to is the snake in the Dark Room. One who is overwhelmed with fear will suffer from inaction in a dark room. The only way to eliminate fear is to turn on the light and to gain the knowledge that what once caused inaction (“the snake”) is really a rope. This change in mental attitude comes from the dispelling of ignorance through knowledge.

Finally we discussed play ideas for Annual Day. The ideas we had were:

- Indian Sitcom Family
- American Idol
- Current Events
- Interpretive Dance
- Magic Show
- Bill Nye
- Star Wars
- Jungle Book
- Slum dog Millionaire

The decided on Slum Dog Millionaire in the end, because we would be able to incorporate everyone in a song/dance part as well as acting section.

Srikanth Kowtha

This past week, we began our discussion by reading verse 10 from chapter 5 and asking the question “Can we perform any action without attachment?.” One person raised the point that there can be different levels of attachment, such as attachment to a toy or to a television set. Some could be more distraught at the loss of the TV because of the cost of the television, an attachment to higher valued objects, or be more distraught at the loss of the toy that has sentimental value.

Another example, the ideal wedding, was used for the rest of class. As Aniket Uncle explained, many people are attached to the idea of a perfect wedding; some become extremely stressed, while others take it in stride. We concluded that to avoid ‘overattachment’, we must maintain perspective, realize that people are inherently imperfect, and that some things are outside of our control. What is always in our control is our reaction.

With that, we read from the commentary of the verse, in which we learned to attach to the real, focus on what is important, and to not allow the nitty gritty details to influence our happiness.

We then read verse 12, discussing the desires and attachments involved in war, specifically the start of World Wars I and II. Different countries were attached to an idea of supremacy on the world stage, and therefore started both wars. FDR, our president at the start of the second world war, had the duty as Commander in chief to protect the United States, and also was attached to a certain level of respect on the international stage. By studying the causes of war, we realized that misdirected over attachment can cause chaos.

We finished class by reading verse 22, which said that enjoyment from objects is ephemeral – ice cream only lasts until it melts.

* * *

Once Upon A Time, I Was Involved With You

Aziza Meer

Once upon a time I was involved with you

In a very simple way.

Once upon a time you just meant good

And I said "God is Good."

Then, I read a book that spoke of God

Was intrigued into thinking about you.

Adding thought to thought

I got complex bit by bit.

Wound up, tangled, twisted.

Loved to talk about you

Thought it great to show I love you.

Then came a time when I had no time

For you.

I didn't miss you.

Now

I don't think of you;

Talking about you doesn't excite me;

Immersing in you feels like home.

The Concept of Yajna in Vedas

Dr. Pragya Pandey (Dixit)

Bala Vihar Sanskrit Language Teacher – Frederick Chapter

From the vedic period, the *yajna* was understood to be link between human and the divine and act as a vehicle towards liberation. Our culture evolved on the basic of *yajna* having primary purpose to create harmony and peace all around the world. The rituals are not only meant for personal prosperity but also for the welfare of the society. Ancient scriptures point out that sacrifices are essential from the very beginning of creation. The lord of creatures, *Prajapati*, was described as the embodiment of sacrifice

The Brahamana-text comprise of variety of vedic rituals which are having different standards and goals. Rgvedic Brahaman-text '*Aitreya- Brahmana*' believes in five types of *yajnas* such as *Agnihotra*, *Darshporna*, *Chturmasya*, *Pashuyaag* and *Samyaga*. In general, *yajnas* are divided into two parts as *Shrout-Karmas* and *Smarta-karmas*. The rituals like *shodasha-samskaras* (*Garbhadhan*, *Punsavan*, *Seematonnnayan*, *Jaatkarma*, *Naamkarana*, *Annaprashana*, *Choodakarana*, *Upnayana*, *Samavartan*, *Panigrahan antyeshi* etc) are the *smarta-karmas*. The groups of twenty one *yajnas* are known as *shrouta-yajnas* which are further classified into three parts as seven *Pakyajnas*, *sapta Haviryajnas* and *sapta Somyajnas*. It is necessary to perform *shrout yajna* only for those who have special desire. Our religious text also having concept of *Panch-mahayajnas* (*Devayajna*, *Pitrayajna*, *Brahma-yajna*, *Nriyajna* and *Bhootyajna*), those meant for inner purification and hence come under "*Satvika-karmas*". We should perform those *yajnas* in our daily life and they will bring growth, knowledge, and maturity in thoughts and realization to us

1. **DEVAYAJNA**- Any form of worship of god. For example, worship through prayers, service to *yajnas* meditation etc.
2. **PITRAYAJNA**- Prayers to parents, forefathers and ancestors. We should perform rituals like *Tarpanam Shradhham* and *Pinddanam* for the father and forefathers after their death.
3. **Brahmayajna**- Prayers to guru, rishis and vedic scripture. We must have reverence and gratitude to our Vedas and guru who enriched our self.
4. **Nriyajna**- It meant to worship the entire humanity. We should donate a part of our earnings in charity and social services. For those people who do not have money to spend, it could be in form of service like physical help, teaching etc.
5. **Bhootyajna**- This *yajna* has great importance to balance our environment. By this *yajna* we can perform our services to plants, trees and animals. We should grow plants and trees, feed cows, dogs, crows, birds and living being of this planet.

The performance of vedic yajnas with fire support get rains which effects positively for developing plants, vegetation and animals. On the other hand, some yajnas liberate us from the fear of demons, disease, snakes and the defect of houses (Vastushanti). It is well known fact that normally yajnas provide separation from the enemies, chastity, sharp brain, fame, prosperity which led to final liberation to the performer of the sacrifices. The rishi's of vedic period emphasized on those trees for samidha (fuel which is used in yajna like wood stick), which can burn easily with lesser emission of carbon dioxide. They generally used Ghritam (ghee) in rituals which purifies atmosphere and helps to cure to varieties of diseases. It was mentioned in Vedas that smell of Guggula wood sticks helps to remove the infection and illness.

It was proved by the scientific experiments when we perform Agnihotra yajna, the gases which emit during that time, help us to clean the environment and kill the air borne insects, mosquitoes etc., and save our environment.

The chanting of various mantras in *yajnashala* generates sound waves which reduce the sound pollution created by different activities of human being. Water is also purified through the procedure of air-purification approach of yajna. Vedic yajnas are not only protect our ecosystem on the earth but also responsible for rain.

In short, we may say that all kinds of sacrifices always play important role to increase our social values and remove the ignorance form our mind. The real donation is accepted in the form of great values like simplicity, non-violence, austerity and truthfulness in rituals. The theory of Samskaras is based upon the beauty of soul, happiness, enthusiasm, eradication of sins and peace all around the world. The whole diligence life of a person was also defined as a sacrificial ceremony.

“Atha khalu kritumaya purusham” (chhandogyopnishad, 3.14.1)

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Series – Summary of the Gita

Ch. 15 (Purushottama Yoga) The Yoga of Supreme Spirit

Nilkanth Bhatt, Richmond Chapter

The world, which we experience in our day-to-day life, is made up of our sense perceptions, our emotions and our thoughts. This world of mine is changing constantly and I am aware of that fact because I, the observer, am the constant common factor midst of all changes. We often express our amazement about how our city or our neighborhood has changed in last five years based on our observations. In my relationship with my world, I am the unchanging reality experiencing the changes occurring in my world.

In a similar manner the sages have described the relationship of this manifested universe with God, the creator and the source of this universe. This universe is ever changing and therefore it is called **Samsar** (that which is ever-changing) in our scriptures. These changes are possible because the source of this universe is changeless and imperishable. This source is the supreme self pervading all throughout this universe.

Using the analogy of Peepul (**ashvatham**) tree, Bhagavan says that the root of this world is up and its branches are below in this world, nourished by the three qualities (**Sattva, Rajas and Tamas**) of the Prakriti. The sense objects are the buds, which result in actions in the world of beings. We cannot see this complete picture, while living in this world because of our attachment to the sense objects and our actions.

To recognize the source of this world and experience the unchanging nature of it, we must cut this peepul tree with the axe of non-attachment. A wise person, who has become victorious over the evil of attachment and who is free from pride and delusion, reaches that state of bliss. He reaches a place, where neither the Sun nor the Moon is shining nor is there any fire. Life as we know it cannot sustain itself without the energy from Sun or Fire. If we reach a state where we exist without them it must be the place of God, the very source of the Sun, the Moon and the life giving Fire. Having gone there, no one returns to this painful world of ever changing emotions and thoughts.

An eternal portion of the Supreme Spirit having become the soul of a being in this world, creates five senses of perception and sixth, a mind. When the soul enters and leaves a physical body it carries these six entities with it. Presiding over the ear, eye, touch, taste smell and the mind, the self enjoys the sense objects. Due to our attachment to the world of sense objects we do not see the self who resides in our body, enjoys and departs; but those with the eye of wisdom recognize him as the true self.

Unless one has trained oneself and refined the mind and intellect instrument through contemplation and meditation, even after striving hard, one cannot recognize the true self in him/her. But a true seeker striving for perfection will realize that the Self dwells in him and he dwells in the Self, the Supreme Spirit.

Bhagavan says that the light, which resides in the Sun and illumines our world, and that light which resides in Moon and the Fire, is the light of the Supreme Spirit. Permeating the entire earth, the Supreme Self supports all beings and nourishes all herbs. Having become the fire in our bodies, the Self, associating with **Prana and Apana** (receiving and responding) digest four types of food (food that should be masticated, swallowed, sucked and licked, in other words all types of food).

The Supreme Self is seated in the hearts of all beings. Because of its presence we have memory, knowledge and even awareness of absence of them. All knowledge is because the Self, and Self is the only thing to be known through knowledge.

For all beings there is twofold identification of the Self. One identification is with the manifested self (body), which is perishable; and the other identification is with the consciousness, which is imperishable. The Supreme Self is distinct from both these identifications, which pervades three worlds of waking, dream and deep sleep, and sustains them. Because the Supreme Self transcends both the perishable and the imperishable self, it is called **Purushottama** in **Vedas**.

He/she who identifies with his/her whole being with the Supreme Self becomes one with it and will have no more duties to perform.

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On the Concept of Creation – Part III

If There Is No Creation, Why Do The Scriptures Describe Creation?

Acharya Dr. K. Sadanandaji

In Upanishads creation is described at many places. At the same time they also negate the creation. Thus both the presence of plurality and negation of plurality are discussed. These are usually called bheda and abheda statements of the scriptures. Looking superficially, the Upanishads seem to contradict themselves. Acharyaas have provided a samanvayam or self-consistency in accounting both; with some giving prominence to the bheda vaakyam and giving secondary importance to the abheda vaakyam, some the other way around, and still some trying to integrate both into one. Dvaita, Advaita and VishiShTaadvaita are classical examples of the three. According to Advaita, the plurality exists at the transactional level (vyaavahaarika level) and advaita at the paaramaarthika level as discussed above. Logically plurality cannot be there at the absolute or paaramaarthika level, since Brahman being infinite cannot really undergo mutation to become finite objects. In addition moksha, being freedom from all limitations, has to be freedom from division, that is, freedom from duality, since even a spec of duality causes fear says Tai. Up. while moksha is a fearless state. Hence scriptures says brahma vit brahma eva bhavati – the knower of Brahman becomes Brahman – that is knowing infinite is recognizing that I am infinite, and in the infinite there are no finites or divisions; because by definition infinite is division-less.

Hence according to advaita, Scriptures teach first creation and then negates it. This procedure, called adhyaaropa apavaada, is adopted since one sees the creation at transactional level. Creation is discussed to prepare the mind and to purify the mind through yoga. It is like we learn first Rutherford model of an atom which will be later dismissed by Bore model and then later by quantum mechanical model. This procedure – adhyaaropa apavaada- can be illustrated by taking the scriptural example of pot made up of clay. The following four steps can be visualized:

1. Looking at the pot, we first say- here is a pot, a product, or a creation made up of clay.
2. Then we examine the pot closely to see if there is anything other than clay any where in the pot. Since there is nothing other than clay, we conclude that pot is nothing but clay and clay only.
3. Now we dismiss the pot all together, since there is only clay and nothing but clay only. Therefore there is really no pot at all in the place where we say there is a pot.
4. Now we dismiss the creation of pot itself since it was and it is all the time clay and therefore clay has not really become any pot.

The same steps can be applied to the creation that we perceive. Negation of the pot or negation of the creation is at the intellectual level only. Pot is still there for utility and for transactional purpose. What is negated is the notion that pot is distinctly different from other pots and from its material cause, the clay, from which it is made, by which it is sustained and into which it goes back.

Scripture uses this procedure, for example, in dismissing each kosha, one by one in the ananda valli of Tai. Up. In Kaivalya Up. it starts with creation – yetasmaat jaayate praaNaH ... etc all the way to the creation of panca bhuutas – space, air, fire, water and earth. Later the same Upanishad dismisses all of them – na bhuumiraapo na ca vahnirasti ... etc. In kaThopanishad it says – neha naanaasti kincana – there is absolutely no plurality whatsoever. This statement is made in the present tense indicating the negation of the world of plurality while one is seeing it right in front – like negation of the pot while seeing the pot right there. GouDapaada in his ManDukya kaarika in advaita prakaraNa provides several scriptural examples that dismiss the reality to the plurality.

This procedure of negation of the reality to the plurality is required to recognize the oneness that pervades this entire universe. Human suffering is due to the fact that I give reality to the world of transactions. Scriptures says this reality that is given is only a notion in the mind of the perceiver. What is there is eternal unchanging Brahm that I am which is ever pure and infinite and hence the embodiment of ananda itself. The mahaa vaakyaas emphasize this identity and this identity can be realized only when I dismiss the reality to the creation. Hence Krishna's declarative statement at the beginning of Gitopadesa– Arjuna, you are crying where there is no reason to cry – because those who know the truth about the absolute nature of the reality do not cry – asochyaan anvasocatvam.. na anusochanti panDitaah.

Hence is there a creation? Yes, it is there at transactional level and it is the vibhuuti of the Lord. That Lord is nothing but this creation itself and hence I should have a reverential attitude towards the creation. As I understand more, I have to recognize that Lord, who is sat chit ananda swaruupa is not deferent from the self that I am. That understanding as a fact is the culmination of the very purpose of this life itself. There is nothing but He is or I am. Yo maam pasyati sarvatra, sarvanca mayi pasyati, tasyaaham na praNasyaami sa ca menapraNasyati | | One who sees me everywhere and sees everything in me, he is never away from me nor I am from him – says Krishna.

My sincere thanks to Dr. Shree Praveen Kumar who instigated me to write this article.

Hari Om!

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