

# Chinmaya Smrithi

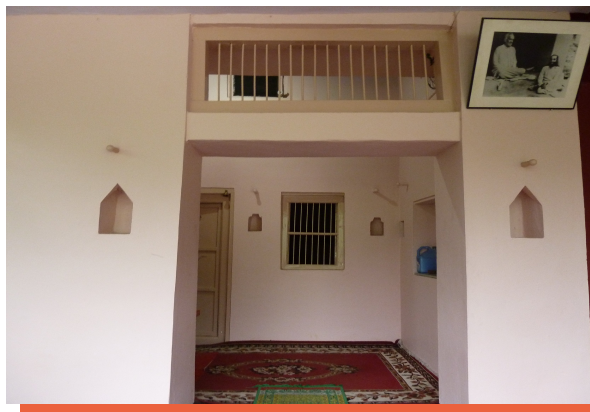


A Bi-Monthly Newsletter of the Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center (CMWRC)

Volume 21, Number 5- September 20, 2011



*Tapovan Kutir in Uttar Kashi, where Pujya Gurudev received spiritual training. Above, entrance to the Kutir. Below, the veranda with picture of Sri Gurudev with his Gurudev, Swami Tapovanji Maharaj.*



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## Calendar and Upcoming Events ([www.chinmayadc.org](http://www.chinmayadc.org), Link – CMWRC Events)

- Saturday/Sunday October 1-2 – Bala Vihar Field Trip, by session
- Thursday, October 6 – Vijaya Dasami (Dussehra)
  - Swamiji starts Thurs night classes at 7:45PM – 9PM. Text: Advaita Makaranda; Location: Chinmayam
- Wednesday, October 26 – Deepavali
- Saturday, November 12 – Annual Fund Raising Event, at Herndon High School, Herndon, VA. Dance Ballet in Multiple Dance Styles
- Mon Nov 21- Sat Nov 26 – Jnana Yajna by Pujya Swami Dheeranandaji on Gita Chapter 2, Slokas 1-18, at Dulles Community Center, Dulles, VA. Details soon.

## Study Groups

- Please contact Sri Vijay Kumar ji by email at [vijaykumar@rocketmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:publications@chinmayadc.org) to order any books, CDs, DVDs, etc.. Browse online at [www.chinmayadc.org](http://www.chinmayadc.org) or [www.chinmayamission.org](http://www.chinmayamission.org)
- Srimad Bhagvad Gita with Sri Gurudev's commentary is online at [www.myholygita.com](http://www.myholygita.com)

## Next Issue

- Articles for the next regular bi-monthly issue – November 2011, are due by November 1st, 2011
- Email submissions to [smrithi@chinmayadc.org](mailto:smrithi@chinmayadc.org). Submission instructions at [www.chinmayadc.org](http://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](http://www.chinmayadc.org)  
[www.chinmayamission.com](http://www.chinmayamission.com)  
[www.chinmayamission.org](http://www.chinmayamission.org)  
[www.chinfo.org](http://www.chinfo.org)  
[www.chinmayadulles.org](http://www.chinmayadulles.org)  
[www.chinmayafrederick.org](http://www.chinmayafrederick.org)  
[www.chinmayava.org](http://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](mailto:smrithi@chinmayadc.org))**

*Sitaram Kowtha, Gopal Gopinath, Raju Chidambaram, Acharya Vilasiniji, Acharyas, Chapter Coordinators and Teachers. &*

*BV students - Ananya Krishnan, Asmi Panigrabi, Atman Panigrabi, Harsha Neerchal, Nandini Kishore, Vishnupriya Kareddy and Keshav Kowtha*

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

## CMWRC Events Held

- The 2011 Maryland Summer Camp for children was held from July 25 to August 19, at the Chinmayam, under the guidance of Swami Dheeranandaji.
- Acharya Vivekji held a workshop on “Mindful Living”, August 9-11, at Chinmayam
- CHYK organized summer retreat for youth, aged 18-35, in the Washington DC Area, under the guidance of Acharya Vivekji, August 12-14.
- 2011-2012 Bala Vihar classes commenced during the weekend of September 10-11 at all CMWRC chapters, with Ganesh Puja.

## Chinmaya Somnath Project

You can follow the progress of the Chinmaya Somnath project – new center in Northern Virginia at - [www.chinmayasomnath.org](http://www.chinmayasomnath.org)

This website is continually updated to show progress and information on the project. Please review the fund raising appeal and use the pledge form, available at the website, to support this important CMWRC initiative.

## Chinmaya West Newsletter

Be sure to read the September 2011 newsletter from Chinmaya Mission West. Browse and download at [www.chinmayamission.org/newsletter](http://www.chinmayamission.org/newsletter):  
<http://www.chinmayamission.org/newsletter.php>

**Guidelines:** Submit a report/newsbrief on their recent major events or activities, for print in September or subsequent issue of CMW News. In particular, centers where Pujya Guruji has already visited are requested to submit an article with photos.

Please email your article and images to [cmwn-submissions@chinmayamission.org](mailto:cmwn-submissions@chinmayamission.org) Due Dates for Article Submissions to CMW Newsletter in 2011: August 1, October 1, December 1.



## LOAN PLEDGE FORM

I/We Mr/Mrs/Miss \_\_\_\_\_  
would like to commit to advancing, as loan, a sum of Dollars \_\_\_\_\_ thousand  
(multiple of \$5000) for a fixed term as indicated below to **Chinmaya Mission Washington  
Regional Center (CMWRC)** for the purpose of supporting the capital projects in Northern  
Virginia and in Maryland.

\$ _____	For FIVE YEARS	@5.0% per annum- simple rate of Interest *
\$ _____	For SEVEN YEARS	@6.0% per annum- simple rate of Interest *
\$ _____	For TEN YEARS	@6.5% per annum- simple rate of Interest *

I/We understand that the interest will be payable in the month of January each year for the  
immediately preceding year. The principal will be payable at the end of the five/ seven/ ten year  
term. The amount of my/our pledge, as stated above, will be available by:  
(Please circle one)

2011	June 1	July 1	Aug. 1	Sept. 1	Oct. 1	Nov. 1	Dec. 1
2012	Jan. 1	Feb. 1	Mar. 1	Apr. 1	May 1	Jun. 1	Jul. 1
2012	Aug. 1	Sept. 1	Oct. 1	Nov. 1	Dec. 1		
2013	Jan. 1	Feb. 1	Mar. 1	Apr. 1	May. 1	Jun. 1	Jul. 1

and will be mailed/delivered to Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center within ten days  
of a request for funds from CMWRC.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print)  
Full name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone# \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print)  
Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone# \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

(\* Note: If CMWRC decides to adjust interest rates during the first three years of this loan, those rates if moved  
upwards will be applied prospectively to your rates but your interest rate will not go down if the adjustment is  
downwards. Early withdrawals will be subject to rate reduction rules - please see FAQ. Please indicate if the loan is in  
minor's name)

Please Mail or hand over this form to:  
Prakash G. Soman, Treasurer, CMWRC - 6541 South Street, Falls Church, VA 22042



### Nominee Designation Form

To:  
Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center (CMWRC)  
46 Norwood Road  
Silver Spring, MD 20905

I/We Mr./Mrs./Miss\*\* \_\_\_\_\_ wish to advance a sum of Dollars \_\_\_\_\_ Thousand only ( \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Multiple of \$5000) at the interest rate indicated below to Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center (CMWRC) for a period of five/seven/ten years for the capital projects in Northern Virginia and in Maryland. I/We understand that the interest will be payable in the month of January each year for the immediately preceding year. The principal will be payable at the end of the five/seven/ten year term.

A check (Check # \_\_\_\_\_ dated \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ bank) made payable to CMWRC is enclosed herewith.

I/We nominate \_\_\_\_\_ to be the beneficiary(s)/nominee(s)/assignee(s) of the said loan amount (the principal as well as interest due thereon as stated above) in the event of my/our death prior to the maturity date of the loan.

The social security number to be used for the annual 1099-INT form is \_\_\_\_\_ and the mailing address for mailing the annual 1099-INT form is given below. We will promptly notify CMWRC if the mailing address changes in the future.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Term and Interest Rates:**

5 Years	@5.0% per annum – simple rate of Interest *	Please Treat This Loan as an Interest Free Loan for _____ Years.
7 Years	@6.0% per annum – simple rate of Interest *	
10 Years	@6.5% per annum – simple rate of Interest *	

**NOTE:** Please inform CMWRC promptly of any change in address.

\* Early withdrawals are subject to rate reductions – see FAQ for details.

\*\* Please PRINT name and indicate if the Loan is in a Minor's name.

Please mail/give this form to Prakash G. Soman, Treasurer CMWRC, 6541 South Street, Falls Church, VA 22042

## News

Acharya Anantji married Meera Subramaniam in August. Meeraji brings great love and knowledge of Carnatic Music and is a vocalist herself. Congratulations to Anantji and Meeraji. We welcome Meeraji to CMWRC.

## Announcements

### **Thank Gurudev It's Friday (TGIF) Bala Vihar – Chinmayam class CHYK Connection (CCC) Socials**

TGIF socials are held on Friday evenings every other month for CHYK and Chinmayam students/parents. (Chinmayam is Bala Vihar classes for Grades 10-12). TGIFs are get-togethers hosted by a CMWRC family, and all Chinmayam parents across CMWRC are invited to attend. 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.

Next TGIF social is planned for the end of September 2011. Details to follow.

Contact: Email [chinmayamTGIF@gmail.com](mailto: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.

### **Recent Pravachans Available for Download or Purchase ([www.chinmayadc.org](http://www.chinmayadc.org), Audio)**

1. Swami Ishwarananda's talks on Adi Sankara's Dhanyashtakam at the recently concluded One Day Spiritual Camp, July 4th 2011 in Frederick, MD. These are posted under Swami Ishwarananda ji's Discourses'.
2. Swami Ishwarananda's talks on Goal of Life Fulfilled (G-O-L-F), featuring one verse from each of the 18 Chapters of Bhagavad Gita, as applied to daily life. These were conducted July 5-7, 2011 in Frederick, MD. Available under Swami Ishwarananda ji's Discourses'.
3. Acharya Sadananda recently concluded the series of talks on Mandukya Karika, Alata Santi. These tracks have been posted to the website under 'Acharya Sadananda ji's Discourses'.
4. Mindful Living Workshop discourses for householders by Acharya Vivekji, August 9-11, 2011.
5. Acharya Sadananda recently completed SRI RAMA GITA during Memorial Weekend Camp in May 2011. These are available for sale (MP3 format) at our Mission book store in CHINMAYAM.

## Current/Upcoming Events

- **Swamiji's Thursday Night Classes start on October 6<sup>th</sup> @ 7:45PM on Advaita Makaranda**
- **Devi Puja in October, Details TBA**
- **Deepavali Celebration in October, Details TBA**
- **Annual Fundraiser Event on Saturday, November 12, at Herndon High School, Herndon VA. Details TBA**
- **Jnana Yajna by Pujya Swami Dheeranandaji, on Gita Chapter 2, Slokas 1-18, at Dulles Multipurpose Center in Herndon VA, November 21-26**

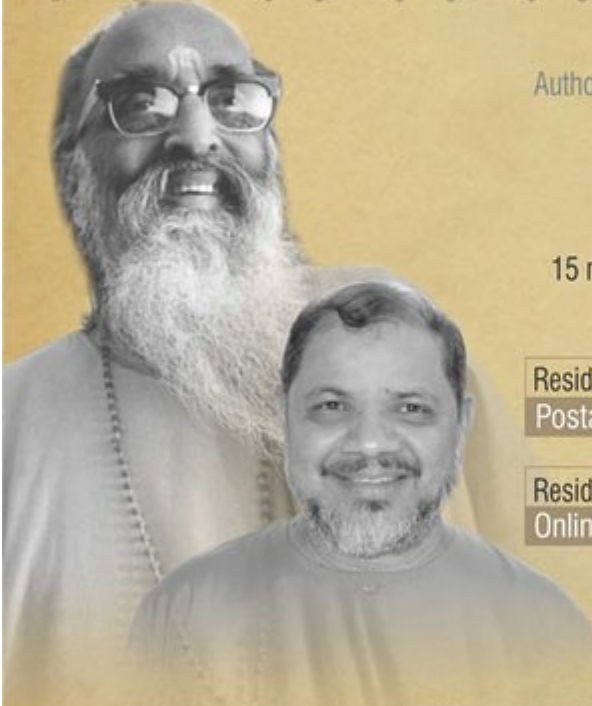
# *cif* Chinmaya International Foundation

Affiliated to Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, New Delhi & recognised by Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam and Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)

launches

## BHAGAVAD GITA COURSE

*Go through Gita... Grow through Gita...*



Author: **His Holiness Swami Tejomayananda**  
Head, Chinmaya Mission Worldwide

### Course Highlights:

18 Chapters covered in 30 lessons  
15 months duration @ 2 lessons per month

### Course Donation:

Residents of the Indian sub-continent: ₹3,000  
Postal Course Other Residents: US\$250

Residents of the Indian sub-continent: ₹3,000  
Online Course Other Residents: US\$200

Knowledge of Sanskrit is not required  
as the medium of instruction is English.

## REGISTER NOW!

For online registration visit: [www.chinfo.org/courses/bhagavadgita](http://www.chinfo.org/courses/bhagavadgita)

For further details contact:

Administrator, CIF Home Study Courses  
Chinmaya International Foundation

Adi Sankara Nilayam, Adi Sankara Marg, Veliyanad, Ernakulam – 682 319, Kerala, India

Phone: +91-484-2749676, 2747307 Fax: +91-484-2749729

Email: [gitacourse@chinfo.org](mailto:gitacourse@chinfo.org)



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- ◆ Celebrate auspicious occasions like Ganesh Chaturthi, Janmashtami.



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FAX: 1-868-679-3652

EMAIL: CHINMAYAMMISSIONTT@GMAIL.COM





#### CMWRC SEVAK SELECTED AS HINDU LAY LEADER FOR U.S. FORCES, KABUL, AFGHANISTAN

We are very happy to announce that Vijay Kumar who was posted to Afghanistan a few months ago has been appointed as a Religious Lay Leader for Hindu Services to the United States Armed forces and Coalition Forces, under NATO Training Mission- Afghanistan, effective September 11, 2011. Vijay Kumar is well known to most of us and has been teaching Vedantic texts and Bhagavad Gita since 1987 in CMWRC . He has lead many Vedanta discussion groups and is an excellent orator of Vedanta topics.

As a Lay Leader, Mr. Vijay Kumar will be conducting vedanta study classes and religious worships for members of Hindu faith as well as others who are interested to learn about Hinduism.

Vijay Kumar is an Electronic Engineer, working under the U.S. Department of Defense and is currently serving on a NATO Training Mission.

**CMWRC is proud of this accomplishment and wishes him all the best!**



*Mr. Vijay Kumar with Brigadier General Ghulam Heider, Director Information Communication Technology, Afghan National Police (Left) and COL Sardar, Deputy Director, Information Communication and Technology, Afghan National Police (Right)*

## **Ganesh Pooja on July 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011 Chinmaya Somnath - “Our Children Our Future”**

*Submitted by Sri Gopalakrishna*

### **Background:**

It has been over two decades since Chinmaya Mission was established in Washington DC. In 2009, land was purchased for a facility in Virginia to support the growing demand in the community for the vibrant Bala Vihar program and the Vedantic knowledge program for adults. Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda named the facility Chinmaya Somnath after the famous Shiva temple in Gujarat. When complete, the facility will effectively deliver a range of Chinmaya Mission programs to the community (equipped with) a 600 seat auditorium, over twenty classrooms, shrine for Lord Shiva and Gurudev, a fully-equipped kitchen and dining area, over 200 parking spaces in the first phase, bookstore, and Acharya rooms. The project is being funded through a combination of cash-on-hand, bank loan, as well as loans and contributions from Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center (CMWRC) congregation members and well-wishers, and is expected to be completed by late 2012.

A Bhoomi Puja was performed in January 2010. After another two years of planning, design, county approvals and many challenges, we finally received approval in mid-July 2011 from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to begin site work. This marks a major milestone for the three hundred and fifty Chinmaya Mission families in Northern Virginia.

### **Ganesha Pooja on July 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011 to mark commencement of site work:**

Volunteers immediately began working in earnest on preparations for a grand Ganesh Pooja on July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2011 at the site in Chantilly VA, to mark the commencement of site preparation work. Over 100 members and well-wishers of CMWRC attended the pooja, in the presence of our beloved Swami Dheerananda, and several Mission Acharyas. Founding members and families represented all five CMWRC chapters - Dulles, Springfield, Silver Spring, Frederick and Richmond.

On the auspicious morning of the function, several earnest and excited volunteers gathered at the site early to put up the tents, banners, balloons and chairs for the function, braving what was already shaping up to be an extremely hot day. But the oppressive weather did not dampen the spirit or smiles of those who came, colorfully, but comfortably dressed for the weather, to be a part of the celebration of this significant Chinmaya Somnath milestone.

The atmosphere was soothing and filled with a sense of family, unity and bhakti, with the melodious chanting of Sanskrit mantras by the Vedic Purohits and Yajamans performing the Pooja. Overall there was a clear sense of purpose among those present to see the Chinmaya Somnath project to a successful and timely completion. We also felt that the thoughts and well wishes of those who could not attend the function were with us on that day.

Our heartfelt thanks to the numerous volunteers who worked tirelessly to provide the attendees a comfortable setting for the event, including the priceless shade of tents on an exceptionally hot day, plenty of refreshingly cold water, lemonade and even a traditional buttermilk drink, not to mention a wonderful sound system powered by a car battery with the help of an inverter.

Swamiji's message was simple and poignant. When requested for his address, he replied simply with a twinkle in his eyes: "4300 Pleasant Valley Road, Chantilly", the address for Chinmaya Somnath. He urged us all to regularly drive by the site and monitor progress on the construction of our "new home", as well as that of generations to come in Virginia. Construction is expected to start in few months upon approval of the Chinmaya Somnath facility plans by Fairfax County.

Pictures can express a thousand words, so here are some photographs from the event:



## Hiking the C&O Trail with Swami Ishwarananda

*Submitted by Koman Nambiar*

We were blessed with Swami Ishwarananda setting aside a number of days to be with us at Frederick Chapter, MD, for a workshop and a three day yagna in July. The problem before us was how to keep Swamiji fully engaged and entertained during his down time. So we began by filling his schedule with bhikshas - that was a relief. But, more time was left, so we still faced the conundrum as to how to entertain a person such as the Swamiji. While we were pondering this thought Swamiji suggested that we go for a hike. This was something we could handle. Frederick County, Maryland and the adjoining areas have one of the best hiking trails in the country. The new dilemma confronting us was the selecting a hiking trail. As you all know Swamiji is a resident of California, but also of the skies. Why the skies you may ask? One of the interesting facts about Swamiji's routine we discovered was that Swamiji spends about 50% of his time out of State of California, lecturing and tending to other Mission business, and so he is often airborne! We decided to pick a trail with water as the main element as we felt Swamiji would enjoy that one element that is scarce in Southern California, scarce until the ingenuity of engineers diverted an adequate supply of water from the Colorado river to make the Southern California desert bloom.

We started in the morning at about nine o'clock and arrived at the starting point of our hike, about 2 ½ mile from historic Harper's Ferry, West Virginia on the Chesapeake & Ohio (C&O) Trail. This is a point where the Appalachian Trail (Maine to Georgia) blends into the C & O Trail and passes through the town of Harper's Ferry. The trail was formerly the path on which mules and horses would tow barges along the canal by the Potomac river during the 1831- 1924 time period. The canal gave way to the more efficient railroads of the Baltimore & Ohio (B & O) railroad company. There were six others on this hike with Swamiji and one of them was Rohini, from the Frederick Tapovanam Class who happened to be celebrating her 14<sup>th</sup> birthday. On our drive to the trailhead, she was blessed by Swamiji leading all of us in the birthday song written & composed by Guruji - "Janma Dinam Idam."

The hike started at mile 58 of the 184 mile trail and we welcomed the shade from the dense canopy of trees sheltering us from the hot mid-day July sun. The cool breeze coming across the Potomac river also swirled around us gently making our hike extremely comfortable. Chatting with Swamiji and walking at a leisurely pace, we arrived at the bridge over the Potomac river at Harper's Ferry that links Maryland to West Virginia. After crossing we took in the beautiful view of the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers. We were surrounded by the river, rocky cliffs and the town of Harper's Ferry. The sign in front of us depicted our location, half way along the 2078 mile long Appalachian Trail that starts in Maine and ends in Georgia. On seeing the sign Swamiji exclaimed that we must plan to do the whole length of the trail sometime or at least a 100 mile segment for starters! Most in our troop developed pains in their joints just hearing Swamiji! Our time at this beautiful location where HE paints the jagat as his work of art was limited as we had to rush back, completing our 5 mile walk so that Swamiji could attend the lunch biksha prepared by fellow chapter member families.

Thank you Swamiji for getting us out to appreciate the beauty around us!





*The confluence of the Potomac & Shenandoah rivers. Allahabad please take note-another sangam here.*



*Relaxing in the arms of Nature can be a lot of fun! Swamiji, Koman, Suneethy, Sukanya & Sathya.*



*Border crossing alongside the railroad bridge on the Potomac. Swamiji walks over from West Virginia into Maryland*



*Swamiji, strides forward at Mile 58 on the C&O Trail.*



*Maine is 1165 miles NE and Georgia is 1013 miles SW. Rohini smiles, undaunted!*



*Are we going round in a circle? Swamiji consults with Janaki & her expert navigators.*

Photos provided by B. K. Sathyanarayana



## Tribute To Vilasiniji

*Sethuraman Balan*

*CMWRC Secretary*

*{Editor's Note: This tribute from Balanji to Vilasiniji was read out on Aug 27<sup>th</sup> during Bala Vihar Teacher Retreat at Chinmayam, as the Bala Vihar teachers and coordinators prepared for 2011/12 Bala Vihar Year}*

I wish I am here personally to express my deep sense of appreciation for the invaluable services rendered by Vilasiniji to the Mission for such a long time. She looks young as ever with an ever smiling face, but has served the Mission for decades. Having served him directly for a few years, She has the personal blessings of Gurudev and you can see these easily in her. She is an institution by herself in the Mission. She brings with her the wisdom of Vedantic knowledge and objectivity of western traditions. Her views and advice are highly regarded not only in this area but also at the national level at the Chinmaya Mission West. Gentle, understanding and practical, She has an excellent style of dealing with complex issues. She is a great listener and never forces her views, but at the same time is quite effective. Whenever we faced challenges in our Mission, whether on policies or on personalities, it is she whom we run to first. Personally I have gone to her many times in such circumstances and I see immediately the light in the tunnel.

I don't have to tell you how much she has done for the Bala Vihar program. She is the architect of this program and has nurtured it all the way to its current growth.

I would like to share with you one incident about the power of her personality. It was at one of Gurudev's camps several years ago. Before the camp started, all the organizers were very tense about children's program, logistics and other issues. When she came with a smiling face and a nodding head, chatted with us here and there for a few minutes and went round with friendly suggestions, the whole atmosphere changed. In a few minutes, the whole youth group flocked around her, inspired. That is the Power of her personality.

Vilasiniji, I know you are not leaving us. You may not be available full time as you were before and will be on travel status. However, I am sure we can always rely on your wisdom whenever we need.

With all the best wishes in whatever you are planning to do in the future.

Hari OM!



## Frederick Summer Camp

*Submitted by Devi Ramaseshan*

*This summer, a week long summer camp for children was organized in Frederick, MD. Children and parents enjoyed participating in the session for three hours every day. Many devoted and passionate sevaks volunteered to do different and interesting activities that included reading and listening to stories, chanting slokas, yoga, music and craft classes.*



*Three cheers to the students, parents and sevaks who made this camp a grand success. Kids enthusiastically engaged in an arts and craft activity called "Pillars of Hinduism". They traced their hand on a newspaper and labeled each finger as Ahimsa, Dharma, Karma, Prema and Shanthi.*

## Chinmaya Mission Mahasamadhi Camp 2011

*Nandini Kishore*

*Chinmayam, Silver Spring*

This year, the annual Chinmaya Mahasamadhi Aradhana Camp was held in Chicago from July 29<sup>th</sup> to August 3<sup>rd</sup>. I enjoyed it immensely, from the discussions, lectures, magic shows and especially all the friends I made, this camp was one that I will never forget.

The discussions and lectures held by Acharya Vivekji, as usual, were very inspiring to me. There were many topics that we, as 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders covered with the guidance of Acharya Vivekji. The one that was most interesting to me was “Knowledge and Wisdom”. This topic appeals to me because as I was growing up “knowledge” and “wisdom” were always synonyms, used interchangeably.

When the topic of “Knowledge and Wisdom” was first introduced, we were told to come up with words that described each. For Knowledge common words and phrases were “smart,” “knows a lot” and “good grades.” With wisdom people thought of “wise,” “old,” and “experienced. Only after we were told to differentiate the two, was it clear to us that the two are related but different. Our definitions lead us to the right path. We learned that knowledge is “gained by reading scriptures or by listening to the teacher who expounds on the intricacies of the scriptures.” In other words, knowledge is gained through learning like we all do in our everyday lives whether at school, work or just out on the streets. The only catch is, the one who is receiving this knowledge may not understand or follow what they have learned. Wisdom on the other hand is “discovered by putting knowledge to practice.” We learned that knowledge is like undigested food. When food isn’t digested and assimilated by the body, it doesn’t add growth but causes harm to the body. This





*Acharya Vivekji, Amol Mehta, Brni Arpitaji, Vinay Mallikarjun, Vani Ravichandran, Nandini Kishore, Nina Beri and Anil Kishore at Mahasamadhi Camp in Chicago.*

relates to the fact that simple intellectual Knowledge by itself doesn't help a person grow, but it creates "personality distortion." This knowledge needs to be transformed into wisdom to make a person complete and holy instead of arrogant and unruly. All in all, wisdom makes a person master of the mind and senses. When knowledge is turned into wisdom, it has the power to release a person of all sins committed in several births. Therefore becomes the quote, "Knowledge talks and Wisdom listens." Knowledge can go in one ear and out the other, but wisdom is what absorbs and applies what is learned therefore creating a spiritual and holy person.

\* \* \*

## Lord Let Me Sink ..

*Aziza Meer*

*Sink into the deep blue waters  
To the very bottom  
No waves, no ripples  
Shanthi, Shanthi, Shanthi  
Peace, Peace, Peace*

*Not asking to swim  
Or to wade the waves  
Not discouraged  
Not disappointed*

*In the still waters of the deep  
I am an empty shell  
A bare outline  
Not there*

*Not feeling kindness  
Not feeling love  
Not feeling motivation  
Not acting*

*No good thoughts  
No bad thoughts  
No good efforts  
No bad efforts*

*Blank  
Sweet*

*Nothing*

*Lots of joy*

*All work done*

*Please let me stay  
Sunk...*

## Reflections & Travelogue: Destinations in Uttarakhand, India

*Krishnan and Kowtha Family*

### Mother Ganga

*Deepa Krishnan*

*This summer, we went with some friends on a pilgrimage and followed the trail of Mother Ganga through the Himalayan mountains. The thunderous voice, the cool touch and the inspiring beauty of Mother Ganga, left us all breathless.*

Mother Ganga,  
You flow over rocks and boulders,  
In silent determination,  
Overcoming,  
Just to comfort,  
The poor, the lowly, the sinful,  
With your compassionate touch.

Har, Har Gange,  
Flames, fragrance and flowers,  
Ganga Arati,  
In the overflowing Ghats of Haridwar,  
On the serene steps of Sivananda Kutir,  
You, indeed, are the Gateway to God.

O mighty Bhagirathi,  
You leave your abode,  
In the Himalayas,  
From glacial Gaumukh to sacred Gangotri,  
And find your way down,  
To mere mortal plains,  
With your roaring, gushing fervor.

O graceful Mandakini,  
From holy snow tipped Kedarnath,

The abode of Lord Shiva and Goddess  
Parvati,  
The Samadhi Shrine of Jagad Guru,  
Adi Shankaracharya,  
You thunder down the mountains,  
With your ever changing names and forms.

O strong, colorful Alaknanada,  
As Lord Badrinarayan,  
Resides in his beautiful abode,  
Between Nar and Narayan mountains,  
You embrace the Lord,  
And emerge, as pure devotion,  
From Self to Supreme Self.

Mother Ganga, you have inspired,  
So many great saints,  
Our Pujya Gurudev, at the footsteps of  
Tapovan Kutir, To descend from the heights  
of spiritual realization,  
And like you, touch us,  
The lost, the undeserving, the blemished,  
And lead us, into prayerful, peaceful, pure  
silence.

## Our Himalayan Yatra Alongside Ganga

*Sitaram Kowtha*

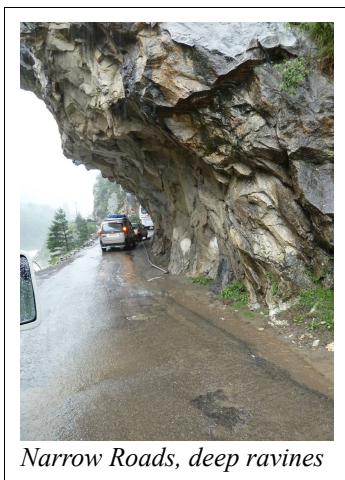
This year our summer vacation plan involved a trip with Krishnan family to the state of Uttarakhand in India, situated northeast to the capital, New Delhi. Once part of a larger state of Uttar Pradesh, this Himalayan state borders with Nepal and Tibet (China), and is home to famous Hindu pilgrimage sites - Haridwar, Rishikesh, Gangotri, Yamunotri, Kedar Nath, Badri Nath, Deva Prayag, as well as Hemkund, a pilgrimage site for the Sikhs.

Our journey started at Delhi by train to Haridwar. It was a 10 day journey that took us from Haridwar to Rishikesh, Uttarakashi, Gangotri, Kedarnath, Badrinath, and then back to Haridwar. Typically a trip to Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath is called "Char Dham" or four abodes. Our trip was to three abodes or "Theen Dham". The trip was arranged by a Haridwar based tour operator who came recommended from a Washington DC area Mission family which had been on a similar yatra before.

The journey in the Himalayas is beautiful. Thousands of people gather each evening at dusk to offer aarati to mother Ganga in Haridwar. The spirit of Ganga - energetic, purposeful, sharing and loving, and tranquil, pervades the environment. It is as if she is blessing the yatri to go ahead and embark on the journey to the Himalayas! At Rishikesh, Ganga flows rapidly and is very wide. Alongside Ganga are many peaceful Ashrams. The journey north and east from Rishikesh takes one to higher and higher elevations. Elevations of 6000 feet are quite common - and these are only foothills! Kedarnath is at 11000 feet elevation. From Kedarnath, one can see the snow peaks at much higher elevations. The journey through the Himalayas are marked by rivers, deep gorges, mountain peaks, amazing greenery, variety of waterfalls, and towns and farmlands along mountain slopes. One view of the Himalayan valley often outdoes the other in beauty! It is in these Himalayas that Sri Adi Sankara attained self-realization, restored the Narayana temple at Badrinath and started the first Sanakara mission at Jyothirmath. It is here that Swami Chinmayananda, under the tutelage of Swami Tapovanji, learned the vedic scriptures at Uttarakashi. It is near Badrinath where Veda Vyasa dictated Mahabharatha to Ganesa, and also where Vyasa is believed to have composed the Srimad Bhagvatam. The journey in the Himalayas is not only a journey to beautiful vistas, but also to a land of spiritual source and quietude.







*Narrow Roads, deep ravines*

The journey in the Himalayas is treacherous and physically tiring. Landslides (mud, rock) are common, more so during the monsoon season. In our journey we witnessed or were slowed by as many as ten landslides. We were fortunate that none of the landslides delayed our travel by more than three hours. It is not uncommon for roads to be closed for days. In addition to landslides, these are mountainous roads - narrow roads (for two-way traffic) with barely enough space for a single vehicle in many spots, poor road surfaces, weak bridges and steep climbs coupled with steep drop offs into valleys below.



*Landslide on our way to Kedarnath, was being cleared*

## Haridwar

We joined thousands of pilgrims and participated in Ganga Aarati at Haridwar. It is a beautiful and peaceful location, despite everyone vying to get a seat closest to the river. As the dusk settled in, the loudspeakers blared with "Jai Gange Maatha" song. Large aarati trays were alit, and crowd joined in singing the Ganga song. After the aarati event was over, each of us lit a small lamp and offered it to the Ganga, and then headed to the Ganga temple for darshan and tilak.



*People gathering as dusk draws near for Ganga Aarati*



*Ganga Aarathi*

## Rishikesh

A town on Ganga with many ashrams on its banks. We visited Swami Sivananda ashram (also known as Divine Life Society). We paid respects to the Sivananda samadhi, and received blessings from Swami Vimalananda for a successful completion of our yatra. The roads to all the dhams start at Rishikesh, and go along the rivers. Our journey took us along Bhagirathi river to Uttar Kashi and Gangotri.



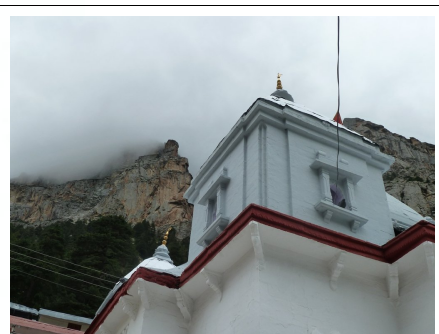
*Swami Sivananda Ashram, Rishikesh*



*Ganga at Rishikesh*

## Uttarkashi and Gangotri

We spent two nights in Uttar Kashi at a tent resort on the banks of Bhagirathi surrounded by mountains, filled with the roar of the river. It was a very beautiful and serene setting. After the first night we went to Gangotri. At Gangotri, we took a dip in Ganga and performed Ganga aarati. Here the river is known as Bhagirathi. The source of the river is the glacier at Gomukh in the Nanda Devi Biosphere, and it is named after Bhagirath who did the penance asking Ganga to come down to earth, and purify his ancestors. Bhagirath had to do yet another penance to Shiva in order to receive Ganga. Gangotri is the spot where Shiva received Ganga. We collected Ganga jal



*Gangotri Temple*



*Bhagirathi River at Uttar Kashi*



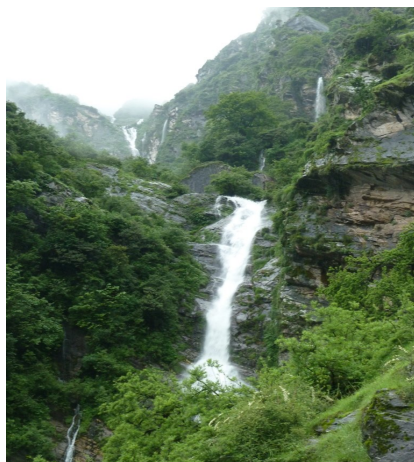
(water) for performing Shiva abhishekam at Kedarnath. The next day, we visited Tapovan Kutiya in Uttar Kashi. We tried to imagine Swami Tapovanji and Puja Gurudev there. We remembered the laddu story and the garden story and observed how far Bhagirathi river was from the Kutiya. We chanted Gita Chapter 12 (thank you, Swamiji) in the prayer hall, and paid a visit to the bookstore. We wished we could stay at least one night at Tapovan Kutiya's beautiful lodging facilities - perhaps next time. Before we continued on our journey we visited Kashi Vishwanath temple and picked up some Bilva Patra for Abhishekam at Kedarnath.



*The Modest Kutir of Tapovan Majaraj has been preserved*

### **Kedarnath**

The Nanda Devi Biosphere is home to many more glaciers, and is the source of Mandakini river. Mandakini flows by Kedarnath, and is cited in the famous Shiva Panchakshari sthotram by Sri Adi Sankara (the verse for 'ma' in namasivaya, starts with Mandakini). We trekked up 14 kilometers from Gauri Kund on foot. During this journey, we experienced heat, humidity, fog, heavy rain, cooling (finger numbing) temperatures and thinning air. We walked along Mandakini and viewed many waterfalls, one more awe-inspiring than the other. We also caught the first sights of towering snow peaks from a distance. It is quite difficult to trek up 14 KM, even though there are rest stops along with way. Other safe options are available - pony and palki. While most trek up on a pony, there are quite a few sannyasis and elderly who do it on foot! It took us 8 hours to make the climb.







*Above the clouds on the trek up to Kedarnath*



*Kedarnath Temple*

At Kedarnath, we stayed overnight, and got up early, at 2AM, to perform Mahabhishekam. We used the Ganga jal from Gangotri and Bilva leaves from Uttar Kashi Vishwanath temple. The jyothirlinga at Kedarnath is a stone idol in the form of a mountain peak. It was amazing that we could sit right in front of the Lord and perform his abhishekam. We were encouraged to touch the idol, bow, and touch our heads against it. At the temple complex there are statues representing the 5 Pandavas, Draupadi and Krishna. Later, we went to a hall near the temple that is dedicated as the samadhi of Sri Adi Sankara. It is believed that Sri Adi Sankara went into a cave nearby and never returned.



*1st glimpse of snow peaks on the trek to Kedarnath*



*Snow Peaks above Kedarnath*

### **Badrinath**

The Nanda Devi Biosphere is also home to a glacier, which is the source of Alaknanda. Alakananda flows by Badrinath. Sri Adi Sankara mentions Alaknanda along with Bhagirathi in the Ganga Sthotram. We stayed overnight at Badrinath and had darshan of Badri Narayan in the evening and again early next morning. After observing abhishekam and alankarana (decoration) of the Lord, we chanted chapter 12 of the Gita in a nearby seating area.



*Alaknanda River on the way to Badrinath*

We also visited a border village next to Badrinath. Here we saw Ganesha Guha (cave) where Mahabharatha was written, Vyasa Guha where Srimad Bhagvatham was written and Saraswathi river.



*Badrinath Temple in the background*



*Saraswathi River near Badrinath*

### **Jyothirmath (currently known as Joshimath)**

It is believed that Sri Adi Sankara did his tapas at this town on the way to Badrinath. It is also here that he wrote the famous Bhashyas. We visited the tree under which he meditated (yes, it still stands today) and the hall where he wrote the Bhashyas is called his 'Gaddi' or seat. A cloth he had worn is in display in this hall. It is also in this town that he established the first of four Jyothirmaths, hence the name of the town. The Lord of Badrinath is worshipped in this town during the winter months.



*Adi Sankara Gaddi (Seat) where he is believed to have written his famous bhashyas*



*Inside - an inscription on the wall: Aham Brahmasmi (I am Brahman)*





*Adi Sankara did Tapas under this tree in Jyothirmath*



*1st Jyothirmath established by Adi Sankar*

### Other Highlights our trip

- Experiencing many rock and mud slides. Luckily for us, we were able to visit all the dhams and keep to our itinerary. After we left Gangotri, the roads there were impassable for two days!
- Driving through the beautiful mountain vistas along Bhagirathi, Mandakini and Alaknanda
- A wild cougar! On our way from Uttar Kashi to Rudra Prayag (for overnight stay), we went through a couple of landslides. A wild cougar (or perhaps, a snow leopard?) crossed our path. We had heard about man eating tigers (from British period) of Rudra Prayag, but we were not expecting to see a live wild cougar.
- Viewing Prayags (confluence of two or more holy rivers) - we viewed Keshav Prayag (Saraswathi and Alaknanda), Vishnu Prayag (Nandakini and Alaknanda), Karna Prayag (Pindari and Alaknanda), Rudrya Prayag (Mandakini and Alaknanda) and Deva Prayag (Alaknanda and Bhagirathi). It is at Deva Prayag that the river is officially called Ganga, as it heads down to Rishikesh, Haridwar and the plains beyond.
- Singing Hanuman Chalisa, Ganga Stotram, Bhajans, Shiva Panchakshari and chanting Vishnu Sahasranama
- Great driver; friendly, informative and resourceful guide; comfortable vehicle, nice places to stay, very tasty food, very enjoyable masala tea, and lots and lots of good luck.
- With the grace of God, we were able to visit all the holy places we had planned, have good darshans at the temples, experience the magnificent vistas of the Himalayas and bring back wonderful memories.



*Deva Prayag - confluence of Alaknanda and Bhagirathi to become Ganga*



# Reflections on Drig Drishya Viveka (Seen, Seer, Discrimination)

## Part 1 of 3

Kiran Varma

*{Editor's Note: Kiran Varma hosted Pujya Gurudev, Swami Chinmayananda, for 10 days in 1985, and followed his teachings ever since. She is a psychotherapist by profession and works with adults with mental illnesses. Recently she attended year-long discourse on 'Drig Drishya Viveka' by our Pujya Swami Dheerananda. In the following article, Kiranji reflects on this beautiful work and what it means to her. Our bookstore carries this title in both book (by Pujya Gururji Swami Tejomayananda) and audio (discourse by Brahmacharini Sumati Chaitanya) formats. Gururji's quote on Drig Drishya Viveka, "The eye is the seer and form (and color) the seen. That (eye) is the seen and mind is (its) seer. The Witness alone is the seer of thoughts in the mind and never the seen."}*

### Background

Drig (Witness), Drishya (Seen) and Vivek (discrimination) is Vedanta in 31 verses. Vivek comes from separating the Seer from the Seen. Then only can we get the correct Drishya (seeing and understanding).

This was a beautiful, creative assignment by our beloved Guru, Swami Dheeranandaji. He explained the text, but how can we make it a part of ourselves? We are not particularly fond of exams but preparing to present this text verbally I found was the only way to assimilate this profound material that we only intellectually grasped.

### Why do we want to seek?

Because of sorrows and pain (not such a bad thing!).

### What are we seeking?

That which gives no sorrow and no pain. We do not know at this point that no sorrow and no pain will give us joy.

### **Why seek a Guru?**

Because this Vidya can only be taught by one - a man of Self Realization - who has direct experience and not just the book knowledge, . We get information from books which is understood through the intellect. But Self Knowledge is not in the books. Just like in worldly activities like music, swimming etc. where after learning from a teacher, we practice it to make it our own Guru cannot experience (swim or sing) for us, we have to apply ourselves to gain experience for ourselves.

### **How to approach the Guru?**

One should approach a Guru with Detachment, a prepared sincere mind that has the intense desire to know, otherwise one will not persist in the endeavor.

### **What to ask a Guru when I don't know what to ask?**

With a prepared mind that is trying to discern the subtler Truths we should ask how to discriminate the Seer from the Seen because the lack of that discrimination is the veil (ignorance) of Maya that causes repeated suffering. It is difficult for the unprepared mind to see the difference because Seen is also part of the Seer and the Seen is mistaken for the Seer. Therefore, inquiry is essential to separate the two.

### **Why not go on with Life without trying to untangle these mysteries? What purpose will this discrimination serve?**

Taking ourselves for something we are not, we suffer endlessly and relentlessly. We are conditioned by our own misconceptions. Therefore the purpose of discrimination is to know our true nature, end sorrow and gain unconditional Bliss. **Mind does not want to undergo the discipline of discrimination** and when we are faced with our own transience - our death, the mind wants to escape that fear of Self annihilation. This play of mind is called **Maya**. We should not yield to its tricks. We need to be consistent in our guided Inquiry, and we will obtain Bliss if we keep pursuing, and this is the promise of the Vedas.

### **Understanding and practicing the Concepts leads to Self Realization through the practice of Meditation.**

Vedanta removes our ignorance that we are the Seer. It helps us see the true Seer (knowledge) by teaching discrimination between the Seer and the Seen. Even though the Sakshi or Consciousness is all pervading, it is not manifest everywhere, but only in the Pure Intellect (Buddhi). The intellect (thoughts) appears conscious on account of the reflection of consciousness in it. Intellect (thoughts) is of 2 kinds: a. Ego and b. Antahkarana or Mind, Intellect and Memory. Mind is thoughts in a state of doubt. Intellect analyzes and decides. Faculty to remember is Memory (Citta).

### **How is this inert form made up of water and minerals enlivened by Consciousness?\_**

The consciousness enlivens the Ego (subtle body) and the identified ego enlivens the Gross Body. The identification of the Ego with the reflection of consciousness is known as the **sentient ego or Jiva**. Gross body does not have the capacity to reflect consciousness. The Gross body gets its sentiency via the Subtle body. **It is at this point that delusion causes the feeling that I am this live body.** By clarifying these concepts, we can free ourselves from the bondage caused by identification. The identification with Sakshi makes the thoughts alive or sentient, this sentiency enlivens the Body. Since the body is limited, the self begins to think 'I am limited too'. A feeling of incompleteness is experienced within and this incompleteness creates a desire to become complete and perfect. These desires create mental agitations, which prompt man to act in order to quieten the agitations.

\* \* \*



**Series – Summary of the Gita**

**Ch. 18 (Moksha Sanyasa Yoga)**  
**The Yoga of Liberation by Renunciation**  
**Part I – Nature of Actions**

*Nilkanth Bhatt, Richmond Chapter*

It is not uncommon for us to come across words such as Sanyasa and Tyaga, while discussing spirituality or religion in context of Hinduism. These words conjure up an image of a monk in our minds and we can hardly relate to them in our day- to- day life. It is our general understanding that living active life of a householder does not allow us to be a Sanyasi or a Tyagi. Bhagavan Krishna says in this chapter that it is not so. Sanyasa and Tyaga are mental attitudes and not physical acts.

Giving up hankering after wealth, long life, fame, respect, power etc., is called Sanyasa and giving up anxiety for the preconceived results for our actions is called Tyaga per the great sages in our culture. It neither requires nor does it recommend giving up actions.

The actions that purify our minds, such as Yagna, Dana and Tapas (Cooperative endeavors, charity and self disciplining austerities) should never be given up but even those actions should be performed without attachment to the desired results. Our daily duties should not be given up because it will be nothing but ignorance to do so. We also should not give up our duties because it is physically inconvenient or painful, such abandonment will be nothing but an act of selfishness. Krishna tells us that obligatory duties must be done merely because they ought to be done, without expecting any results. This giving up of the expectations of the results is called Sattvic Tyaga.

It is indeed impossible for any person to give up all actions, because even to maintain one's body one needs to perform actions. However, a person who has understood the nature of actions with his steady intellect, all of whose doubts are dispelled about the rewards of actions, will not hanker after desired results. Such a person does not hate disagreeable work nor does he remain attached to agreeable work. So we must understand nature of actions.

Sankhya philosophy explains that there are five factors required for accomplishment of any and all actions. They are 1) the body 2) the ego 3) the senses 4) the functions and 5) the presiding deity. To perform any action one requires a physical presence. One cannot perform action when he/she is not there. One also needs to have a sense of agency that I am performing this action; e.g., I am dancing, I am singing, etc. All these actions are possible only if the appropriate senses of action and perception are present to perform the act of seeing, hearing, touching, speaking, etc. One can act only if one has the knowledge about how to act, and finally, all the above is only possible if the presiding deity, "the life principle", is there; in other words only if one is alive. Whatever actions a person performs, with his/her body, speech or mind, whether right or wrong, the above five factors are always there. Therefore, it is incorrect to assume that the self in us is the performer of actions. However, as long as one has the sense of agency that I am the doer, he/she is bound by the results of the actions; but the one who is free from egoistic notion of "I" is free from all actions.

This philosophy of *Sankhya* also describes that all actions have three causes which prompt incitement of actions. They are 1) the knowledge 2) the object of the knowledge and 3) the knower. If one of these three is not present an action cannot take place. Similarly three constituent parts are inherent in each action. They are 1) The instrument of action, 2) The object of action, and 3) the doer of action. Because every action has the above six aspects, and each of these aspects can vary in quality in terms of three fold classification of *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*, we see verity of actions and their results in our life and in the world around us.

Three types of knowledge are described in Bhagavad Geeta as follows. 1) The knowledge (gained through contemplation and meditation) that makes us realize that the one imperishable being pervades all existence and it remains undivided in all seemingly divided beings is *Sattvic Knowledge*. 2) However the knowledge (gained through senses) which makes us see manifold entities, different from each other and varying in kinds, is *Rajasic knowledge*. 3) But the knowledge that clings to a single effect as the whole reality is a *Tamasic knowledge*, as in a case of a proverbial frog in a well, who considers the well to be the entire universe.

Similarly the actions also can be classified in three types. 1) The actions, which are ordained and not prompted by desires, are *Sattvic* actions. 2) But the actions which are performed to satisfy desires and cravings, and performed with egoism are considered *Rajasic* 3) However, the actions that are performed without consideration of their consequences, out of delusion, beyond one's ability, and cause loss and injury, are to be known as *Tamasic*.

Let us hope this guidance in Geeta will make us examine our motives and quality of our actions before we perform them.

\* \* \*

## Jnana Yoga and Self Realization – Part III

*Acharya K. Sadanandaji*

We discussed how or when to proceed from karma yoga to jnaana yoga. It is important to realize there are tripuTi-s or triads involved in both karma and jnaana in terms of their origin or utpatti. In karma the triads involve actor, acting and object of action – when we say Rama killed Ravana, we have the subject Rama who is the actor and object of action is Ravana, it was his karma to get killed by Rama, and the action of killing. Rama is not Ravana, and Rama and Ravana are not the action of killing. By mutual exclusion each limits the other and each is separate from the other. Thus dvaita (or plurality) forms the basis for karma. In the jnaana utpatti also we have tripuTi or three factors – knower, known and knowing. The jnaana prakriya, in terms of praamaata (knower), prameya (known) and pramaana (means of knowing), is extensively discussed in the Critical Analysis of Vedanta paribhAsa (visit <http://www.advaita.org.uk/discourses/knowledge/intro1.htm> ). All are in the realm of dvaita, since by mutual exclusion knower is different from the known and the knowing. There is of course fundamental difference between karma and jnaana as elucidated by Sureswara in his Naishkarmya Siddhi. Karma is not only originated in dvaita but it subsists in dvaita or by dvaita, since any result of karma, which need not be immediate, depends on dvaita only. For example, a ritual performed to go to heaven, will materialize only after one departs from this loka. For some punya and papa, or merits and demerits to fructify, it may take different lokas or many lives. In contrast, jnaana is like a light. As soon as it arises or as it is arising it removes the ignorance, just as the when the light is lighted even though the lighting involves process or tripuTi's and the auxiliary karanaas (as in lighting the candle with a match stick, etc), the result is immediate – the result being the removal of darkness. Karma is purusha tantra, that is, it depends on the performer while jnaana is vastu tantra, it depends on the object. When I hear a lecture, what I listen and understand does not depend on me but on the speaker, but when I decide to take notes, the extent of notes I take depends on me, the kartaa.

The example of lighting of a candle illustrates some important aspects of jnaana. Once I understand by shravanam the nature of the reality that I am sat chit ananda, the ignorance that I am a jiiva with identification with body mind and intellect goes instantaneously. To illustrate this point, an example of 10<sup>th</sup> man-missing story is given. When the teacher points out that you are the missing the tenth man that you are searching for all along, the knowledge is not paroksha or indirect but aparoksha or immediate and direct, since you are that, and not you are going to become that, after some time or after you have taken sanyaasa or after you have become parivraajaka, etc. The leader who was searching for the 10<sup>th</sup> man becomes jiivan muktaH, immediately. Ignorance and knowledge cannot co-exist. To say that other external requirements are need to be fulfilled to fructify the knowledge is against the very nature of jnaana itself. It is like saying I have lighted the candle but since darkness has been there for ages it will take some time for the light to remove the darkness.

What is needed for the jnaana prakriya to take place is that the mind has to be prepared. The reason is obvious – YOU are all the time THAT, even if you do not know. When you do not know you are that, even though you are that, the very teaching that points to the fact should immediately



reveal the true identity one self –unless there are some pratibhandhakas or obstructions covering the light of knowledge, such as I have doubts about the teaching itself, or due to firmly rooted preconceived notions that I cannot accept the teaching even when Vedanta teaches you are that. It is like a prince, who was abducted when he was a child and grow-up like a beggar on the street, does not easily believe that he is the missing prince. One can become a king but not a prince. For one to be a prince, one has to be born to a king. Scripture addresses us – not as other religions do as you sinners - but as - Ye the sons of Immortality! – ShRinvantu veshve amRitasya putraaH! ; In spite of that, we pray – mRityormaa amRitam gamaya – please led us from mortality to immortality, while the scripture is screaming that we are the very sons of immortality.

Although this example of the missing 10<sup>th</sup> man story is quite well known, the operation of the 'tat tvam asi' as mahaavaakya has to be clearly understood. This is the teaching of the scriptures via the teacher to the seeker. For the communication to be successful certain qualifications are necessary. If I enter a Physics class and the teacher is teaching  $E = mc^2$ , even though I know what are E, m and c letters, I would not understand the significance of that teaching. Hence, we have gradations in the mental maturity of the students – broadly as uttama (the highest), madhyama (middle) and adhama (the lowest) adhikaaries or qualified students. Since the teaching is by communication, let us look at a simple statement by a teacher, 'maanasa sarovar is of ten miles long'. This is a statement that involves subject, maanasa sarovar and predicate that describes the qualification of the subject. Of the two, subject and predicate, the sentence makes sense to me only if I know the subject, and does not know the predicate. The sentence will provide me a new knowledge about the subject that I know. If I do not know what maanasa sarovar is, the information provided makes no sense to me; it would be as good as knowing that some gaagaabuubu is ten miles long. Thus if I do not know both the subject and the predicate, the teaching is useless. If I already know both the subject and the predicate, the teaching is redundant. The teaching is most effective only if I know the subject of the statement, maanasa sarovar and do not know the predicate pertaining to it.

Now let us look at – you are the missing 10<sup>th</sup> man – story. The leader is looking for the 10<sup>th</sup> man everywhere, and the leader also knows he himself exists and he is not missing. However, he thinks that the 10<sup>th</sup> man is missing. He has negated the first 9 people as neti neti, that is, first is not the 10<sup>th</sup> man, second is not the 10<sup>th</sup> man, etc., and still searching for the 10<sup>th</sup> man. He cannot find the 10<sup>th</sup> man anywhere that he could see. He was devastated. When the teacher says the 10<sup>th</sup> man exists (asti), his mind is relieved and wants to know whereabouts of the 10<sup>th</sup> man. Then the teacher says, tat tvam asi, 'you are the 10<sup>th</sup> man'. That is, the leader knows the tvam padaartha thoroughly when the teacher points out that 'YOU'. Hence the subject is very much known that he exists and is not missing. The object that one is searching is the missing 10<sup>th</sup> man. Hence the statement by the teacher ' YOU, are the 10<sup>th</sup> man' makes immediate sense to the leader, who knows himself as existent entity and now knows that he himself was the missing 10<sup>th</sup> man. He experiences the 10<sup>th</sup> man immediately and directly – aparokshaanubhuuti. He did not suddenly become the 10<sup>th</sup> man. He was searching for the 10<sup>th</sup> man allover, except where he really has been. He has been the 10<sup>th</sup> man, even when he was searching for the 10<sup>th</sup> man. The seeker himself was the sought. Once he discovers that he himself is the missing 10<sup>th</sup> man who was never missing at any

time, all the seeking for the 10<sup>th</sup> man stops and all the anxieties that arose due to the missing 10<sup>th</sup> man subsided. He has self-realization. Is it an experience or knowledge? Here both are the same. It is not experience-experiencer and experience or knower-known and knowing tripuTi-s, but clear understanding that the object that he is looking for is the very subject himself. The experiencer and the experienced, or knower and the known have become 'as though' one in that identity relation.

Let us apply now to the mahaavaakya – tat tvam asi. This teaching with the identity relation becomes effective when two things are thoroughly known. The first thing is 'tvam padaartha' and the next thing 'tat padaartha'. What is not known is the identity relation between the two. In Gita it was said that the first six chapters predominately deal with tvam padaartha and next six chapters deal with tat padaartha and the remaining six chapters deal with the identity relation, which requires operation of bhaaga tyaaga lakshaNam. Our understanding of the meaning for 'tvam' is different from what 'tvam' that Vedanta refers to in the identity relation. Before we can understand the sentence, we need to understand the subject that is being referenced. Before I understand the significance of the statement 'maanasa sarovar is 10 miles long', I need to know maanasa sarovar that is the subject of the sentence that is being qualified. Hence I need to know first the 'tvam' that is being pointed out in the identity relation.

In principle, one can arrive at the nature of oneself – tvam padaartha, either by the study of the scriptures or even by meditation on the subject – I; the subject, I, must be different from the object - this. That is, one can use anvaya vyatireka logic, or dRik-dRisya viveka, or avasthaatraya, or pancakosha vilaskhaNa analysis or all of the above, to understand that I am not this – I am pure existence consciousness that I am. Essentially I am saakshii, the witnessing consciousness that is different from the witnessed objects that include all the objects in the world, including panca koshas. Clear understanding of who that I am is, constitutes the understanding of tvam padaartham. Clear understanding involves no more confusion of mixing the subject I with the object this, as I am this. That is, the ahankaara gets dissolved in the understanding that I am the witnessing consciousness. That is what is involved in the 'who am I' inquiry.

Up to this point, I can understand who am I, by the enquiry of the subject I, as different from the object, this. To accomplish this, I can use the scriptural teachings, or even sharp intellectual discrimination of subject from object. Meditation can take me up to this point and even to nirvikalpaka samaadhi, where I am with myself without any objectification, since all objects are silenced by sublimating them. That constitutes only the understanding that I am pure witnessing consciousness – the subject in the identity relation. In the maanasa sarovar example, knowing who am I, in the tat tvam asi statement - is like knowing only the subject part that is being referenced in the statement 'maanasa sarovar is 10 miles long'. That knowledge is necessary before understanding the predicate in the sentence 'maanasa sarovar is 10 miles long. Now let us look at the rest of the sentence which is predicated for the maanasa sarovar. It says, 'it is 10 miles long'. The statement now concerns the maanasa sarovar that I know, and what I do not know is that it is 10 miles long. Even though I know now what Maanasa sarovar is, the statement still would not make any sense to me, if I do not know the meanings of the three words used – ten, miles, and long. In relation to tat tvam asi, essentially I should know what is tat padaartha in order to

understand the relation between tvam and tat. In Gita, starting from seventh chapter to all the way to 12 th chapter, the glory of Iswara is described in detail. In 7<sup>th</sup> Ch. Krishna says - bhuumiraapo nalo vayuH .. describing that all the panca bhuutas, from which the whole gross and subtle universe is build, is My lower nature – beyond that and yet which supports all these is my higher prakRiti. I pervade this entire universe in an unmanifested form, all beings are in me – they arise in me, sustained by me and go back into me; nay I am not in them in the sense that their modifications do not affect me – Look at my Vibhuuti or glory, Arjuna – I am the Virat swaruupa that pervade the entire universe, and yet I am beyond the time and space – thus the magnificent description of tat padaartham goes on. This knowledge of tat padaartha can only be obtained via scripture and not by my meditation of who am I. It is only in Vedanta that spells out I am not only an intelligent cause but material and instrumental cause as well. Hence scripture says- yatova imaaani bhuutani jaayante, yena jaatani jiivanti, yat prayantyaabhisam vishanti - from which the whole world arose, by which it is sustained and into which it goes back – I am that gati, bhartha, prabhu and saakshii, the goal, the protector, the Lord and witness of this phenomenal world of plurality - the cause for projection and the cause for annihilation too, prabhavaH palayaH sthaanam, sources for everything, biijam and but yet I am immutable, avyayam. For a student who has clear understanding of both tvam and tat, the mahaavaakya instruction reveals the knowledge of the identity when he has full faith in the teacher's words. The uttama adhikarari, therefore, is one who has clear understanding of both terms tat and tvam and will be able gain the knowledge by listening to the teacher when the teacher says – tat tvam asi. Once I know what is maanasa sarovar and what are the meanings of the three terms ten, miles, and long, the statement that 'maanasa sarovar is ten miles long' makes immediate sense. The statement 'maanasa sarovar is ten miles long' is a statement of fact, and is accepted as valid knowledge. This is knowledge of revelation involving the nature of maanasa sarovar, provided I have a faith in the source of revelation; it is not an instruction for any action - to do, not to do, or to do something else. If that information is helpful, then it will be – other wise it is not. In the case of tat tvam asi, it is also knowledge of a fact and the information is helpful as in the case of the 10<sup>th</sup> man story, since all search for what I am longing for ends with that knowledge. In this case it is the very fulfillment of life itself.

If my knowledge is not clear regarding either or both, tvam and tat, then the identity relation is not obvious for the student to accept. Since it is the Vedic statement, it is a statement of fact, the fact becomes factual only when understood correctly what the terms and the identity relation mean. Normally, major problem comes from not understanding the significance of the term 'tvam'. We all know who we are since everybody talks about themselves endlessly, if there are listeners, or at least to themselves in their minds, yet scripture say you are not what you think you are – you are the very subject who has the capacity to think, but not the contents of what you think. You are the witnessing consciousness who is nether waker, nor dreamer nor sleeper, yet in your presence, the waking, dream and deep-sleep states emerge, sustain and dissolve. However, we operate though out our lives, we are as wakers, dreamers and deep-sleepers – while Vedanta says, the truth is you are none of the three. We say we are kartaa, bhoktaa, jnaataa, etc, doer, enjoyer, knower, etc. while Vedanta says you are saakshii chaitanya or witnessing consciousness, which is akartaa, abhoktaa and ajnaata – witnessing consciousness that is non-doer, non-enjoyer and non-knower. All transactions are done at one level and saakshii is the witnessing consciousness of all the transactions. This lack of shift in understanding of the real nature of tvam forms the major hurdle in the spiritual path – hence the emphasis by Bhagavan Ramana to inquire who you are first before



you inquire about the world and the Iswara. Then he says later that ‘.... soham ityasou bhaavanaabhidaa paavanii mata’| saH aham iti – I am He or He is I – that unifying or non-differential understanding of tat and tvam is the most sacred. That saH aham iti bhaavana is the same statement as tat tvam asi declarative statement that comes from mahaavaakya of Vedanta – where all the terms involved have to be clear to understand the identity relation. Isha jiivayoh vishadhii bhidaa, satva bhaavato vastu kevalam – the Iswara He, and jiiva, aham, the difference between the two is only in the costumes each one is wearing, but in their essence they are identical. The identity relation is the essence of all maha vaakyas.

Hence if the Vedanta has not done its job, it is not the problem of Vedanta nor it is the problem of the teacher, but the problem lies in not clearly understanding the terms tat and tvam and the problem in acceptance of the identity relation between the two. There is no self-realization unless this identity relation is understood as a fact. For that only Vedanta is pramaaNaa – hence the statement of Shankara that was quoted before – na yogena na saankhyena karmaNa no na vidyayaa, brahmaatmaikta bhodena mokshaH sidhyati na anyathaa! – only by the understanding the identity relation between self and Brahman, one can gain the supreme – brahma vit aapnoti param – knower of Brahman attains the supreme where knowing Brahman involves the knowledge that I am that Brahman.

Hence depending on my mental preparedness or purity, the teaching can sink in immediately after I am convinced of the validity of the knowledge. The primary obstacle or the pratibandhaka is that the mind is not ready to see the fact as fact. For that only shravaNa and mananam is emphasized. We will address some more obstacles or pratibandhakas that arise inhibiting the awakening of the knowledge.

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