

Chinmaya Smrithi



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

Volume 25, Number 1, January 30, 2015

HAPPY NEW YEAR

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Pujya Swami Dheerananda

Conducted Geeta Jnana Yajna on 'Sthitha Prajna Lakshana' from Geeta Chapter 2, Verses 54-72, at Chinmaya Somnath in December, and joined the congregation on Jan 1 2015 for New Year Day Puja

Calendar and Upcoming Events

Upcoming Events

- Maha Shivaratri – Tue Feb 17, 2015
- Annual Geeta Chanting Competition, locally at each chapter – March 21/22, 2015
- Sri Rama Navami – March 28/28, celebrated during common time
- Hanuman Jayanti – Friday April 3 at CHINMAYAM
- Silver Spring Chapter Spring Break – April 4/5 Weekend – No Bala Vihar Classes
- Spiritual Camp with Swamini Vimalananda – April 3-5
- Launch of Global celebration of 100th Birthday of Swami Chinmayananda – May 8, 2015
- Save the Date: Memorial Day Weekend Spiritual Camp by Acharya Sadananda, May 23-24 at CHINMAYAM. Topic: Munikanda II from Brihadaranyaka Upanishad
- Save the Date: 'Understanding Marriage – The Joy of Giving' retreat conducted by Acharya Vilasiniji and Acharya Vivekji at Chinmaya Somnath, May 22-25, 2015

Study Groups

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

Bookstore/Library

- Please contact Sri Vijay Singhji by email at publications@chinmayadc.org to order any books, CDs, DVDs, etc.. Browse online at www.chinmayapublications.com

Next Issue

- Articles for the next regular bi-monthly issue - March 2015, are due by March 1, 2015
- Email submissions to smrithi-editor@chinmayadc.org. Submission instructions at www.chinmayadc.org.

Useful Links:

CMWRC – Washington Regional Center www.chinmayadc.org

Central Chinmaya Mission Trust www.chinmayamission.com

Chinmaya Mission West www.chinmayamission.org

Chinmaya International Foundation, E-Vedanta Courses www.chinfo.org

Washington DC – Chantilly VA Chapter website www.chinmayasomnath.org

Washington DC – Frederick MD Chapter website www.chinmayafrederick.org

Washington DC – Richmond VA Chapter website www.chinmayadc.org/ActivitiesRichmond.htm

Please Note

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

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



From top to bottom:
Bala Vihar students celebrate
Makara Sankranti;
Swami Dheerananda listens as;
Swami Siddhananda sings bhajans;
Srimati Pramodini Rao sings with
Bala Vihar Students

Collage by Nishant Carr

News, Notes and Flyers

CMWRC Events Held

- Swami Siddhananda, Chinmaya Mission Philadelphia, conducted Bhajan Sandhya at CHINMAYAM and Chinmaya Somnath Nov 22/23 weekend.
- Geeta and Tapovan Jayanti prayer and celebration was held at all chapter on December 6/7 weekend. See Event Summary.
- Geeta Jnana Yajna on 'Sthita Prajna Lakshana' by Pujya Swami Dheeranandaji at Chinmaya Somnath during last week in December. See Event Summary
- New Year Day 2015 Puja and Celebration was held at CHINMAYAM and Chinmaya Somnath. See Event Summary.

Announcements

- Videos, Slide-Show, Photographs and Audio are posted from the CMWRC events from October 2014 through January 2015. They can be found on the website (www.chinmayadc.org) under Video, Picture Album and Audio Pages
 - Video Page: Swami Siddhananda Bhajan Sandhya; Slide-Shows from Pujya Swamiji Geeta Jnana Yajna and New Year Day puja at Chinmaya Somnath; Pujya Swamiji Deepavali message; Srimati Pramodini Rao's devotional concert video from the Annual Fund Raiser event.
 - Picture Albums Page: New Year's Day puja and celebration at CHINMAYAM; Pictures from Annual Fund-raiser
 - Audio Page: Pujya Swamiji's Geeta Jnana Yajna under Swamiji's page; Swami Ramakrishnanandaji's talk on values; and Sri D.C.Raoji's message on New Year's Day
- 'Siva Sankpa Suktam' DVDs from Pujya Guruji, Swami Tejomayananda, Jnana Yajna are available for sale. It is a single DVD, priced at \$15.00, and available at CMWRC bookstores.
- 2015 Rachana - Creative Composition – Contest is underway. See Flyer.
- Register for Geeta Chanting. Competition is around the corner. See Flyer.
 - Regional Geeta Chanting competition, May 16 at Chinmaya Somnath, May 17 at CHINMAYAM
 - Winners compete in Nationals at CM Chicago in September
- Save the Date
 - Swamini Vimalananda Spiritual Camp, April 3-5
 - Acharya Sadananda Spiritual Camp, Memorial Day Weekend, May 23-24 at CHINMAYAM
 - 'Understanding Marriage – The Joy of Giving', Retreat conducted by Acharya Vilasiniji and Acharya Vivekji, May 22-25, at Chinmaya Somnath. See Flyer

Current/Upcoming CMWRC Events

- MahaShivaratri on February 17. Puja and celebrations planned for CHINMAYAM and Chinmaya Somnath
- Geeta Chanting Competition, March 21/22 Weekend, locally at all chapters



~Invitation to Participate~ Creative Contest 'Rachana' for All Age Groups 2014-2015

Dear Chinmaya Families and Friends,

CMWRC-CHINMAYAM is pleased to offer 'Rachana' creative contest for the second year. It is a forum to foster and encourage creative expression within all age groups with the added flexibility of multi-media options. The optional categories include Essays, Poems, Artwork, Photography, Audio and Video. It is open to everyone--CMWRC member families, friends and non-members. Registration will be free for 2014-2015. The submissions must adhere to the age-specific themes and topics in six different levels as listed below.

We hope you enjoy the process of unfolding your latent creativity and find it rewarding.

Important Notes:

Please submit one [Registration Form](#) per Submission per [E-mail](#)

Please read the following guidelines and instructions carefully prior to submitting the entries. Please send all entries and inquiries to Vandana Bapna at Rachana@chinmayadc.org

CHECKLIST	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>REGISTRATION FORM</u> - One per SUBMISSION per EMAIL
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION ENTRY</u> - One per Email with Subject Line : Rachana Submission <u>Submission Categories:</u> (Essay / Poem / Artwork / Photography / Audio-Video)

	Note: See instructions below for submitting e-mailed and Original Artwork
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>EMAILED</u> REGISTRATION FORM AND SUBMISSION TO RACHANA@CHINMAYADC.ORG
<p>All submissions are to be anonymous -Avoid personal information in the entries so that Judges are not able to identify the participant.</p> <p>Only One Submission is accepted per Participant in the choice of their creative category. Family members must submit each entry as a separate e-mail submission</p> <p>Six Age Groups: Grade 1-3, Grade 4-6, Grade 7-9, Grade 10-12, College to 29 years Youth, 29 years+ Adults</p> <p>Registration is free for 2014-2015</p> <p>Submission Deadline: Feb 18, 2015.</p> <p>Award Ceremony in All Three Sessions on May 2nd-3rd, 2015: Certificates will be awarded to all participants during common time in all the three sessions at Chinmayam.</p>	

Groups and Themes

Group 1: Young Children (grade 1-3)

My favorite God ...one of them wishes to spend a day with you. What would you do? Where would you take him? What would you show him? Who would you want him to meet? What would you talk about?

Group 2: Children (grade 4-6) - My favorite saint and why or Thank you for my family

Group 3: Children (grade 7-9) - My favorite scriptural hero/heroine or My favorite story at Bala Vihar and why

Group 4: High school (grades 10-12) - Most valuable lessons I have learnt in Bala Vihar or

Gratitude: How do you apply it daily? Why is it important? How does it help you? Give examples from your life (e.g., your daily routine, decisions and choices, how it helps dealing with challenges and conflict, how do you express thankfulness, etc.) .

Group 5: CHYKs (college up to 29 years) - Applying Vedanta teachings in my daily life

Group 6: Adults (29 +) - My favorite Gita verse and why or Sadhana inspired by Satsang at Chinmaya Mission.

[CLICK HERE](#) to View Registration Guidelines, Submission Formats and Additional Details.

Unto Sri Gurudev!

'Chinmayam Team'



~Om Namah Shivaya~

Dear Chinmaya Families and Friends,

Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center extends a warm invitation to participate in the auspicious Maha Shivaratri 2015 celebrations amidst Chinmaya families. The event will be held at Chinmayam on Tuesday, 17th February 2015. Please mark the date in your calendars. The detailed agenda is outlined below.

Programs are offered in early morning and for the entire evening until midnight. Bala Vihar & Arts Teachers are invited to sign-up classes to offer Bhajans or programs on Lord Shiva. Members may sign-up to offer Pooja and Bhajans. In addition, volunteers are needed to help with Decorations, Pooja set-up and Mahaprasad. See details below if you would like to sign-up and participate.

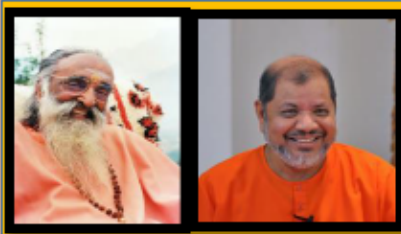
Maha Shivaratri Agenda

Tuesday, February 17, 2015 - Chinmayam, Silver Spring

5:00-7:00 a.m.	Shiva Manasa Puja, morning	8:30-8:45 p.m.	Nirvana Skatakam
4:30-6:15 p.m.	Shiva Manasa Puja, early evening	8:45-9:30 p.m.	Maha Prasad
6:30-7:00 p.m.	Stotra Parayanam - Chinmayam Shloka Class	9:30-10:15 p.m.	Bhajans Offered by Members
7:00-7:25 p.m.	Lord Jagadeeshwara Puja*	10:30-11:50 p.m.	Bhajans and Naama Japa
7:30-8:10 p.m.	Bala Vihar Classes Programs**	11:50-12:05 a.m.	Conch Blowing, Silence and Maha Arati
8:15-8:30 p.m.	Dance on Lord Shiva		

*Interested families, give your name to Session Coordinator

**Interested Bala Vihar teachers / students, inform Session Coordinator



Chinmaya Mission® Washington Regional Center

www.chinmayadc.org www.chinmayasomnath.org www.chinmayafrederick.org



2015 Geeta Chanting Competition

“Chant Geeta, Enchant Krishna, Celebrate Chinmaya”



EVERYONE IS INVITED

To participate in 2015 Chapter Competition

CHILD – YOUTH – ADULT

And even those afar can participate by Writing (Reflection)

Geeta Chapter 15 - Purushottama Yoga - Verses 1-20

Chinmaya Mission Washington DC center is pleased to announce the 2015 Geeta Chanting Competition. The aim of Geeta Chanting is to encourage everyone to chant, study and live the essence of the Upanishadic knowledge that Sri Krishna imparted to Arjuna. It is particularly poignant in 2015 as Chinmaya Mission world-wide begins celebrations towards Pujya Gurudev, Swami Chinmayananda, birth centenary in May 2016. Swami Chinmayananda is synonymous with Geeta Jnana Yajna. He carried the message of the Geeta to kindle the knowledge of the Self to millions world-wide!

Please visit <http://geetachanting.cmwrc.org> for more information, registration, and practice materials

2015 CHAPTER COMPETITION

Dates:

- March 21/22 2015

Locations:

- Chinmayam (Silver Spring MD)
- Chinmaya Somnath (Chantilly, VA)
- Chinmaya Frederick (Urbana, MD)

Participation Categories

- Memory
- Memory & Comprehension
- Reading
- Reading & Comprehension
- Writing (Reflection)

2015 GLOBAL COMPETITION

Regional

- Eligibility - Children with Diamond Star or Diamond Plus award in Memory category during Chapter Competition, & up to 15 Years of age as of Jan 1 2015
- May 16 at Chinmaya Somnath & May 17 at Chinmayam

National

- Eligibility - Winners of Regional Competition
- September 5/6 at Chinmaya Badri, Chicago

Global

- Eligibility - Winners of USA National Competition
- December 25 at Chinmya Vibhooti, Pune, India

**CHINMAYA MISSION® WASHINGTON REGIONAL CENTER
PRESENTS...**

Understanding Marriage: The Joy of Giving

**MEMORIAL DAY
WEEKEND
2015**

**RESIDENTIAL
RETREAT**

CHANTILLY, VA



Acharya
Vilasiniji



Acharya
Vivekji



Chinmaya Somnath May 22nd, 2015 - May 25th, 2015

Understanding Marriage: The Joy of Giving is a unique weekend residential retreat offered to singles and couples by Chinmaya Somnath in Chantilly, VA. Acharya Vilasiniji and Acharya Vivekji will present Vedanta's wisdom as a guide to enhance harmony and happiness in a marriage. Discourses, Discussions and Activities will fill the weekend. Participants should be between the ages of 25-55, or one partner should be within the age limit. Participants can also stay for a discounted rate at a nearby hotel and all meals will be provided. Keep an eye out for more details coming soon!

For More Information:

CONTACT - UNDERSTANDINGMARRIAGE@CHINMAYADC.ORG

VISIT- [HTTP://TINYURL.COM/UNDERSTANDINGMARRIAGE](http://tinyurl.com/understandingmarriage)



Chinmaya Mission West
welcomes you to

VEDANTA CAMP 2015

Conducted by



His Holiness Swami Tejomayananda

Head of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide



June 15-21, 2015

'Sāndeepany Krishnālaya' Ashram, Piercy, Northern California

Study Text: *Shrī Rāma Gītā*

Arrive: Monday, June 15

Depart: Monday, June 22

The ashram, CMW's headquarters and retreat center, is situated in the serene Redwoods and is a four-hour drive north of San Francisco. This camp is for adults only, and is not a family camp. Seats are limited and get filled quickly, so early registration is recommended.

Registration includes lodging and boarding, and excludes transportation: \$900 per person.

Visit krishnalaya.org/index.php/vedanta-camp-2015 to view details and register.



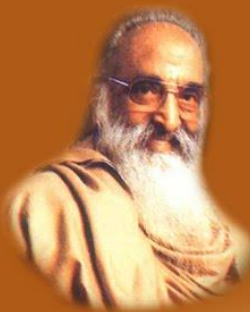
krishnalaya.org

krishnalaya@chinmayamission.org, (707) 207-5011

Chinmaya Mission West, P.O. Box 129, Piercy, CA 95587



22nd Mahasamadhi Family Camp New Jersey 2015



July 29th to August 3rd 2015



Upanishad ganga

Ancient wisdom, limitless strength

With

H.H. Swami Tejomayananda

H.H. Swami Swaroopananda

and Acharyas from North America

Camp Highlights:

- Chinmaya Vishwa, bird's eye view of Chinmaya Movement
- Chinmaya Jeevan Darshan
- Meditation / Yoga
- Special Balavihar / Chyk / Sethukari program
- Sumptuous vegetarian food

Location:

DoubleTree by Hilton
Somerset, NJ 08873



Chinmaya Mission Tri-State Center

Our Acharyas: H.H. Swami Shantananda
H.H. Swami Siddhananda

For further information

Write to: msc2015@chinmayavrindavan.org

Website: www.chinmayavrindavan.org

Ph: 609-655-0404

Come discover yourSelf...!!

Event Summary: New Year Day 2015 at CHINMAYAM

Varsha Krishnan

Many of us got together on New Year's Eve to celebrate the New Year at home with friends and family, and watched the ball drop in New York City. On New Year's Day, many Chinmaya Mission families continued the festivities by attending Puja and Satsang at Chinmaya Mission.

The day started with Vishnu Sahasranamam, the chanting of the 1008 names of Lord Maha Vishnu. This was followed by Guru Paduka Puja. The two families at the front offered petals to the Holy sandals of Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda. After this, we all chanted the 108 names of Swami Chinmayananda, and then was the Chinmaya Aarti. Next, all the children, and CHYKs that had come shared their new year's resolutions with everybody. Not procrastinating, appreciating the little things in life, doing Saadhna every day, and being more introspective were a few of the resolutions, which inspired everyone.

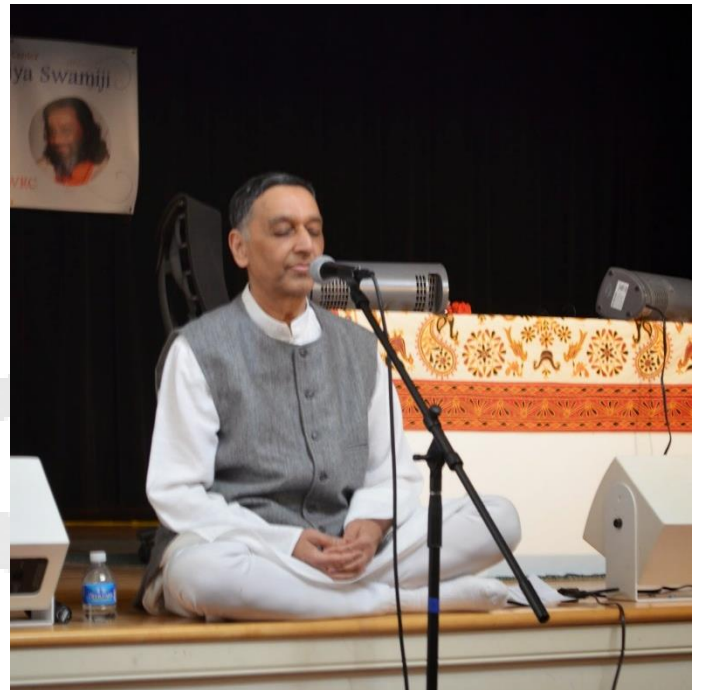
After the resolutions, was the most exciting part of the celebrations – the Mahabharata Jeopardy. Siri Neerchal and Nagaraj uncle created the questions and Chetana auntie was the quiz master. Siri also kept score. The congregation was divided into five groups. Categories included: The Bad Seed; The Cowherd; The Princess; The Grandsire; and The Author. Everyone was excited and many become competitive. The winning question was “Who was Janamejaya”. Can you come up with some answers?

Following the jeopardy, Dr. D. C. Rao made remarks and gave us an inspiring New Year's message. He talked about how God is everywhere and encouraged us to look for the divine grace even in small things –from flowers in the garden, to our families and friends.

I look forward to another year at Chinmaya Mission. Wishing everyone a very happy 2015!







New Year Puja and Celebration at Chinmaya Somnath

Sri Gopalakrishna

The January 1st Puja was beautiful, and was attended by around 200 adults and children. Mahaprasad was served to all who attended after the program. We were fortunate to have Swamiji in VA with us for the New Year Guru Paduka Puja and Vishnu Sahasranamavali Puja. The holy water from the Paduka Puja was sprinkled on the land by the Acharyas and participants. The trailer 'On a Quest' was shown to the audience after the Puja. We concluded the Puja with the full Chinmaya Somnath Vedic Arati that is done each evening at Chinmaya Somnath.

All Bhiksha spots were filled and some were double-booked. Many had the opportunity to spend time with Swamiji and Vijay ji.

Vinod and Vibha Kulkarni did a splendid job hosting and taking care of Swamiji and our sincere thanks to them. Many thanks to Anant Somalwar and Srihari Edara who coordinated aspects of the Yajna, Jaya Rajagopal for child-care, Darshana Somalwar to coordinate the bhikshas, Ramesh Golla and Shyam Harohalli for the audio support, Jay Kalathil and Rajaram for video support, Sriram for facility support, Sulekha and Shobha along with other sevaks for cooking for over 200 people on January 1st, and Vijay ji for his presence and support during the entire program. Many other sevaks helped in various capacities.





Event Summary: Geeta Jnana Yajna by Swami Dheerananda

Sri Gopalakrishna

CMWRC recently concluded a week long Jnana Yajna by Pujya Swami Dheerananda in Virginia during the last week of December. The text, Sthita Prajna Lakshana (Gita Ch 2, Vs 54-72) was covered in part by Pujya Swamiji (the rest will be completed this upcoming December 2015).

A number of children participated daily in reciting the Gita Dhyanam and Gita Chapter 15 each night before Yajna discourses. We concluded each evening with Arati to Sri Chinmaya Somnath, Sri Krishna and Sri Gurudev.

The Yajna was very well-received. We had around 180 adults and around 60 children attend during the weekend and slightly less during the weekdays. Swamiji's presence always serves as an inspiration for the local sevaks, especially those new to Chinmaya Mission. We are grateful to Pujya Swamiji and we hope this tradition continues.





Event Summary: Geeta and Tapovan Jayanti

Sitaram Kowtha

With guidance of Pujya Swamiji, Sri Venkateswanji coordinated Geeta Chanta-a-thon: chanting of all 18 chapters, 701 verses of Srimad Bhagavad Geeta, on December 6, 2014 at CHINMAYAM. A similar event was held at Chinmaya Somnath during the Thanksgiving weekend.

The event started promptly at 3PM with invocation and Geeta Dhyanam. We also chanted Tapovana Shatakam in honor to Tapovan Jayanti. While the audio of Swami Brahmananda Geeta recitation played, about 10-15 members chanted along with their own books. Pujya Swamiji guided the event throughout.

There were two breaks – once at the end of Chapter 5 and again at the end of Chapter 12. The chanting concluded around 7PM with Geeta Mahatmiyam and closing prayers.

One could feel a sense of being recharged spiritually after the event. A grand satsang with Pujya Swamiji, Mother Geeta and fellow members.

Geeta and Tapovan Jayanti was celebrated at common time during Bala Vihar sessions also. Acharya Vilasiniji led the chanting of Tapovana Shatakam. She then gave a discourse on 'Deconstructing Karma Yoga'.



New Year Resolutions

Bala Vihar Children

Meghna Krishnan (Grade 5)

New Years Resolutions are something you can actually do. They should be something reasonable. This year, I have two main Resolutions.

My first resolution has to do with homework. I hope to plan with my parents to prepare for any big test or project. This will help me because I will stay on task and not get distracted. Plus, with the help of my parents, I won't leave anything to the last minute.

My second resolution has to do with praying. This year I hope to finish my homework and have a shower before my Amma lights the lamp. I will be able to pray a little every day.

Jahnvi Kirkire (Grade 6)

1) To think before I say anything. When speaking to someone, we always have to think of what we will reply with, what we will ask, so my new year's resolution is to think before I talk

2) To control down my anger. I often overreact to multiple very small things- and I don't need to. I need to learn to control my temper, and to just relax sometimes. So, my new year's resolution is to control my anger.

Pooja Arvind (Grade 5)

My new year resolution is not to get sick. I will make sure I exercise regularly and stay healthy all year long!

Suraj Arvind (Grade 3)

My new year resolution is to everything I can to have a healthy body, pure mind and a brilliant intellect.

Divya Shastri (Grade 3)

I will try to practice my flute more and also transfer and create new songs to play on the flute

Ananth Shastri (Grade 10)

I will begin thinking about and planning for college

Divya Vydhianathan's (Shivanandam Class - Sat Session)

A New Year's resolution is a goal or goals that you want to accomplish this year that will either make you better person in some way or is just something that will make you happy. For 2015, my New Year's resolution is to become a better swimmer.

Swimming is my all-time favorite sport and I enjoy doing and watching it. I think that I swim well, but I want to improve in speed and accuracy. Some strokes are easy for me to be accurate and quick, but I have difficulty with other strokes in speed and accuracy. I hope to try and accomplish my goal and become a better swimmer.

Govind Mohandas (Grade 3)

Focus

My New Year's Resolution is to focus more because it applies to everything that I do. This will help me get good grades on my report card and I will also understand what I learn better.

At times, I have also been deficient in focusing on cricket. I take a long time to put my pads on so I am usually the last one to bat. I will focus more so that I can put my gear on quickly rather than spending time talking. I have also not been eating very well. I will focus on what I am eating, so I can get value from the food I eat. In Chinmaya mission, during my class, I

sometimes get silly and don't focus. I will make sure that I focus on what is being taught.

All this will help me have a healthy body, pure mind and brilliant intellect, as Swamiji teaches us.

help other people more and be nicer to them. I can get more friends and feel better about myself because of this.

Dakshesh Nimishe (Grade9)

Focus. I chose this word because of my need to focus on one thing at a time, and not let my mind wander into other thoughts when I need to focus on just one thing.

Anisha Sankar (Grade 6)

A New Years resolution is a decision to change for the better in the course of the new year. My 2015 resolution is to stop procrastinating. I tend to procrastinate mainly because I normally spend my free time on anything but homework. Therefore, I finish all my work at the last minute, which is very stressful for me. So, this new year, I am going to put my priorities before everything else so that I can finish my work and then relax. This new year I will stop procrastinating.

Sahaj Kasturi (Grade 3)

Eloquence

Vedanth Yallavi Grade 2)

Pay Attention

Neeharika Yallavi (Grade 6)

Practice Sangeetam every day. Don't want someone to remind me. Want to do it myself.

Shrikar Vasisht (Grade 7)

One of the New Year's resolutions I have is to improve my running speed. I will do this by practicing at home and running outside more. Another resolution is to try to always get straight A's in school. I will do this by studying more for tests and doing them carefully. The third resolution I have is to practice trombone more so I am able to play advanced songs. The fourth resolution I have is to

Swamiji's BalaVihar Common Time Messages

November – December 2014

Usha Konduri

A New Year has arrived, bringing us the chance to start anew again. Swamiji's Common Time messages, if implemented, provide us opportunities to reach higher and better ourselves.

Swamiji got us thinking about this topic in early November by asking how many of us have thoughts that pop up without control. It turns out that a large number of us do not have 'pop-up-blockers', so we often have uncontrolled thoughts which result in uncontrolled words; these may lead to undesirable actions, leading to bad habits, which impact our character and finally, our destiny. Swamiji urged us to learn to design our thoughts, such that we only keep those that are beneficial to us and everyone around us. When unintelligent thoughts pop-up, we should practice thought replacement. What is thought replacement? Replacing a negative thought with a japa thought such as "Om Namah Shivaya" –enables us to elevate our thoughts towards the positive. Thoughts are the only private treasure that each one of us possesses in this world, and it is important that we use our treasure to benefit everyone. Swamiji taught me that by simply controlling my thoughts, so much can improve. I have been trying to control my thoughts according to this in hopes that it will become a habit this New Year.

To celebrate Veterans Day, Swamiji had us chant "Trayambakam Yajamahe" in honor of those who have served the country. The way he lowers the octave with each repetition has a soothing effect on me. Thank you Swamiji.

After Thanksgiving, we were blessed by a visit from Vilasiniji. Additionally, we chanted Tapovanashtakam to honor Swami Tapovan Maharaj, who taught the Geeta to our Gurudev, Swami Chinmayanada. It was a truly beautiful experience.

Later, Swamiji narrated a simple but meaningful story that depicted how teamwork and helping others is principal

for the success of any collective group effort. Two groups of young students, 27 in each team, captained by Shreyas and Preyas respectively, had to take a balloon for each member, blow the balloon up, and write their name on it. The team led by Shreyas followed these directions and put all 27 balloons in Room1 and team lead by Preyas did the same and put their balloons in Room 2. After all the balloons were placed, the rooms were closed. Then the teams were asked to go to their respective rooms, pick up their balloons, and come outside without letting a single balloon pop and with each person carrying the balloon with his or her name on it. The teams were given five minutes to accomplish the task. Time started and Shreyas's team accomplished the task in three and a half minutes while Preyas's team could not complete the task! How did Team Shreyas do this? They quietly walked into Room 1, each student picked up a balloon, saw the name on it and gave it to the person who it belonged to. Team Preyas however, went into Room 2 and each person looked for their own balloon, so 27 people could not complete the task in five minutes. Keeping the "team" in mind is what helped Team Shreyas win the day!

As I write this, I see that we are blessed to have "reset", and restart in this brand new year. Here is wishing everyone a beautiful reset. Hari Om.

New Year Resolutions

CHYK-DC

[Amol Mehta](#) (CHYK and BV teacher)

My resolutions are to work towards a healthy body, pure mind and brilliant intellect.

Healthy Body: Exercise at least 3 times a week.

Pure Mind: Practice Japa at least 4 times a week and read some spiritual literature at least 4 times a week.

Brilliant Intellect: Being more intellectually curious.

[Tarang Bapna](#) (CHYK)

My new year resolution is to put 100% into everything I do.

[Mayank Bapna](#) (CHYK)

I want to work and serve society after graduating. Feel calm and confident in all situations.

[Vinay Mallikaarjun](#) (CHYK coordinator, BV Teacher)

My New Year's resolution is to practice a sadhana every day, whether it be japa, reflecting, or reading one of our sacred texts. I have come to realize that simply coming to Mission once a week is not enough - if I am not applying what I have learnt in all areas of my life, then it is ultimately a waste. Therefore, I resolve to practice the Vedanta that I am learning from the Mission through daily sadhana.

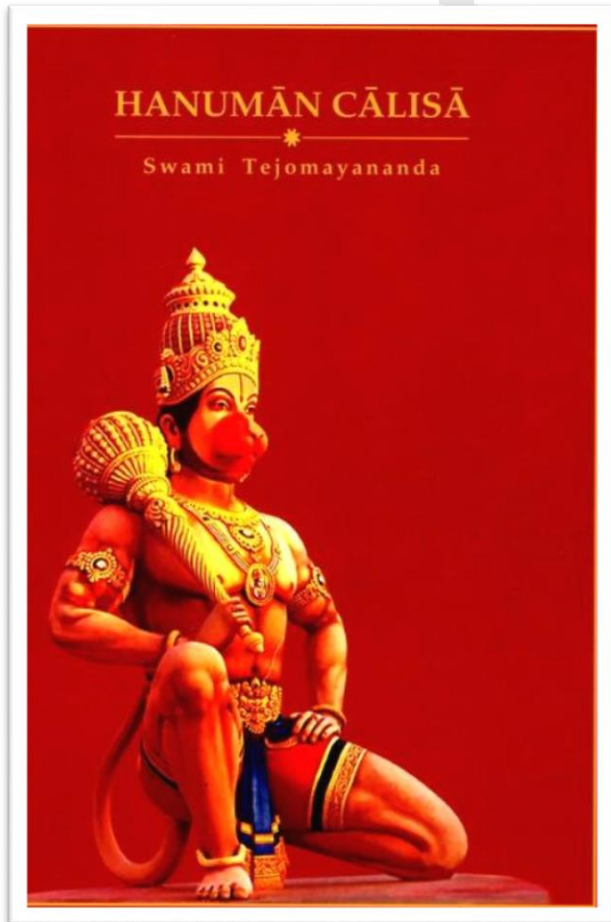
[Keshav Kowtha](#) (CHYK)

Over this next year, I will strive to improve myself as a student. While I will attempt to follow this resolution by improving my studying habits, changing my note taking skills, and getting more organized, I plan to most importantly change my attitude towards studying. I will do this by putting my studies before everything else. I will try to take each assignment as seriously as I would take studying for my finals. With this, I will become a better student.

Who are Hanuman's Parents?

Keshav Kowtha

Last week, I chanted the Hanuman Chalisa five times a day. During this time I used Swami Tejomayananda's text on Hanuman Chalisa. This text, along with the Ramacharitra-manas have inspired me to write about Hanuman, especially about Hanuman's parents.



In the first two lines of the opening doha of the Hanuman Chalisa, Goswami Tulsidas introduces his work by describing the great ability of Sri Raghuvara to bestow the four purusarthas (The four objectives: dharma, artha, kama, moksa). But who is this Sri Raghuvara? Raghuvara refers to the greatest of the Raghu Dynasty. Sri Rama is the one most commonly referred to as Raghuvara. But that is not always the case. Goswami Tulsidas, in the Ayodhya Kanda of his Ramcharita-manas, also refers to Bharata as Raghuvara. But that is not the only other character Tulsidas refers to as Raghuvara. Swami Tejomayananda, in his commentary on the Hanuman

Chalisa, says that the opening doha is actually referring to Sri Hanuman himself. In his explanation, Swami Tejomayananda cites Sri Hanuman and Mother Sita's first meeting in the Ashoka Vana and the meeting between Sri Rama and Sri Hanuman after Sri Hanuman returns to Lanka. In these cases, Sri Rama and Mother Sita refer to Sri Hanuman as their son. This means that Sri Hanuman is Raghuvamsi, of the Raghu Dynasty. He is Sri Rama and Mother Sita's adopted son. But, Swami Tejomayananda remarks, Sri Hanuman gives all of his credit to Sri Rama. They are inseparable. So by invoking Sri Hanuman as Raghuvara, Tulsidas is still invoking Sri Rama as Raghuvara.

There are four other major references to Sri Hanuman's parentage in the Hanuman Chalisa. The most simple of the two to explain are Anjani Putra and Kesari Nandana. Anjani and Kesari are the literal parents of Hanuman. Anjani (or Anjana) means pure intellect. Kesari means lion and so embodies courage and strength. Hanuman inherited these traits from his birth parents. The next interesting reference to Hanuman's background is Pavana-sutha or Pavana Kumara. Pavana, known as Vayu, is the wind god. He is said to have put some of his power into Anjani and Kesari in order for their son, Sri Hanuman, to grow up to serve Sri Rama. Sri Hanuman is thus called Pavana Kumara. But what traits did he gain from Vayu? The first trait he gained was his purity. Vayu is known as a great purifier. Whenever a room is stuffy, you open the window to let the air flow purify the room's atmosphere. So too, Sri Hanuman's presence purifies every location he visits. Also, in his commentary, Swami Tejomayananda contrasted Vayu with Surya and Chandra. The sun and the moon each provide great services. For instance, they each provide light in the day and night respectively. But, we know when they are present and note when they are absent. Vayu, the wind/air, is not so 'loud.' The air serves all living beings continuously and, more importantly, it serves silently. Sri Hanuman inherited these traits from Vayu. Without asking anything in return, Sri Hanuman

continuously served Sri Rama. Sri Hanuman served with humility and devotion. Both Vayu and Hanuman serve without ego.

The last reference to Hanuman's parents in the Hanuman Chalisa is early on, when Sri Hanuman is given the title of Sankara-Suvana. Lord Sankara, or Siva, is said to have also put his power into Sri Hanuman. When Lord Siva heard about Lord Vishnu taking his next Avatar, he too decided to take an Avatar to serve his friend as Sri Hanuman. Swami Tejomayananda says that Lord Shiva decided against taking a form of a family member of Sri Rama. He felt that that might make problems as Sri Rama would hesitate to be served by a family member. And so Lord Shiva took the form of a lower animal, a monkey. And so he passed his tejas to Hanuman. Hanuman is thus called Sankara Suvana and Rudra Avatar. But that didn't stop Sri Rama from praying to Lord Shiva. And so, in the Ramcharitra-manas, in the scene of the building of the bridge, Sri Rama installs a linga on the beach which would soon become known as Rameshwaram. And in a beautiful twist, Lord Shiva answered his prayers immediately- by building the bridge to Lanka as Hanuman with the rest of the Vanara- Sena.

Hanuman received the great traits that makes him who he is from his parents. He is the example of selfless service, like his father Vayu. He is brave, strong, and smart, like his physical parents. He is as great as Lord Shiva and is called Raghuvara like Rama. He is an unquestionable hero and a great devotee.

I will continue to chant the Hanuman Chalisa, and I will continue to study his glories.

CMWRC Vedanta Study Listing, January 2015 Update

MARYLAND CLASSES WITH BAL VIHAR									
No.	NAME OF CENTER	DAY	TIME	TEXT	LOCATION	HOST PHONE	ACHARYA	E-MAIL ADDRESS	PHONE #
1	Chinnmayam	Every Saturday	10:30 - 12:00 N	Bhagavad Gita	Chinnmayam- Vydhinathan	240.695.3302	Swami Dheerananda	swami.dheerananda@gmail.com	301.384.1204
2	Chinnmayam	Every Sunday	10:30 - 12:00 N	Bhagavad Gita	Chinnmayam- Mehul Mehta	301.351.1552	Swami Dheerananda	swami.dheerananda@gmail.com	301.384.1204
3	Chinnmayam	Every Sunday	1:30 - 3:00 PM	Bhagavad Gita	Chinnmayam- Sudesh Nimishe	202.492.4930	Swami Dheerananda	swami.dheerananda@gmail.com	301.384.1204
4	Frederick	Every Sunday	02:30 - 03:30 PM	Bhagavad Gita	Urbana MS- Shiva Vanam	301.874.5796	Sankaran Nayar	smnayar@gmail.com	301.299.9450
MARYLAND VEDANTA CLASSES BY ACHARYAS									
No.	LOCATION	DAY	TIME	TEXT	HOST	HOST PHONE	ACHARYA	E-MAIL ADDRESS	PHONE #
1	Kailas Niwas	Every Thursday	7:45 - 9:15 PM	Taitareeya Upanishad	Kailas Niwas- Raja Kirkire	240.938.6024	Swami Dheerananda	swami.dheerananda@gmail.com	301.384.1204
2	Salisbury	2nd & 4th Saturday	10:00 - 12:30 PM	Kathopanishad	Madhav & Satoja Barhan	410.219.3242	Acharya Anantiji	anant_sarma@hotmail.com	703.574.3854
MARYLAND STUDY GROUPS									
No.	NAME OF GROUP	DAY	TIME	TEXT	LOCATION/ HOST	HOST PHONE	COORDINATOR	E-MAIL ADDRESS	PHONE #
1	Devi Niwas 1	Every Sunday	12:00 - 01:00 PM	Vision of Gita	Devi Niwas/Meena Sankar	301.476.9838	DC Rao	dcraox@gmail.com	301.530.8961
2	Devi Niwas 2	Every Sunday	12:00 - 01:00 PM	Lalitha Sahasra Nama	Devi Niwas/Gopal Gopinath	240.994.4774	Gopal Gopinath	gopal_gopinath@yahoo.com	240.994.4774
3	Chinnmayam 1	Every Sunday	09:00 - 9:45 AM	Bhakti Sudha	Chinnmayam/Chetana	301.384.5009	Chetana Neerchal	cneerchal@gmail.com	202.725.2668
4	Gaithersburg	Every Saturday	7:30 - 9:00 AM	Bhagavad Gita	Ravi & Meera Ravichandran	301.279.0434	DC Rao	dcraox@gmail.com	301.530.8961
5	Rockville 1	Every Monday	06:30 - 8:00 PM	Viveka Chudamani	Sangamesh Konaraddi	301.874.5922	DC Rao	dcraox@gmail.com	301.530.8961
6	Frederick- Devi group	1st & 3rd Saturday	08:00 - 10:00 AM	Lalitha SN,Tatva Bodha	Rotating Location -Sukanya	301.694.5010	Lakshmi Yelamanchi	diyelamanchi@yahoo.com	301.663.3738
7	Germantown	Every Saturday	09:00 - 10:30 AM	Bhagavad Gita	Jaya Neti/Padmini	301.972.4939	Vijay Kumar	vijaykumar@rocketmail.com	571.276.7828
8	Clarksville	Every Saturday	09:30 - 10:30 AM	Bhaja Govindam	Sitaram Kowtha	410.531.9923	Sitaram Kowtha	skowtha@verizon.net	410.531.9923
9	Rockville 2	Every Saturday	09:30 - 11:00 AM	Patanjali Yoga Sutra	DC Rao	301.530.8961	DC Rao	dcraox@gmail.com	301.530.8961
10	Chinnmayam 2	Every Saturday	11:45 - 12:45 AM	Vishnu Sahasranama	Kodumudi Venkateswaran	301.762.5324	Kodumudi Venkateswaran	dheswaran@gmail.com	301.762.5324

VIRGINIA CLASSES WITH BAL VIHAR

No.	NAME OF CENTER	DAY	TIME	TEXT	LOCATION	HOST PHONE	ACHARYA	E-MAIL ADDRESS	PHONE #
1	Chinmaya Somnath	Every Sunday	09:25 - 11:00 AM	Tattva Bodha	Chinmaya Somnath	571.921.4893	Acharya Anantiji	anant_sarma@hotmail.com	703.574.3854
2	Chinmaya Somnath	Every Sunday	09:25 - 11:00 AM	Bhagavad Gita	Chinmaya Somnath	571.921.4893	Vijay Kumar	vjaykumar@rocketmail.com	571.276.7828
3	Chinmaya Somnath	Every Sunday	12:00 - 1:30 PM	Bhagavad Gita	Chinmaya Somnath	571.921.4893	Vijay Kumar	vjaykumar@rocketmail.com	571.276.7828
4	Richmond	Every Sunday	10:00 - 11:30 AM	Bhagavad Gita	Vision Learning center	804.514.6007	Nilkanth Bhatt	nbhatt@nblarch.com	804.514.0025

VIRGINIA VEDANTA CLASSES BY ACHARYAS

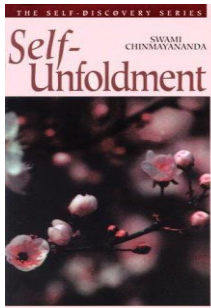
No.	LOCATION	DAY	TIME	TEXT	CORD/HOST	HOST PHONE	ACHARYA	E-MAIL ADDRESS	PHONE #
1	Vienna 1	Every Saturday	09:00 - 10:30 AM	Prasna Upanishad	Bishnu Poudel	703.759.3954	Acharya Pramilaaji	pramila@cox.net	703.759.3954
2	Chinmaya Somnath	Every Saturday	09:30 - 11:55 AM	Panchadasi- 2 Sessions	Kishore Bala	703.725.4091	Acharya Sadaji	kuntimaddisada@yahoo.com	703.879.6090
3	Chinmaya Somnath	Every Sunday	06:30 - 08:00 PM	Ashataakra Gita	Shyam Harohali	703.222.5866	Acharya Sadaji	kuntimaddisada@yahoo.com	703.879.6090
4	Vienna 2	2nd & 4th Thursday	07:30 - 8:30 PM	Tatwa Bodha	Karthik Balasubramaniam	703.589.8687	Acharya Pramilaaji	pramila@cox.net	703.759.3954
5	Vienna 3, Devi Group	1st and 3rd Fridays	11:45 - 1:45 PM	Mukunda Mala	Varitha Venugopal	703.255.2536	Acharya Pramilaaji	pramila@cox.net	703.759.3954
6	Chinmaya Somnath	Every Thursday	07:20 - 8:00 PM	Kenopanishad	Ram Krishnan	703.729.4882	Acharya Anantiji	anant_sarma@hotmail.com	703.574.3854

VIRGINIA STUDY GROUPS

No.	NAME OF GROUP	DAY	TIME	TEXT	LOCATION/HOST	HOST PHONE	COORDINATOR	E-MAIL ADDRESS	PHONE #
1	Falls Church	2nd and 4th Fridays	08:00 - 9:30 PM	Viveka Chudamani	Suresh & Nimala Limaye	703.241.0629	Nimala Limaye	slimaye@verizon.net	703.241.0629
2	Rajadhani Mandir	Every Sunday	04:45 - 6:00 PM	Bhagavad Gita	Rajdhan Mandir	703.542.7837	Neeti Gandhi	neetn@gmail.com	510.552.8558
3	Chinmaya Somnath	Every Sunday	11:00 - 11:50 AM	Bhaja Govindam	Chinmaya Somnath	571.921.4893	Vijay Kumar	vjaykumar@rocketmail.com	571.276.7828
4	Herndon 1	Every Friday	07:30 - 9:00 PM	Bhagavad Gita	Rotating Locn/ Kishan Gupta	703.707.0755	Kishore Bala	kishoreb@hotmail.com	703.725.4091
5	Vienna 1	Every Sunday	05:00 - 6:30 PM	Viveka Chudamani	Ram & Kamala Nagula	703.660.6734	Raju Chidambaram	alvers@comcast.net	703.461.3785
6	Vienna 2	Every Sunday	05:00 - 6:30 PM	Bhagavad Gita	Rotating Location	703.589.8687	Vijay Kumar	vjaykumar@rocketmail.com	571.276.7828
7	Chinmaya Somnath	Every Monday	07:20 - 08:00 PM	Vedic Chnig.Sri Rudram	Chinmaya Somnath	571.921.4893	Sri Gopalakrishna	sri_gopalakrishna@yahoo.com	703.327.8307
8	Chinmaya Somnath	Every Tuesday	07:20 - 08:00 PM	Tulsi Ramayan- Audio	Chinmaya Somnath	571.921.4893	Shyam Harohali	sharohali@verizon.net	703.222.5866
9	Chinmaya Somnath	Every Wednesday	07:20 - 08:00 PM	Arma Bodha- Video	Chinmaya Somnath	571.921.4893	Shyam Harohali	sharohali@verizon.net	703.222.5866
10	Chinmaya Somnath	Every Thursday	07:20 - 08:30 PM	Sri Rudram Class	Chinmaya Somnath	571.921.4893	Sri Gopalakrishna	sri_gopalakrishna@yahoo.com	703.327.8307
11	Chinmaya Somnath	Every Friday	07:20 - 08:00 PM	Lalitha Sahasra Nama	Chinmaya Somnath	571.921.4893	Sri Gopalakrishna	sri_gopalakrishna@yahoo.com	703.327.8307
12	Chinmaya Somnath	Every Saturday	06:20 - 07:00 PM	Vishnu Sahasra Nama	Chinmaya Somnath	571.921.4893	Shyam Harohali	sharohali@verizon.net	703.222.5866
13	Herndon 2 Devi Group	2nd & 4th Saturday	08:00 - 09:30 AM	Self Unfoldment	Bala Residence	703.793.8855	Raji Bala	rajyam321@yahoo.com	703.793.8855

“Self-Unfoldment” Summaries

Chapter 18: Sadhana; Chapter 19: Meditation; Chapter 20: Sustained Joy



Editor's Note: This series provides short summaries of each chapter of the foundational introduction to Vedanta by Pujya Gurudev, Swami Chinmayananda, “Self Unfoldment”. This book is part of the curriculum for Chinmayam (10th - 12th grade) Bala Vihar class. It is also the recommended starting book for newly formed youth and adult study groups. These summaries are from one such recently formed study group.

Chapter 18 – Sadhana

To reach the pinnacle of peace, fulfilment and tranquility called Self-Realization, we have to work on cleaning away from our real nature the accumulated conditionings that hide its pristine beauty. That process of cleansing is called spiritual practice or Sadhana in Sanskrit.

Making Progress

The progress on the path depends on inculcation of two qualities: discrimination and dispassion. Discrimination is a positive process of gaining a clear picture of the all-satisfying goal and the straight path to it. Discrimination is the appreciation of the real and discerning real from unreal. Dispassion or detachment is the negative process of detaching from all dissipating urges. In other words, detaching from the unreal. The pilgrimage on this path becomes pleasant and sure, but in no way easy.

Discrimination (Viveka)

A mind that rushes out into the world of objects if full of desires and agitations. Such a state of mind is not conducive to quiet contemplation upon the Truth. Withdrawal of the mind from preoccupation with the world quiets the agitations in it and prepares the mind for contemplation. In such a calmed mental atmosphere, the intellect begins to discriminate between (a) real and the

unreal; (b) the changeless and the changing; and (c) the imperishable and the perishable.

Just as we can discriminate between good coffee and bad, a good and loyal friend, and a fickle one, we can apply discrimination in our contemplation. We know that time is a product of mind, that is, it has no separate existence from the mind. We also know that Brahman, the Supreme Reality, transcends time. Even though we may not yet experience Brahman directly, we can have the intellectual conviction of its timeless, unchanging nature. Once that conviction becomes strong in us, we inherit the consequent ability to reject all that is impermanent.

The Maha Vakyas reinforce that which is real and the contemplative negation of the conditionings (Upadhis) through neti-neti – not this, not this, the oneness of the individual soul and the Supreme Soul is realized. (Adi Sankara – Atma Botha, verse 30).

Detachment (Vairagya)

Once our mind knows discrimination between the real and the unreal, detachment follows on its own. Detachment has to be at the mental level, not merely at the physical level. We cannot achieve true detachment by mere physical retirement from the world, but through

a proper mental relationship to it. We have to renounce our infatuation with the extroverted life and explore the possibility of rediscovering the pure Self within.

For many the word 'detachment' invokes fear – to them it means a condition of living death rather than a state of better and fuller life. For others, detachment, means an excuse to escape their obligatory duties or even abandon life altogether.

Every human being has a purpose in life, and we should use our lifetime to fulfil it. We fulfil the duties that nature imposes upon us (Dharma, discussed in Appendix I of Self-Unfoldment). The world provides us with a field for exhausting our vasanas, our innate tendencies. On the path, we fall prey to bewitching objects and infatuation with our loved ones. These worldly attractions distract us from our goals.

The advice from the scriptures is, "while remaining in the world, learn to maintain the right relationship to it." We can practice discrimination with the following questions:

- Who is my wife? Husband? Father? Mother? Who were they before I came to know them?
- Where was my child before it was born to me?
- Where was I before I appeared in this world?

And the final, and most important question -

- Who am I?

Even as we reassess our infatuation with objects of the world and the nature of our relationship with our loved ones, we need to attach to the Higher. The substitution of the attachment to the Higher while we detach from the lower allows us to cultivate healthy contacts with the world at all levels of our personality. Attaching to Higher means:

- Associating with good people (Satsanga)
- Maintaining Noble emotions (love, forgiveness, etc.)
- Studying and reflecting upon spiritual Truths

Six Qualities

In addition to the 2 qualities of discrimination and dispassion, Adi Sankara enumerates 6 qualities, in Viveka Chudamani, that help one to gain control of the mind -

- Calmness (Sama): the mental condition when mind is able to focus on the Supreme Reality and avoid getting distracted by the world.
- Self-Control (Dama): The mental alertness and strength in controlling sense perceptions and localizing them, rather than mentally drown in sense perceptions.
- Self-Withdrawal (Uparati): Sama and Dama contribute to Uparati. One is able to withdraw from the world and not be affected by external disturbances, and focus on the Higher.
- Forbearance (Titiksha): the capacity of the mind to cheerfully and silently endure the vicissitudes of life and patiently ignore any obstacles.
- Faith (Sraddha): It is not 'blind-faith', but a healthy attempt to gain a clear intellectual appreciation of the secret significance underlying the words of the scriptures and the teacher. The capacity to realize the words of the scriptures in all their suggestiveness is Sraddha.
- Tranquility (Samadhana): A state of poise that the mind gains when it is trained to revel continuously in the concept of a perfect ideal. Seeing all in one, and one in all - there are no likes and dislikes.

Burning Desire for Liberation (Mumukshutva)

A sense of urgency for liberation envelops one who cultivates the six mental qualities, with the foundation of discrimination and dispassion. This sense of urgency is the necessary for the Sadhana to bear fruit. Mumukshutva is not an idle enthusiasm to gain an unknown goal through some mysterious intervention of God or teacher. This is a full time endeavor, seeking to live every moment in the diligent pursuit of the Real.

The four qualities (discrimination, dispassion, the six mental qualities, and the burning desire for liberation) will help our self-unfoldment and unshackle us from the sorrows and restlessness and drive us towards the cloudless sky of spiritual freedom.

Chapter 19 – Meditation

While we may study and understand the sacred texts, and develop feeling for God and Truth through devotion, neither by itself is sufficient for realizing the Truth. For Truth is beyond the capacity of the mind and intellect. It is in the seat of meditation that we learn to use the mind to rise above the mind – and realize the Truth as our own innermost Self.

Preparing the mind: Japa

Meditation is the subtlest of human activities and requires that our minds be fully prepared for it. In order to become effective meditators, we must organize our day's activities in such a way as to prepare in the inner personality a conducive atmosphere for meditation. If during our day our activities are selfish and greedy, our mind will be agitated. On the other hand, if our activities are disciplined and selfless, our mind will be peaceful and ready for meditation.

Even after preparing the mind for meditation through various methods of purification, the spiritual masters do not advise us to dive straight into meditation. We should do Japa first.

In Japa, the mind is given a word symbol of the Divine, a mantra, to chant silently to itself, to the exclusion of all other thoughts. When the mind is constantly chanting a chosen mantra, it reaches a state of single-pointed attention, the beginning stage of meditation. Thus, Japa is the training for the mind that prepares a student for meditation by bringing the mind to attend to a single-pointed focus. A Japa conditioned mind can soar to unimaginable heights in meditation in a very short time.

The logic behind Japa is simple: we cannot say a word without a thought form rising up immediately in the mind, nor can we have a thought form without its corresponding name. As soon as we chant the Lord's name, an association with Him automatically rises in the mind.

Another important principle behind Japa is that attachment is caused by a repetition of thought. Thoughts running continuously towards an object create

an attachment to it. Thus, by continuous repetition of the name of the Lord, we get attached to Him, with a consequent detachment from the outer world of objects.

Meditation Process

- Location: Choose a quiet corner of a room or a special room
- Timing: Choose a quiet time of the day when other distractions are at a minimum [absolute quietness cannot be found even in the serene setting of Himalayas – it can only be in our minds]
- Mantras: A mantra is a word symbol expressing a particular view of God and the universe
- Setting: Set up an altar with your chosen image of the Lord with the feet in level with your eyes. You can choose symbol, such as Om or mantra, instead of an image. Flowers, incense and other decorations further create an ambiance that suggests the mind to withdraw from the world and enter into a contemplative mood.
- Seating: Place a thin, flat cushion or a blanket folded into four on the floor in front of the altar. If sitting cross-legged is uncomfortable, sit on a chair. Sit with back straight with vertebral column erect, slightly bending forward at the pelvic region. Place left hand on the left thigh and right hand holding a mala (rosary), near the right knee.
- Object of focus: Look at the image/symbol in your altar and take it in with love. Then gently close eyes, looking nowhere in particular.
- Thought Massage: Start 'thought massage' to relax the body: direct mind to slowly tap various muscles of the body, starting from the head and descending to the toes. Mentally inspect each muscle, urging them to release their stiffness and tension.
- Thought Parade: Let the disturbances of the mind caused by predominant thoughts and desires of the day rise and exhaust themselves. Maintain a role of witness as these thoughts parade by. Let the thought disturbances surface and pass away

without getting attached to any of them. The mind disturbance will subside, becoming available for japa.

- **Chanting:** Start to chant your mantra in the mind as you visualize the divine symbol in your altar, invoking feelings love and surrender. The mala has 108 beads and an off-bead, meru. With mala in the right hand, search for the meru. Bring the tips the thumb and ring finger together, and at the juncture hang the mala. Let the hand holding the mala rest on the knee. Repeat mantra, turn a bead immediately after the meru, after each mantra repetition. Use the middle finger to move the turn the bead towards you. The index finger is not employed because it represents duality. When the mantra is repeated 108 times, the mala turns completely and meru returns to the fore. Without crossing the meru, turn the mala around, and start the next 108 chants.
- **Positive Silence and Quietude:** After some time of doing japa, a moment of positive silence may be within reach. One approach would to suddenly stop the japa (with the order to stop coming from within). Another approach would be to steadily slow the pace of the japa and bring the mental chanting to quieter and quitter whisper. Once within a moment of positive silence, try to stay in that moment as long as possible, until thoughts start to rise again.

For a few sweet moments, we can cheerfully learn to hold the mind from all its usual wanderings in the realm of objections, emotions and thoughts. Under such a balmy quiet, a lacerated mind becomes revitalized and refills itself with a new poser. In quietude, the mind can bring forth new ideas, solutions, and endlessly creative ideas.

Cautions

The mind will often drift away from the point of concentration, even during Japa. External aids such as fragrance of flowers, incense or sound of bells may be of help. It is important to bring the mind back to the point of concentration repeatedly.

During Japa, chanting loudly and keeping eyes open on the point of focus may help with bringing the mind back to the point of concentration.

Sometimes, instead of attempting meditation, a study of scriptures or stories about the various divine incarnations during the allotted meditation time will help with consistency of thought and aid in resuming meditation.

The Final Stages

The last stage of contemplative practice is meditation (dhyana). When a seeker has succeeded in keeping his single-pointed concentration for a prolonged period of time, he is ready to enter the state of Samadhi thoughtlessness (Samadhi).

As long as the mind is engaged in chanting the name of the Lord, mind and intellect are still engaged. The moment of dynamic silence is when chanting stops and only silence remains. That moment of silence is the peace inherent in the pure Self. In its purest form, this juncture is at which the meditator, the meditated, and the meditation all merge into One.

Om is comprised of sound 'A' for waking state, sound 'U' for dream state and 'M' for deep sleep state. When chanting OM, the silence between two chants is called turiya, the state in which the individual self recognizes its identity with the Supreme. The 3 states of AUM are built on the silence state of turiya. There it may be said that the AUM sound emerges from silence, exists in silence and returns to silence. Similarly, the three states of consciousness – waking, dream and deep-sleep, emerge, exist and merge back into Consciousness.

Self Realization is described as occurring in two stages. In the initial state, the last trace of individuality lingers only to experience Godhood. This is called, Savikalpa Samadhi. The second stage, even that last trace of individuality merges into Consciousness, and the only one Supreme Reality remains. This is called Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

Through repeated practice of meditation, the mind learns to abide in the blissful silence of the Self. When the extroverted mind disappears in the silence, the merger with the Self is complete.

Regularity, sincerity and perseverance will assure success. Spiritual unfoldment is reserved for the wise heroes.

Chapter 20: Sustained Joy

The mind is available for molding when it is in a cheerful, happy mood. In meditation, we are persuading our own mind to engage in the pursuit of the higher. Keeping the mind happy, is thus essential to reach our spiritual goal. Our mind, unfortunately, is addicted to sorrow, even though happiness is our true nature.

Persuading the Mind

With systematic and correct meditation, the readjustment of the mind will start to take place. Initially, one will have persuade oneself to be cheerful within, especially during meditation. In that happy mood, mind is plastic and we can reshape its contours and get better performance out of it. The art of being cheerful within will pay dividends not just at the seat of meditation, but in all engagements with the world. The mind of a master who reached the highest peaks of meditation is far more glorious than when he was still striving to reach the peaks.

Such a trained mind, remains unperturbed in the presence of sense objects, problems and challenges, and the vision is not clouded. As the readjustment of the mind begins with the systematic and correction meditation, the first signpost is the gathering joy within, a stability and poise in spite of the problems encountered outside.

Sometimes the seekers are confounded with their newfound joy, poise and stability – that they may be becoming irresponsible. Joys of the world do not excite them, the sorrows do not touch them. They may not grieve at the death of someone near and dear. The seekers need to note that this is a sign of progress.

The seeker should use the same room or corner to sit in meditation. The seat will take an atmosphere of its own. It will become a psychological harbor for the seeker. Seated there the mind will become quiet. In the quietude, turn the mind to be cheerful. Smile away with the mind. This practice over time will enable the seeker to quiet the mind in a moment, and make it cheerful under any circumstance. Chanting mantra also will help bring the mind back to being quiet and cheerful.

All great masters, saints and sages constantly live in the attitude of joy. And it is this cheerful mind we see in their eyes, an enchantment of peace and joy. They spread an atmosphere of joy that engulfs even the grossest among us and we are filled with a mysterious, voiceless experience, which in turn generates a spirit of reverence towards them.

Surrender

The disturbances of the mind – ego and anxieties, will make a showing every day at the seat of meditation. One need not follow every approach and method for making progress on that day, but pick the right method appropriate for that day's anxieties, discomforts and ego disturbances.

Body discomforts, anxieties are natural. For the former relaxing the body through thought massage may be more effective that day, while on latter, gradually reducing the level of anxiety will be more effective. Anxieties come because of our relationships to our field of activities. In our pure Self there are no anxieties. At the seat of meditation, we temporarily surrender our roles to the feet of the Lord. Imagine a private appointment with the Lord, "I have an appointment with the Lord. I am turning towards my Source. I am temporarily leaving behind the fields of pain and imperfection." By thus surrendering our relationships, hence anxieties, we will fill our mind with joy. (Once we conclude for that day, we can return to shouldering our responsibilities).

Invoke floods of joy in your mind, and from the mind let your joy spread in every direction. As this mood increases, the mind is filled with sattva. Such a serene mind is the most effective instrument of contemplation. When the mind in such serene attitude, the body is relaxed. With this mind, chant the Lord's name and be aware of the chant. Since the attention is to chanting, the mind rolls away from the objects of the world; it becomes introverted. In this state of serenity and mind's attention to the Lord, gradually slow down the chanting to a stop. When chanting is stopped, what remains is the Self. Try to remain there in awareness of "I am".

Make it a habit to keep the mind in a state of inner tranquility during all associations with the outer world. To move away from inner quality is to sink to animal level, where there is no dignity for human being. In the struggle of life, one who has inner poise always wins.

Invocation of the Higher

As we continue the meditative practice, we will learn to withdraw from sense appetites and anxieties. The daily sadhana will deepen in ardor, broaden in love and expand to touch new levels of spiritual experience. We will find greater pleasures in daily prayers and come to understand that the very environment in which the Lord

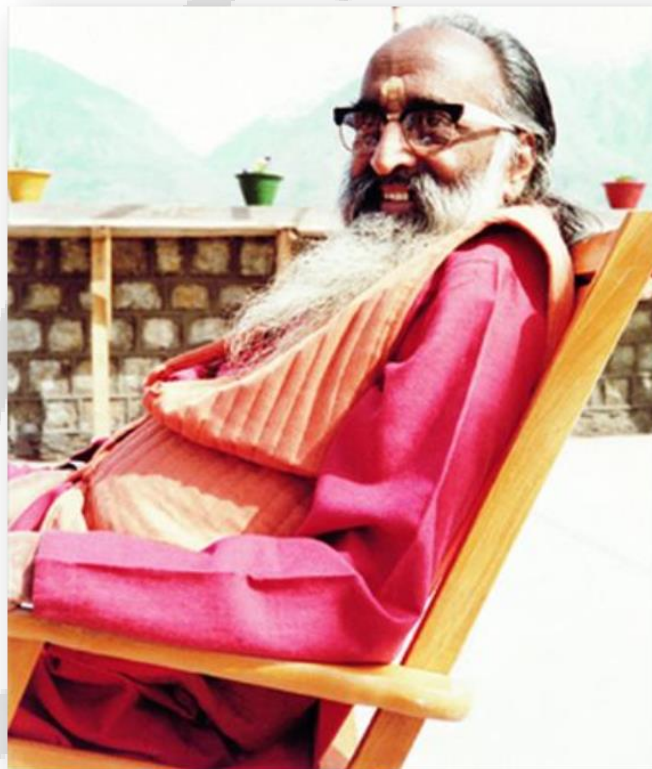
has placed is the most conducive for our growth. With this understanding we are ready to wade through the muddy pools of life, while constantly remembering Him.

We have to be ever vigilant about falling from the peaks of joy. When we find ourselves empty, exhausted or in the grips of our lower nature, we should invoke the Lord and rediscover our association with Him. Sorrows and worries will bring a temporary fall. By surrendering to Him, invoking Him and glorifying Him, we offer our whole being in ardent invocation of the Higher.

Truth is not separate from us. It is the illuminating consciousness behind every thought. As soon as the mind is hushed, Truth is uncovered.

To rediscover the Truth that was always in us but was temporarily veiled is the culmination of the evolution. As we rediscover the truth of our own nature, the pure Self, we gain an unshakable peace and a never-ending joy. Recognition of the Self is the crowning victory in life. This is Ishwara Darsana or the vision of God.

Once we behold that vision, we become rooted in the Self and a calm witness of the universe. No longer a victim of external circumstances – joy and sorrow, pain and pleasure, honor and dishonor, we experience them as minor disturbances in the vast universe. The Self in us is the Self everywhere.



Postscript: This concludes the series on summaries of Self-Unfoldment.

Hari Om! Sri Gurubhyo Namah! Hari Om!

Power of Peace

Aziza Meer

Where I once I saw a rock
Now I see energy from ions of time
Where I once saw an offending fool
Now I see a friend growing in full
Body a house of Light
Mind in repose
By choice reduce my interactions with the world
For, now I need my time for me
A handful is too many
My home vacated to minimum things
With Sunny smiles to fill my rooms
Bliss beckoning me into its fold
I don't need anyone to join me anymore
For by myself I have ample company.
When I walk alone from choice
The world raises its voice
More wanting my side
To walk in truth and in everlasting light.
One is plenty
Two is too many
Family is filling in full
Although I love the world
Like water they slip away
For I don't want them in my fold
Silence and solitude
Embraced in full
Walk by myself
In tremendous power and peace.

Series: Saints of Maharashtra – 2

Sant Jnaneshwar, Part 2

Nirmala Limaye

[Editor's Note: Nirmalaji covered the life of Sant Jnaneshwar in November 2014 edition. Here she describes the works of the great master.]

In a short lifespan of 21 years, Sant Jnaneshwara produced 4 major works of literature. The most important was Jnaneswari; from all standpoints, spiritual or literary, this was the greatest text in the Marathi literature. (Sant Jnaneshwara had named it Bhawarthadipika, but out of reverence to him people called it Jnaneswari).

A highly poetic work, it dances in exquisite beauty, soaring with lofty ideas. The text is in ovi meter that consists of 4 lines, each containing 4 words. Although the original is not available, Saint Eknath redacted the text as per a vision he had from Jnaneshwara. He only changed the old Marathi language to 15th century script. He later wrote that no one could add any more to it.

This text redacted in 1584 is the present copy. On 750 slokas of Geeta, there are 9000 ovis(poetical verses). As we know from other saints, although Jnaneshwara was a realized soul, he had to write in simple words in Prakrit so that common people could understand. He continued to show respect to Pandits yet he brought the Geeta in Marathi against their objections. He gave worldly examples that all people understood. He explained that all knowledges of the world are like the beautiful eyes of peacock's feathers with no vision (which reminds me of Gurudev stating "eyes are two but vision is one"). His language was so simple, sweet, and full of motherly love (hence people call him Mauli). He urged readers not to get enchanted by the poetic beauty but pay attention to the real meaning of the text – there are no harsh words towards anyone. He said with genuine pride in one ovi, that "my Marathi words in ovi will easily surpass amrita."

Jnaneshwara invoked lord Ganesha at the beginning of the text as knowledge itself. As primordial seed of the Vedas, he is "swasamvedya," or the self-knower.

His lower limbs are "A", his large belly is "U", and his head as "MAUM" is his swarupa. He refers to the lord as the primordial status of Brahman, the illuminator of all intellect. All the other branches of knowledge and arts are his ornaments. He invokes Sharada the Goddess of learning, who inspires all four forms of speech.

In commenting on the 11th chapter, when Arjuna gets overwhelmed with fear, the Lord returns to human form. Jnaneshwara gives example of a clothes merchant who has shown fine sarees to a marriage party which overwhelms the ladies. When they ask him to display something simpler, the shopkeeper is disappointed but folds the garment.

The love that Jnaneshwara feels for his Guru Nivrittinath knows no bounds. He gives all the credit of his commentary to his Guru stating that he sent this through his grace. Jnaneshwara truly felt that he was like a parrot repeating his guru's teachings. He worshipped Guru Nivrittinath and wrote that without a Guru, it is very hard to attain realization.

He was the originator of Bhagwat Bhakti and said that God can be attained by ananya bhakti alone. That gave the masses a comfort and hope since they were not well versed with Upanishads. Jnanadeva emphasized God's and Guru's grace. He did include sankhya philosophy as well as saivism, and further stated that the Ayakta is Maya.

May all beings in all the worlds be filled with joy.

May they worship the almighty Lord forever.

May all those, for whom this book is their very life, be blessed with success in this world and the next.

May the sinners drop their sins.

May the saints who are moons without blemish and suns without heat bestow their grace on all beings.

May all beings be friends to each other.

May the darkness of sins be removed.

Then Guru Nivrittinatha said that this would be granted, which brought Jnaneshwara great bliss. There cannot be any other universal prayer as profound as this prayer.

2nd text---Amritanubhava

Guru Nivrittinath said, “you have commented on Bhagawat Geeta, now write your experiences of samadhi and the process of realization. Very few saints can explain this phenomenon of realization.”

Jnanadva takes a metaphor of Shiva and Sakti as a husband and wife; as the relationship between Purusha and Prakriti was, Prakriti covers a sleeping Purusha with exquisite garments, concealing him. Shethen gives birth to the baby universe which grows as a child. But when the husband wakes up, the wife and the child have disappeared.

It is not possible to write all the commentary meanings here;however, in the last prayer at the end of 18th chapter, Jnaneshwara requests for “prasada” to the Lord and his guru known as “pasaydaan”.

Then in the next few chapters he discusses the unity of Brahman and Atman: Brahman is beyond existence, knowledge and bliss. He further discusses the inability of words to describe the ultimate truth or to destroy ignorance. He quotes the absence of darkness when sunlight is present to showcase the inexistence of ignorance. Finally, Jnaneshwaradeclares that his Guru’s grace helped him to realize the truth and when that happened, God, the Guru, and he became one . To prove

his point he gives examples of camphor, mirrors, and more; the whole text is pure Advaitic Vedanta.

3rd text ---- Chandeva Pasahthi (65 verses to Changdeva)

Jnaneshwara praises Chagadeva for all his powers and subsequently states that he is not separate from him,thus slowly destroying Changadva’s ego. (the late Swami Purushottamanandaji has written a commentary in Marathi, which desparately needs to be translated into English)

4th text – Haripath

This is a set of 28 ovis written especially for the hardworking class, representative of the common population, as they do not have time to read extensive texts. It emphasizes Ananya Bhakti and presents deep philosophical thoughts in very simple words. Besides these 4 works, Jnanadeva also wrote Abhangas.

Finally, when he felt that he had completed his life’s purpose, he started requesting his Guru and the Lord to allow him to take samadhi. He wrote a poem acting like a lover for the lord and requesting to take him in His embrace.It is a beautiful poem similar to Mirabai’s embracing the lord as her husband.

I am indebted to Poojya Gurudev Ranade as I have referred to his commentary on Jnanadeva in his book,“Mysticism in Maharashtra”- Indian mysticism,Motilal Banarassidass, 1933— reprint -1998

New Year Resolutions

Swamiji and Adult Members

Pujya Swami Dheeranandaji

New Year RE-solution is RE-flection and Mana-NA (where mind ceases to exist). Do manana (reflection) until mana-na.

Sudesh Nimishe

Kritajnata (Gratitude)

Sudiksha Nimishe

Vaachika Tapas

Vishwanadhan Yallayi

Nidhidhyasana: To develop single pointedness in attention

Lalitha Yellaji

Anger Management: Want to progress from Tamasik to Sattvik

Sitaram Kowtha

Reflection on resolutions and Siva Sankalpa

Over the years I have made a number of resolutions that I have been able to keep. One was to attend Chinmaya Mission regularly. Another was to study Geeta. A third was to gain better appreciation of our Swamiji, Pujya Guruji, and Sri Gurudev.

However, I have one New Year resolution that I renew every year – I wish to lose 10 pounds. For 2015, it is to lose 20 pounds. I gained 10 pounds last year.

I recently read an article in Wall Street Journal on why people don't keep new year resolutions. It turns out that, while many resolutions are well intended, they are usually just plain impractical. Other times,

we have good first start, but we don't maintain the rigor to keep the resolutions going. Sometimes we need a companion – a parent, a sibling, a spouse, a friend, a teacher or a mentor, to keep us honest and on track.

As I began to study the life of Sri Gurudev, I wondered how he might have taken up the resolution to establish Chinmaya Mission in the West. He could have easily come to the United States, talked about Geeta and the Upanishads and returned to India, satisfied. Instead, he envisioned coming to the West and staying! Not just in one location, but all across the United States and Canada! As a result of his resolution and dedication to it, today we have this center we call home. And he lives here, just as he lives in every other center. So I think – why should we just take minor resolutions like “I will lose 10 pounds”, instead make dramatic resolutions – such as “keep smiling”, here and now.

Last year, Pujya Guruji, Swami Tejomayananda, conducted a Jnana Yajna on the topic of “Siva Sankalpa Suktam’ after he inaugurated our new facility – Chinmaya Somnath. The word ‘Sankalpa’ is resolution. The word Siva has several meanings. One of these meanings is auspiciousness. And so, Guruji asked us to take Siva Sankalpa, an auspicious resolution. An auspicious resolution is one which blesses and uplifts everyone. Our resolutions should be such that it elevates and brings joy to oneself and to everyone else. Another meaning of Siva Sankalpa is to mimic the auspicious decisions made by our hero figures. The most auspicious figure is Lord Siva. Hence, we should strive to make resolutions that the Lord Himself would. The Ramayana and Mahabharata have heroes that we can draw from as

we make our resolutions. The third meaning of Siva Sankalpa is that there are only auspicious resolutions. All resolutions are divine. I don't make resolutions, the Lord makes them. I am a mere instrument of His. The glory of Hanuman is that his resolutions are Sri Rama's resolutions.

So, when we consider our resolutions, we must realize that we need two kinds. We need small ones that we can keep and larger ones to strive for. Keeping our small resolutions will give us confidence. Striving for loftier ones, will give us purpose. Purposeful living with love for one and all is the path that Sri Gurudev followed and advises us to follow as well.

May the Lord's grace, blessings and Siva sankalpa flow through us to the world around us. May we succeed with our smaller resolutions. May we dedicate ourselves to purposeful living.

Hari Om!

Jnana Yoga and Self Realization - XXIII

Acharya Sadananda

Obstacles for spiritual progress - VII

I and the World- Kshetrajna and Kshetra:

We will discuss now somewhat related topics that are of interest. First is the understanding of the world. We have dismissed the world as it is not absolutely real; and it is nothing but naama and ruupa or names and forms of the substantive Brahman, using the scriptural knowledge. Brahman which is changeless is only absolutely real while the changing names and forms are just superimposed entities on the substantive Brahman. Logically when something is changing, there must be something that is chang-less as the substantive of the changing entities. That is the basis of law of conservation. In chemical reactions, the mass and energy are conserved. Similarly creation cannot come from nothing. It can only be an apparent transformation of what was there before creation. Scriptures states that what was there before creation is pure existence which is limitless or Brahman. Thus, Chandogya Up. Ch. 6 on sadvidya says that existence alone was there before creation as one without a second. If there was a second, which has to be other than existence, then it can only be non-existence. We cannot say non-existence existed, as such a statement is self-contradictory. This means existence that was there was infinite in nature or it is Brahman or infiniteness. For, if it is finite, we ask again what was there beyond that finiteness. If something exists, then its existence cannot be different from the other existence. Hence existence that was there before creation was part-less (*niShkalam*, Kai. Up.), infiniteness, the Brahman. Infiniteness cannot be qualified. Even the word infinite is only to indicate that it is not finite. There are many infinities that we discuss in mathematics, such as two parallel lines meet at infinity or pi has infinite series, etc. These are finite infinities or one dimensional infinities. Brahman is infiniteness means it is absolutely infinite from every aspect or one can say from infinite dimensions. This is stated in Vedanta as – *deSha kaala vastu parichchinna rahitam* – essentially spatially,

temporally or object-wise limitless or absence of any limitations what so ever or absolutely limitless.

The scripture further says that existence saw, and (decided) to become many- let me become many, and it became many, *tat aikshataa| bahushyaam, prajaayeya|*. The capacity to see rests with a conscious entity alone and not with an inert entity. Hence the implication is existence that existed before creation was a conscious entity and not an inert one. Thus before creation what was there was pure existence-consciousness and being limitless or infinite it is full, that is, it is *sat-chit-ananda swaruupam*.

Then the question that can be asked is what happened to that existence after creation. In response, Shankara asks us to pay close attention to the scriptural statement that says existence **ALONE WAS** there before creation. Therefore after creation existence is still there, but now with names and forms, where each name and form by definition is limited. Thus existence can never cease to exist as echoed by Krishna in the statement – *nasato vidyate bhaave naabhaavo vidyate sath* (non-existence does not come into existence and existences cannot cease to exist – an absolute law of conservation, declares Krishna). On the other hand, if we say that the names and forms which are non-existent before creation came into existence after the creation, we have a case of non-existent names and forms coming into existence thus violating the Law of Conservation just stated. It is not so, says the scriptures. If rings and bangles were not there before creation and even if they came into existence, the process involves no violation of law of conservation. The same gold which exists in the form of a lump now appears as varieties of names and forms, as rings, bangles, etc. The law of conservation is not violated, because these names and forms have no independent existence other than the borrowed existence from the gold from which they are formed, by which they are sustained and into which they go back. In other words they do not have substantiality of

their own to count them separate from gold. The same amount of gold remains before and after the transformation, maintaining the law of conservation. In fact, going one step further, gold does not even undergo any real transformation – it remains as gold before and after transformation in forming rings, bangles, bracelets, etc. Hence it is called as transformation-less transformation or vivarta, in contrast to, say, milk transforming into yogurt or curds which is an irreversible transformation or pariNaama. Hence the scripture calls this as apparent transformation, i.e. transformation only in name (**naamkevaaste**)– **vaachaarambhanam vikaaro naamadheyam**, a transformation that involves only a change of name from a lump of gold to bangle, necklace or ring of gold. To reinforce this idea, scriptures provides three examples; gold becoming ornaments, clay becoming pots, iron becoming iron tools.

Next we ask, wherefrom or why did these beautiful rings, bangles, etc., form? Those forms are determined not by gold nor by gold smith, but on the basis of the Law of Demand by those who are going to use it. In the same way, the creation of varieties of names and forms are based on the demand by the Karmas of the Jiivas that are there in potential form in the creation. Then the question is how this karma of Jiivas came into existence before the creation of Jiivas. The scripture says no Jiiva is newly created nor its karma, but they come from the previous creation as a package. Thus the correct story is creation, sustenance, and annihilation are continuous cyclic processes with no beginning and end. Hence for the commonly asked question of why I am borne with silver spoon, while others are with gold-spoon and some others with wooden spoon and still others with no spoon at all, the answer is it is due to the result of actions that were done in the last life or last creation cycle. In addition, it also means no one can escape this law of action and results. Everyone is accountable for every deliberate action that is performed, here or hereafter, since life is an eternal continuous cycle. We can write a Vedantic law – what you sow, that only you reap – or you get only what you gave. However there is an escape from this eternal cycle of karma; the scriptures call this as moksha or freedom from all limitations, which was the central topic in the analysis of tat-tvam-asi series.

Hence, if there is creator up there, His hands are tight, even if He is the most compassionate and omniscient God – Hence Krishna says – **samoham sarvabhuteshu, name dveshosthi na priyaH** – I am equal to every living being, neither favor anyone nor disfavor anyone – the results are give by law of cause-effect relationships, says Krishna. If I put my finger into the fire, whether I am innocent child or knowledgeable adult or great Krishna's devotee, it is bound to get burned and that is the law, whether I believe in the law or not. I cannot blame the God for burning the finger. Hence creation involves that which is in subtle form, in the form of pure existence, expresses itself into gross forms that we see. Scripture says the same thing happens when we go to deep sleep state where the whole gross world disappears for us. That includes space-time as well as our egotistical presence. They, as though, merge into myself in subtle form, and then reappear exactly the same way when I am awake thereby not violating any law of conservation. However there is a transformation of subtle forms to grosser forms during creation and vice versa during dissolution, without violating the law of conservation. At micro-level or individual level, the sleep is called laya and at macro-level or global level, the sleep of the totality is called pra-laya. The essential cyclic process involves subtle impressions forming gross ones and sustaining for some time and going back into subtle one to become gross again – either at micro level or macro level. It is similar to a lump of gold becoming varieties of ornaments, sustaining as ornaments for some time and going back into the lump of gold.

Hence when the scriptures says – **tat aikshataa-**, it saw, the seeing in relation to creation implies a deliberate planning or visualizing what or how the creation should be based on the karmas of the jiivas that are ready to fructify, by the only existent-conscious entity, Brahman. Since seeing is an action, and Brahman being infinite cannot act, we bring in the concept of Iswara as Brahman identified with maayaa, the creative power as the intelligent cause for creation. All the karmas of all jiivas in subtle form or unmanifest form are called maayaa or prakRiti. Iswara and maayaa are identified in Gita in the 13th Ch. as Purusha and prakRiti – **prakRitim puruSham chaiva vidynaadii ubhaavapi** .- know that both are beginning-less. They constitute the intelligent cause and material cause for the creation. Of these two, only

prakRiti can undergo transformation producing entities that are endowed with qualities or properties, guNas and undergo continuous changes while preserving law of conservation. ***maayaadhyaksheNa prakRitiH suuyate sa charaacharam*** – under My President-ship, the prakRiti manifests into movables and immovables, says Krishna.

The word creation and becoming are two important words which indicate intelligent cause and material cause, respectively. Gold smith creates ornaments while gold becomes ornaments. Hence the word creates is used with reference to intelligent cause while the word becomes is used for material cause. Since there cannot be two separate causes, Brahman which is one without a second has to be both the intelligent and material cause. Thus scriptures declare that a conscious existence entity alone was there before creation and it itself became many as per some predestined plan. This much we gather from the above statement. Scripture describes in detail the stages of creation, starting from space, then gaseous state, next energy, then liquid and finally the solid state. Matter itself is considered in terms of two states – a subtle state and a gross state. Subtle matter formed the basis for subtle entities including mind, and gross matter formed a basis for gross worlds including our physical body. Thus mind, intellect, senses, etc are clearly ascribed by Vedas as subtle matter and are in subtle form, constituting the subtle body.

At this stage we run into two big problems. 1. Brahman being infinite it cannot undergo any vikaara or modification, for it to be a cause for anything, subtle or gross. 2. Brahman being a conscious entity (prajnaanam brahma), it cannot become an inert world that we see, including our gross body. Since we do not (and can not) have anything other than Brahman, as Brahman is one without a second, there cannot be an inert matter either separate from Brahman or part of Brahman. Infinite cannot have parts; only limited can be made up of parts. 'Why can't infinite have infinite number of parts constituting the infinite?', a vishiShTaadvaitin may ask. They believe that infinite can have attributes as well as internal differences, swagata bhedaas. Finite only can have qualities or attributes. Attributes only can be sensed by senses. Brahman being infinite cannot have attributes and therefore imperceptible. Sum of finites can only make

finite; and infinite cannot be parted. This Brahman being infinite, I cannot see or know or experience it, since whatever I can see, know or experience can only be finite. Therefore, scripture is only pramaaNa or means of knowledge to learn about Brahman that cannot be known; a statement that appears to be self-contradictory. On the other hand, we experience this world, solidly day-in and day-out, which cannot be really real, since there cannot be anything else absolutely real other than Brahman, the infiniteness, says the scripture.

We are so convinced that this world exists, since we live in it, experience it all the time from birth to death or from womb to the tomb, and therefore is very real to us; yet the scripture says it cannot be really real. On the other hand, Brahman, which is infinite and inexperienceable, and the scriptures say that it is really real or absolutely real. Philosophers have struggled hard to reconcile these apparently contradictory facts, one experiential reality, and the other, the reality that cannot be experienced but declared in the scriptures. It is, of course, easy to dismiss the scriptures as hog-wash and go with our experiential reality, which is directly evident. However Vedanta also presents the facts logically that a rational intellect cannot easily dismiss. On the other hand, even from the science point, there are no convincing answers for a) the origin of the universe, other than the Big-bang theory, b) the nature of the fundamental or ultimate particle(s) that the universe is made up of, and c) what is the nature of life, other than what we know of it by its expressions in terms of physiological functions, starting from breathing, eating, growing and reproducing, etc. ? Vedanta provides a bridge between ephemeral and transcendental facts while accounting the ultimate truth and the very purpose or goal of life itself. We examine here where science ends and philosophy begins without conflicting each other, but complimenting each other.

One way to accommodate the two contradictory views is to clearly demark their area of validity or applicability. Science we know involves objectification and involves application of experimentally verifiable truths. In all scientific investigations, as we know, there is the subject, a conscious entity, who is the investigator and the object, an inert entity that is being investigated. In essence the science involves the objective world, which is inert.

Objective facts or laws are established when they are confirmed independent of the investigators. Even in the analysis of the human mind, there is an objectification of the mind by the investigator, a conscious entity. In essence anything objectified is an inert entity only, even if there is life in the specimen that is being investigated. To put this crisply, Vedanta says, subject cannot be an object and object cannot be a subject. The reason is simple. Subject is always a conscious entity and object is always an inert entity, hence the above statement follows. Hence the first clear distinction between the two, Vedanta and objective science, is the area of their applicability. As a first and important point, we should know that Vedanta deals with the subject, the conscious entity, while objective sciences deal with inert entities. This demarcation should be understood before we discuss further or apply scientific principles to Vedanta to determine its validity.

Now we can define the subject and object to make sure the applicability of each is clear. Objects include all that can be objectified starting from the body. Hence Krishna differentiates the universe into two – idam and aham – or kshetram and kshetrajna – the field and the knower of the field. He includes in the kshetram, all that can be objectified including the emotions that arise in the mind of a being. Knower or investigator is conscious entity that comes under aham or I and everything else that can be objectified including the body, mind, intellect and the rest of the world come under objective field, kshetram, says Krishna. This is the Vedantic field theory. Objective sciences are obviously relevant for the field, kshetram and Vedanta is obviously relevant when consciousness or kshetrajna is involved, one way or the other, either directly or via as knower of the objective world, kshetram.

Next we address the tools available for each of the two and their characteristics including the origin of the world in terms of Vedanta and objective Sciences.