

Chinmaya Smrithi



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

Volume 30, Number 4, July 2020

**Guru
PUERNIMA**

*is not a day, an occasion,
a ritual, but a STATE of Consciousness,
when the students try to tune in their
minds to the Inner State of the Teacher.*

- Swami Chinmayananda

[/Chinmayananda](#)
[/swamichinmayananda](#)

Om Sri Chinmaya Sadgurave Namah

Foreword: Swamiji's Message



Editor's Note: [Our beloved resident Swamiji, Swami Dheerananda is continuing his weekly classes on Vivekachoodamani. Please find below an excerpt from his class on verse 11].

चित्तस्य शुद्धये कर्म न तु वस्तुपलब्धये ।
वस्तुसिद्धिर्विचारेण न किञ्चित्कर्मकोटिभिः ॥ 11 ॥

*cittasya śuddhaye karma na tu vastūpalabdhaye |
vastusiddhirvicāreṇa na kiñcītkarmakōṭibhiḥ || 11 ||*

Meaning: Selfless works and charitable acts help to purify the mind, but they do not, by themselves, contribute to the perception of Reality. The discovery of the Reality is brought about only by discriminative analysis and never by any number of actions.

Adi Shankaracharya concludes the previous verse by declaring that Karma is not sufficient for a seeker to realize the highest goal. Is Karma then a crime? In this verse, the idea of Karma is beautifully explained.

Karma should be done to purify our own mind and intellect. Only the Karma which purifies the mind and intellect is worth pursuing. The sign of purification of the mind is the mind becoming quiet, alert and vigilant. All Karmas are meant for that purpose. When somebody does a forbidden Karma, the mind becomes agitated and the person feels guilty. The injunctions in the Shastras against forbidden Karma is clearly to prevent this type of mental agitation and guilt. When a child is very young and innocent, it does not have the capacity to distinguish between right and wrong actions and does not suffer from any mental agitations.

Any action done as part of one's duty will not disturb one's mind. When Arjuna enters the battlefield at the beginning of the Mahabharata war, he is overwhelmed with feelings of "I" and "my". He looks at Bheeshma and Drona and can only think of them as his grand-father or

his Guru. He is unable to focus on his duty. After listening to Lord Krishna, he identifies himself as a Dharmic Kshatriya, whose duty it is to fight for Dharma. Having overcome his initial confusion, he now considers his role in the fight a part of his duty. Similarly, a selfless dedicated seeker offers all his Karmas and the results thereof to the Lord in a selfless spirit. When Karma is performed in that spirit, the mind is always peaceful.

The following example illustrates this principle very well. A Brahmachari goes to a house for seeking Bhiksha. The lady of the house asks him to wait for a few minutes and goes back in and starts serving her husband as part of her daily duties. Forced to wait for almost half an hour, the Brahmachari gets increasingly impatient and annoyed with the lady. He chants a mantra and looks angrily at a bird flying nearby. The bird falls down dead. When the lady eventually returns to serve him, he chants the mantra again and looks at the lady. The lady simply smiles at him and tells him that she is not like the bird and his mantra is not going to harm her. The Brahmachari is surprised and asks her the secret of her spiritual strength. She humbly tells him that her spiritual evolution is all due to the grace of her Guru. Curious to learn more about her Guru, the Brahmachari is astonished when the lady tells him that her Guru is none other than Dharma Vyaadha, a butcher! Unable to contain his curiosity any longer, he immediately goes and finds Dharma Vyaadha; who welcomes him with a smile and asks him to wait patiently while he completes serving his parents. The Brahmachari realizes that the spiritual power for Dharma Vyaadha and the lady comes from their sincere performance of their duties. He is reminded of his own duties towards his aged parents. This story reminds us that performing one's obligatory duties in the Yagna spirit is essential for self-purification which will enable one to realize the Self through enquiry. Even a million actions will not directly help in the quest for self-realization.

Calendar and Upcoming Events

Upcoming Events

- August 3rd: Online observation of Gurudev's Mahasamadhi observed at various centers across the world.
- August 1st: Groceries for Families in Need – a monthly distribution of free groceries to local families in need at Chinmayam.
- Multiple online study groups available in the comfort of your own home – please see Flyers in this edition for details.
- August 3rd onward : Chinmaya Ashtottarashata Namavali lectures for 108 days on Chinmaya youtube channel.

Study Groups

- Please contact Sri Ravi Ravichandran ji by email at ravi5211@yahoo.com , if you are interested in learning more about study groups.

Bookstore/Library

- Browse Books, CDs, DVDs, etc. online at www.chinmayapublications.com Contact Sevak to order (Vijay Singh at Chinmayam, Subbarao Kari at Chinmaya Somnath and Bijay Dash at Frederick)

Next Edition of Chinmaya Smrithi

- Articles for the next regular bi-monthly edition – Sep 2020, are due by August 31, 2020
- Email submissions to smrithi-editor@chinmayadc.org.
- Browse Past editions at www.chinmayadc.org/Smrithi/Smrithi.htm

Useful Links:

Central Chinmaya Mission Trust www.chinmayamission.com

Chinmaya Mission West www.chinmayamission.org

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

Chinmayam Chapter – Silver Spring MD website <http://chinmayam.chinmayadc.org/chinmayam-chapter/>

Chinmaya Somnath Chapter – Chantilly VA website www.chinmayasomnath.org

Chinmaya Frederick Chapter – Urbana MD website <http://www.frederick.cmwrc.org/>

Chinmaya Richmond Chapter – Richmond VA website www.chinmayarichmond.org

CMWRC – Washington Regional Center www.chinmayadc.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

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BV students – Please contact the editorial staff if interested to volunteer.

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

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News & Tidbits

Online Summer Camps

Under the inspiring guidance of Swami Dheeranandaji, CMWRC overcame the challenge presented by the pandemic and came up with the innovative idea of running a virtual summer camp. Through the enthusiastic support of the Chinmaya families ably supported by Sevaks, the first ever online summer camp was successfully conducted for four weeks. Kudos to the children, parents and teachers who demonstrated the discipline and values embodied in the Chinmaya Mission. The grand finale with chanting and dance recorded by each family and edited brilliantly by the A/V team was testament to the grace and blessings of Gurudev which continues to inspire the next generation. 175 children participated from across all the CMWRC chapters. In addition to the CMWRC camp, the children and CHYKS also had an opportunity to participate in the 9 week national online summer camp. The online format enabled instruction from Swamijis and Brahamacharis across the country.

JCHYK Online Camp

Continuing the theme of online camps, Vivekji led a weekly online camp for JCHYKs. He continued the tradition established over the last few years of spending a week with high school students talking to them in their own language about topics that enable them to cultivate values drawn from Vedanta. These workshops serve as an inspiration to the students who are all preparing for the challenges of life. This year's workshop titled "Our Culture in Pop Culture" was well attended and proved to be a huge hit with the high school students. In addition, Vivekji spent a couple of sessions with the parents of the JCHYK students answering their questions and concerns.

Launch of CMWRC Youtube channels

CMWRC has launched a new Youtube channel which can be your one-place stop to listen to all the events, discourses and talks from various visiting Vedanta teachers. Please subscribe to this channel and you can access the various events from one channel.

CHYK and Sethukari Retreat

CHYK-DC hosted an online retreat for high school age, college and young professionals under the guidance of Shri Vivek Gupta. Nearly 75 youth joined from various North American centers to study the glory of Divine Mother.

Arpanam

Please refer to the CMWRC website to learn more about this exciting new consolidated fundraising initiative. It offers the Chinmaya family an opportunity to donate at various levels on an on-going basis to support the current and future growth of CMWRC. Inspired by Gurudev's message that true loving is not in passive taking but in dynamic giving, the program is expected to help the mission pay down its debt while also positioning it for future growth to continue to spread the spiritual message of Vedanta. Donors making an Arpanam pledge may fulfill the pledge during the calendar year, and all tax-deductible offerings, such as Gita chanting registration, membership, Bala Vihar, enrichment, Guru Dakshina, event sponsorship, etc. are recognized towards the fulfillment of the pledge.

Please make your pledge today!



Pujya Gurudev
Swami Chinmayananda's
27th Mahasamadhi Day

Pujya Gurudev attained Mahasamadhi on 3rd August 1993. Join us on this special day also known as Aradhana day within Chinmaya Mission, to spend some time reflecting on our own personal practice of Spirituality as a way of expressing gratitude to Pujya Gurudev.

Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda attained Mahasamadhi on August 3rd, 1993. We observe this day each year as one of Sadhana and Chinmaya Aradhana.

Please join us **virtually via zoom** on **Monday, August 3rd** as we observe this special day with puja, bhajans, Vedantic reflection and contemplation.

Chinmayam Program:

7:00 pm to 7:09 pm - Japa of Sri Gurudev's 108 names.

7:11 pm to 7:14 pm - Message of Swami Dheerananda on The 108 Glorious Names of Gurudev!

7:15 pm to 7:45 pm- Bhajans by our Bala Vihar Students.

7:45 pm Concluding Bhajan - Gurudeva Tava Mahaniya Krpa by Krishnapriya

Let us invoke the grace and blessing of the Master who inspired millions to walk the path of courage and wisdom.

27th Chinmaya Mahasamadhi Aradhana
Hosted by Chinmaya Mission San Jose

Chinmaya Mission West invites you to offer gratitude
unto the One whose wisdom lights our path

*Chinmaya
Samarpan*

From San Diego to Sidhbari
Monday 3 August 2020 @ 5.30 PM PDT
Tuesday 4 August 2020 @ 6.00 AM IST

Tune into **You Tube** Chinmaya Channel

Whenever you need me,
close your eyes and
look into your heart -
and I will be there!
- Swami Chinmayananda

Details of Chinmaya Samarpan

Date & Time in PDT: Monday 3 August 2020, 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM PDT

Date & Time in IST: Tuesday 4 August 2020, 6:00 AM to 7:30 AM IST

Connect to: www.youtube.com/chinmayachannel

Highlights:

- Lighting of Chinmaya Jyoti at San Diego at the exact time of Puja Gurudev's Mahasamadhi on 3 August 1993
- Special offerings from Shishu Vihar, Bala Vihar, CHYK, Chinmaya Yuva Rhythms, Chinmaya Setukari
- The Master Speaks - Puja Gurudev's talk from the Gita365 App
- A first-of-its-kind, inspiring dialogue between Puja Guruji Swami Tejomayananda and Puja Swami Swaroopananda
- Befitting conclusion at Puja Gurudev's Mahasamadhi sthala in Sidhbari ashram.

Talks for
108 Days

*Gurudev's Glorious 108 Names
Sri Chinmaya
Ashtottarashata Namavalih*

Starting
AUG 3

LISTEN ON
YouTube

*It is by Divine Grace Alone
we attain the Blessings of being under
the glorious wings of The Glorious Master
Swami Chinmayananda!*



CHINMAYA MISSION[®]
WASHINGTON REGIONAL CENTER

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<https://bit.ly/CMWRCDiscourses>



Chinmaya Mission® Washington Regional Center Northern Virginia Chapter

CHINMAYA SOMNATH

Our Children, Our Future



Chinmaya Mahasamadhi / Sadhana Day

Monday, August 3rd Evening

Hari OM,

Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda attained Mahasamadhi on August 3rd, 1993. We observe this day each year as one of Sadhana and Chinmaya Aradhana.

Please join us **virtually via zoom** as we observe this special day with puja, bhajans, Vedantic reflection and contemplation. **Click here** for Paduka Puja document. You may perform puja to Sri Gurudev concurrently at your home altar.

Swamiji has asked all participants to arrive by 6.45 PM for start of Puja. Zoom entry closes at 6.59 PM.

Chinmaya Somnath Program Details (via Zoom) - 6.45 PM - 8:00 PM

- 6:45 - 6:59 pm - Silent japa and bhajans
- 7:00 - 7:25 pm - Paduka Puja
- 7.25 - 7:50 pm
 - Sadhana Day Message by *Arvind Bhagwat ji*
 - *Swami Dheerananda's* message for launch of Gurudev's 108 Glorious Names - a video series
 - Silent Reflection
- 7.50 - 8:00 pm - Arati & Offering

[Connect to Zoom](#)

Zoom entry closes at 6.59 pm (don't be late)

📱 Connect to zoom via: <https://bit.ly/2020MahasamadhiDay>

Zoom Meeting ID: 920 3003 6615

Passcode: 870583



**Chinmaya Archives presents rare
anecdotes and interactions with the
saints who ignited the spiritual quest
of Swami Chinmayananda**

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Saturday, August 1, 2020

10:00 am - 12:00 pm



Chinmayam

46 Norwood Rd

Silver Spring, MD - 20905



Mark your calendar for the next upcoming drive on September 12 at 2:00 pm!

www.chinmayadc.org



Chinmaya Mission® Washington Regional Center



||श्री राम प्रसन्न||



श्रीमद दासबोध

समर्थ श्री रामदास स्वामी

श्री. अरविंद भागवत यांचे मराठीतून विवेचन
[इंटरनेट माध्यमातून]

दर सोमवारी संध्या. ७.०० ते ८. १५ व
दर मंगळवारी संध्या. ७. ४५ ते ९.००
(East Coast time)

Every Monday 7 pm – 8.15 pm and
Every Tuesday 7.45 pm – 9.0 pm
[East Coast time]

Both sessions are Live and
cover identical portions

Lectures will be in
Marathi language

For Zoom code send E-mail:
BMIPFTOET@gmail.com
(with your choice of the session)

<https://tinyurl.com/dasbodh>



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STUDY VIVEKACUDAMANI

with Swami Dheerananda



Every Thursday
7:00 pm - 8:30 pm (EST)
ONLINE

ADI SANKARĀCĀRYA'S
VIVEKACŪDĀMANI
COMMENTARY BY SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA

Vivekachoodamani classes will restart on 1st October, 2020



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Join the **ONLINE STUDY GROUP**
based on *Sundarkand's* section of
Sri Ramcharit Manas

HUMAN TO HANUMAN

Journey of a Devotee

Sundarkand, from Sri Ramcharit Manas, is a journey of a devotee, portrayed in poetic-drama style. Saint Tulsidas ji, a great vedantin, has packed everyday management gems in his description of Hanumanji's voyage to Sri Lanka. Here we will study how Hanumanji determines what is the right time to pray and time to act? How to negotiate? How to be an ideal contributor to the team? How to prioritize goals? Very relevant situations in our life today!

MEETS ONLINE

Starting July 26, 2020

EVERY SUNDAY
3:30 PM TO 4:45 PM

Moderated by
Arvind Bhagwat (Vedanta Teacher)

To receive the link, contact
sundarkandstudygroup@chinmayadc.org

www.chinmayadc.org



CHINMAYA MISSION BALA VIHAR

Story of Time

Enchanting stories from our scriptures
filled with hidden gems of wisdom!

Saturdays 10.30 AM IST

From April 11th Onwards

Live on Chinmaya Channel  YouTube



with
Swami Swaroopananda

Global Head, Chinmaya Mission

Join us on this enriching ride with Talks on Shri Guru Tattva - 108 names of Shri Guru
- The absolute Being by Swami Tejomayananda!

Live Daily, 7:30 to 8:00 PM IST on Chinmaya Channel, YouTube.



FOOD FOR THE NEEDY

Chinmaya Mission has been distributing food through non-profit organizations in our communities whose values align with the CMWRC vision of serving the needy, by collecting food and donations from Mission members. CMWRC relies on YOUR generous contributions and volunteer services to serve the needy in the community.

WAYS TO DONATE



- Make a check payable to CMWRC (in the memo section please write "Food for the Needy")
- Online - with eCheck (preferred) or with Credit Card at www.chinmayadc.org/Food-For-The-Needy

YOU CAN ALSO DROP-OFF non-perishable, unexpired, unopened Food Supplies at

KAILAS NIWAS (Rear Entrance) *Before Dropping, Text or Email Dharmaraj*
 46 Norwood Road Ph: (301) 928-7753
 Silver Spring, MD 20905 Email: draghavan@Howard.edu

CHINMAYA SOMNATH *Before Dropping, Text or Email Vani*
 4350 Blue Spring Dr Ph: (703) 869-5039
 Chantilly, VA - 20151 Email: vani_yama@hotmail.com

Vegetarian ONLY

Join the Team Send email to AnnaDaanaTeam@chinmayadc.org

Arpanam

An Offering of Gratitude | Annual Donation Pledge

True loving is not a passive 'taking' but a dynamic 'giving'
- Swami Chinmayananda

GROW SPIRITUALLY AND HELP OUR CENTER EXPAND TO SERVE MORE



Whoever offers me with devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit, water, that I accept, offered by the pure-minded with devotion - Geeta Chapter 9, Verse 26

Pledge Today Generously

- Patram (Leaf) - \$2700 and above
- Pushpam (Flower) - \$5400 and above
- Phalam (Fruit) - \$10,800 and above
- Toyam (Water) - \$21,600 and above

Bala Vihar

Enriching our children with the great knowledge of Sanatana Dharma through scriptural stories, games and activities. Join us every week as we learn about values and ideals with laughter and joy!

'Children are not vessels to be filled, but lamps to be lit.'
- Pujya Swami Chinmayananda

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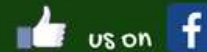
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Vedantic knowledge teaches one how to live in happiness. During our day-to-day life struggles, we often forget that the well-spring of all joy is within us. This knowledge, and the steps to realize and experience it, is the science of Vedanta. The abiding knowledge of Vedanta rests in the vision of the One Reality, a vision that transcends race, class, creed, gender and nationality. The teachings of Vedanta are profound, yet simple; completely personal, yet universal; and above all, very relevant in today's world. The learning and application of Vedanta enables not only spiritual development, but personal and professional growth as well.



CHINMAYA MISSION® WASHINGTON REGIONAL CENTER



Chinmayam Devi Group

led by Medha ji

UPANISHAD GANGA

Upanishad Ganga is a television serial produced by Chinmaya Mission and directed by Dr. Chandraprakash Dwivedi (director of famous TV serial Chanakya).

It covers the entire gamut of Indian culture, heritage, philosophy and wisdom. It addresses, in the form of a drama, the universal questions such as who am I, what are my duties, how to be happy and successful.

Join and discuss the practical applications of the knowledge in our day to day life.

Every Tuesday | 8.30 pm - 9:45 pm
via Zoom (Online)

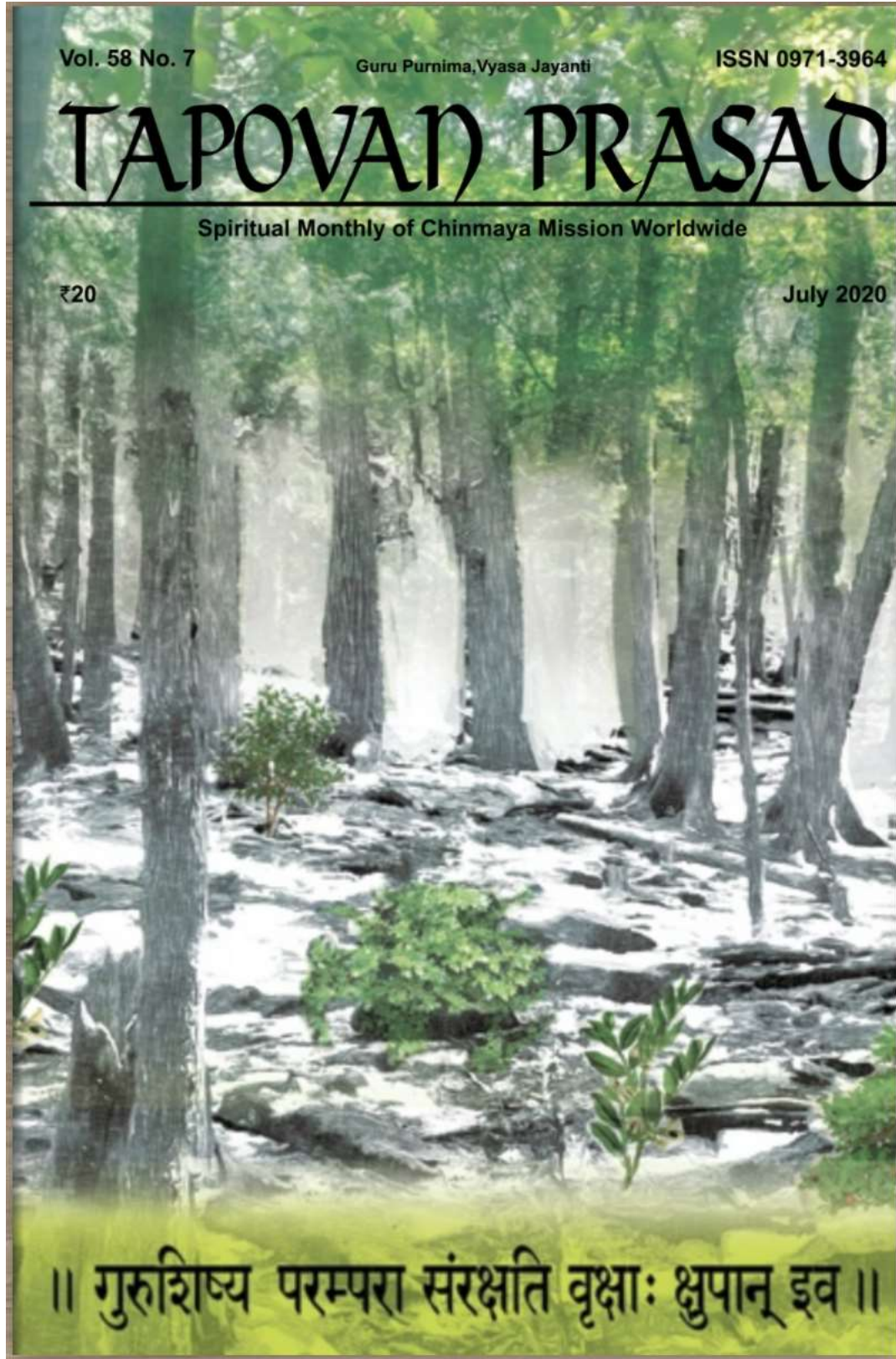
Smt. Medha Bhagwat, a scientist by profession, CMWRC member since 1988, serving currently as a Vedanta Teacher, formerly as a Bala Vihar teacher.

**To register, interested Devis can contact
Chinmayam Devi Group Coordinators:**

Pratima Jadhav | Deepa Krishnan

Email: chinmayam_devigroup@chinmayadc.org





Please look out for the announcement about your family Chinmaya Mission magazines now available online.

This includes online versions of Balavihar and Tapovan Prasad.

Subscribe to Inspiring Chinmaya Mission Magazines

Mananam Series of Books These are inviting and engaging series of books that go into depth into one selected spiritual theme per edition (Truth, Compassion, Education, Fear- face it, Science of Sciences, and so on) and bring perspectives on it from different thinkers, writers and traditions of the world. The recent editions of Mananam have focused on the life, teachings, inspiration and legacy of Sri Gurudev, in honor of his birth centenary.

Subscription: please write to editor@mananam.org. Current and past editions can be purchased at our bookstores.)

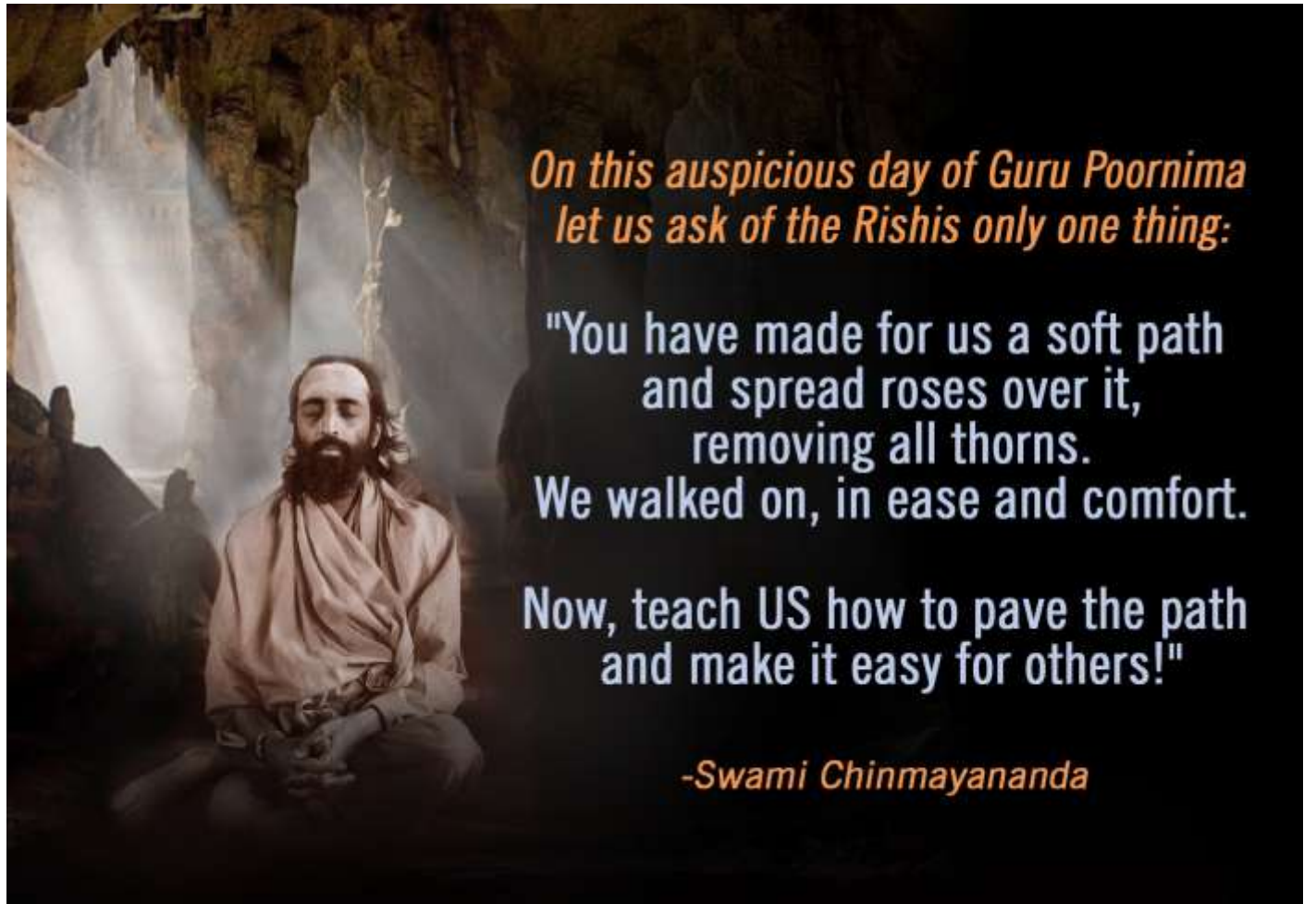
Tapovan Prasad Subscription (print version or E-version). Tapovan Prasad brings out each month - excerpts from teachings of Swami Tapovan Maharaj, Sri Gurudev, Swami Chinmayananda, Guruji, Swami Tejomayananda and CM acharyas. In addition, it captures the pulse of Chinmaya Mission world-wide with reports on happenings and upcoming events.

Tapovan Prasad Subscription Instructions:

1. Please go to www.tapovanprasad.com website
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3. Subscription - Overseas'
4. Choose the required subscription package and then Click on 'Add to Cart' and then 'Go to checkout'
5. Please provide username, password, email...details, etc...and proceed.
6. When you click on Axis Bank / CCAvenue payment gateway, enter details and complete the process. (Do revert in case of any problem)

Please consider Other Chinmaya Magazines for your subscriptions:

- Bala Vihar magazine for children, parents and Bala Vihar teachers. subscription link: http://www.chinmayamission.com/balvihar-subscription-overseas/#.WE_LYvkrJhE
- Chinmaya Udghosh - magazine for youth - appropriate for 13-30 year olds subscription link: http://www.chinmayamission.com/our-magazines/chinmaya-udghosh/#.WE_MBPrJhE



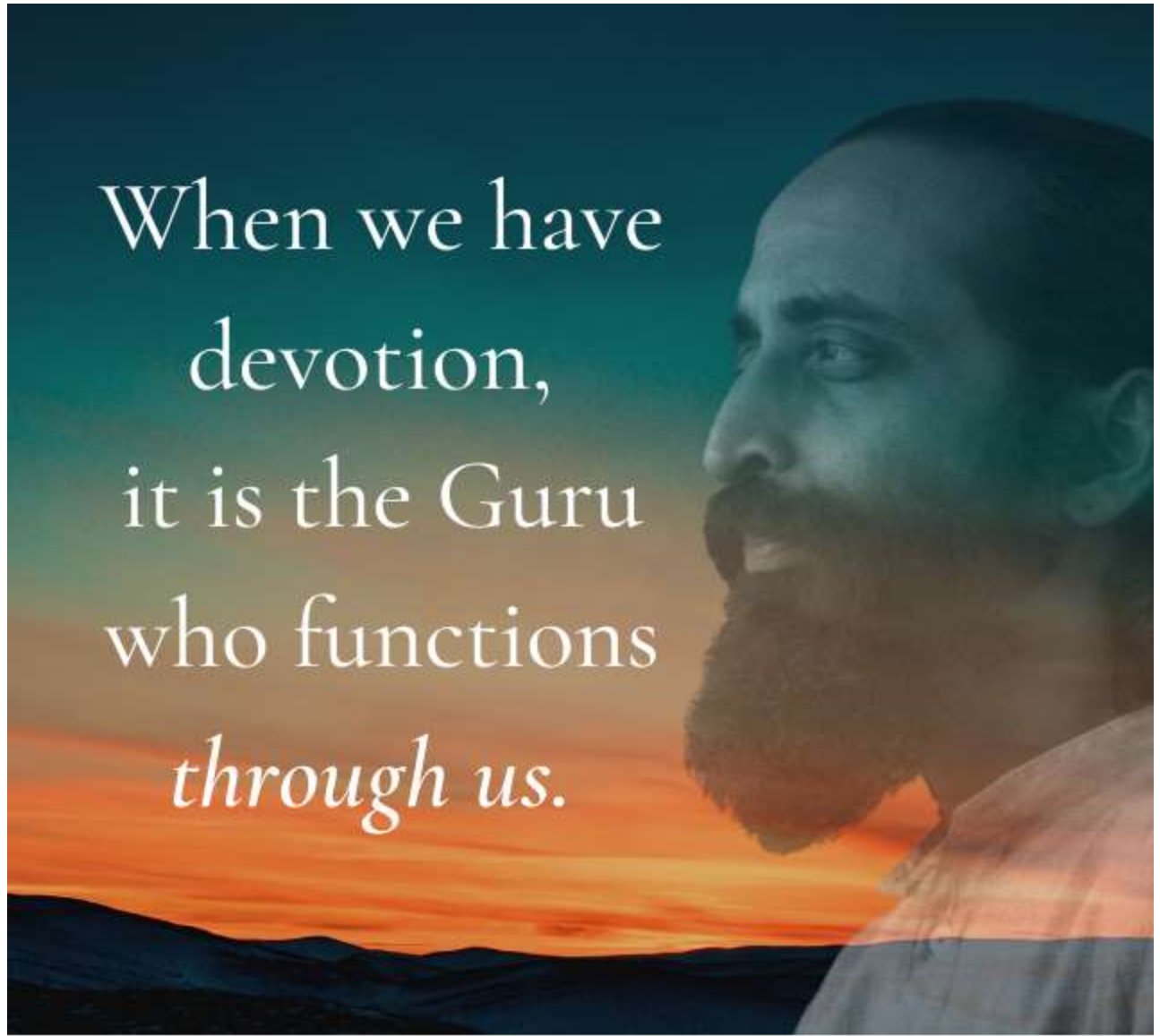
*On this auspicious day of Guru Poornima
let us ask of the Rishis only one thing:*

"You have made for us a soft path
and spread roses over it,
removing all thorns.
We walked on, in ease and comfort.

Now, teach US how to pave the path
and make it easy for others!"

-Swami Chinmayananda





When we have
devotion,
it is the Guru
who functions
through us.

SWAMI SWAROOPANANDA



Messages from Central Chinmaya Mission Trust



Swamins, Brahmacharins and Centres of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide

Dear All,

Hari Om!

Greetings from Coimbatore!

The sankalpa of mahatmas, the silent prayers of millions, have resonated down several centuries. The combined strength of their invocations and the efforts of thousands of unsung devotees, have in one voice resulted in the decision to rebuild the Rama temple, in the haloed precincts of Shri Rama Janmabhoomi!

On 5 August 2020, Shri Narendra Modi, Honourable Prime Minister of India will offer prayers, along with saints, scholars, trustees and other dignitaries of the Shri Rama Mandir. Following this, he will lay the foundation stone of the temple, the first step towards the reconstruction of this ancient and venerated shrine in the birthplace of Lord Rama in Ayodhya. Co-incidentally, the preliminary pujas are scheduled to begin on 3 August 2020.

On Wednesday, 5 August 2020 at 10:30 AM (IST), I request all Mission centres, ashrams, and members to offer worship to their respective deities, sing bhajans, offer flowers, perform aarti and distribute prasad.

In the evening to signify Bhagawan Rama's return to His very own Ayodhya, decorate your homes and light lamps and make it a poignant and memorable day. Light the lamps accompanied by the chant of – Shri Rama Jaya Rama, Jaya Jaya Rama – 108 times. Feel blessed for being witness to this unforgettable occasion.

May Bhagawan Rama's presence fill your hearts, bless your families and light up your homes!

Love,

At His feet,

Swami Swaroopananda

Global Head, Chinmaya Mission

To: All CMW Centers

Hari Om! Salutation!

Chinmaya Mission West is organizing a National Teachers Conference on Saturday, August 15th, 2020.

What? A **virtual national conference for all teachers & coordinators** in all wings of the Mission from Shishu Vihar - Vanaprastha

Why? As we are experiencing challenging times, many centers are deciding to take up their activities on a virtual platform for the next season or year.

During this conference we will explore the following:

- Creating a Safe & Secure Virtual Environment
- Innovative Virtual Teaching Ideas for each group/wing
- Networking with fellow teachers

Who? This training will be conducted by Swamins/Brahmacharins/Sevaks of Chinmaya Mission and is open to all **Chinmaya Mission Sevaks who are Teachers or Coordinators for the following:**

Shishu Vihar

Bala Vihar

Junior CHYK

CHYK

BV Coordinators

Adult Study Group

Devi Group

Vanaprastha

Swaranjali

Chanting

Language/Math/Other extra classes

When? Saturday, August 15th 2020

Time ? - Please note time zones for Eastern Time (ET), Central Time (CT) and Pacific Time (PT)

11AM to 5.00 pm ET (with a break from 1.30pm to 3.00pm ET)

10.00 to 4.00pm CT (with a break from 12.30 to 2.00pm CT)

8.00 to 2.00pm PT (with a break from 10.30 to 12.00noon PST)

How? Registration details for the **VIRTUAL CONFERENCE** will be available soon on www.chinmayamissionwest.com. All participants **must** register and will receive a detailed email on how to join the conference.

Please save the date and share this information with all teachers and coordinators in all wings from Shishu Vihar - Vanaprastha. And please stand by for more details on registration that will follow soon.

At His Feet,

Aparna Devi Jujavarapu

Executive Secretary

Chinmaya Mission West





Swamins, Brahmacharins and Members of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide

Dear All,

Hari Om!

Chinmaya Mission West (CMW) organizes a beautiful and befitting camp every year in the lead up to Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda's Mahasamadhi Day.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, this year's programme has taken on a different form, which will benefit seekers not just in the West, but world over!

Hosted by **Chinmaya Mission San Jose**, the **27th Chinmaya Mahasamadhi Aradhana** will be marked by a **special 9-day online series of talks** by **Pujya Swami Swaroopananda**, on a topic which Pujya Gurudev discoursed on for decades together, ***Krishna's Powerful Instructions (KPI)***.

In Pujya Gurudev's words:

"Krishna's call to man was a call of duty, the call of work, the call of living God-experience in and through life."

Dates: Saturday 25 July to Sunday 2 August, 2020

Timings: 7:00 AM (PDT) which is 7:30 PM (IST) same day. [Click here](#) for your local time.

Highlights: Daily musical prelude by Chinmaya Swaranjali members from North American Chinmaya Mission Centres (beginning at 6:50 AM PDT / 7:20 PM IST), takeaway messages, video clips of Pujya Gurudev at the end of each session, and more!

Duration: 10 minutes Swaranjali offering, 40 minutes session

Connect to: www.youtube.com/chinmayachannel

KPIs are understood in the corporate world as Key Performance Indicators. Here, the KPIs shared by Pujya Swamiji will provide much needed inspiration and guidance for seekers to discover the purpose of life and the tools needed for living a purposeful life.

The e-flyer is attached and information about the talks will also be shared on CCMT's social media avenues. Please publicise the talks widely so that *Krishna's Powerful Instructions* can reach the maximum seekers.

A **KPI booklet** is being created especially for the online discourses, including the verses of Bhagavad Gita which will be covered. **The PDF will be available to download from 9:00 AM PDT / 9.30 PM IST on Monday 20 July 2020**, via this link: <http://share.chinmayamission.com/docs/KPI-Booklet.pdf>

Coming up soon is a very special global online observance of Pujya Gurudev's Mahasamadhi, observed as Sadhana Day in Chinmaya Mission. This too is being organized by Chinmaya Mission West, and promises to be a heartwarming, poignant offering for the global Chinmaya family. Stay tuned for more details, which will be shared soon.

With Prem & OM!

In His Service,

Manisha Khemlani

Chief Executive Officer

Reflections on Vibhishana Gita

Class of 2019-2020 (Shivanandam 300 class)



Characteristics: Chariot (Colorful), Bedroom (comforting), Altar (connected) I need to fix my bathroom light.

To me, the Vibhishana Gita is a guide to how to live my life. It presents a set of principles I should live by and characteristics I should possess. To me, the Vibhishana Gita says that when armed with these morals and attributes, I can overcome any challenge that comes my way.

In the Vibhishana Gita, Ravana pulls up to the battlefield decked out in armor, weapons, chariots, and other things that one would consider vital to win a war. After seeing Ravana, Vibhishana expresses his concern over the battle to Rama, since Rama wasn't equipped with the same gear that Ravana was. In fact, Rama didn't even wear shoes. Rama responds to Vibhishana by saying that Rama possessed something that Ravana did not, and can win any war, regardless of the opponent: the chariot of dharma. The chariot of dharma is a group of standards that, when used, can defeat our enemies such as passion and greed. The chariot consists of qualities like compassion, discrimination between what is right and wrong, strength, forgiveness, valor and fortitude, and many others.

Personally, I occasionally find myself straying away from the chariot. When this happens, I manage to remind myself of the Vibhishana Gita and the morals that come with it. That is the main importance of the Vibhishana Gita. It is a constant reminder of the positive traits I should demonstrate and live by.

For example, when someone makes a mistake, instead of getting frustrated with them like I used to, I am now forgiving about it, which is represented by the first rope of the chariot. This is something that I have been practicing for a while now, so much that it has become second nature. This has improved important relationships in my life and reduced the negativity in me and I'm guessing the other person as well. Instead of being upset about the past, which is something I cannot change, I now move on, and instead focus my energy on trying to fix the mistake.

In addition, the second horse, which represents discrimination, is something that has been playing an important role in my life. I can now discriminate between right and wrong, but also know that there is a gray area between the two, and there are different levels of wrong and right. Furthermore, I can now discriminate against other main ideas as well, such as what my duty is as a student and what is not, what is false and what is true, and others. With my sense of differentiation in mind, I can now navigate my life clearly, without confusion.

On the other hand, there are some things I can still work on. For example, the third rope, which stands for equanimity of mind, is something I am practicing. When I find myself getting stressed or anxious which can be quite often, I remind myself to clear my head, take deep breaths, and try to mentally adapt to the changing circumstances. The world is going to change, for better and for worse, whether we like it or not. If our happiness solely depends on the outside world, then our moods will be all over the place. In order to achieve equanimity of mind, one must let go of the mentality that life will always go their way. One must accept that something will always go wrong and that we may not get the results that we want. I am trying to find happiness that does not rely on outside events, but rather on myself. I

am trying to find happiness inside me, and not be affected by the ever-changing world. I am not there yet, but I am trying my best to get there.

The rider of this Chariot, or the charioteer, also must possess certain things. One of these things is the Bow of Self-Knowledge. Self-knowledge means being conscious of our actions and more importantly, our thoughts, since our actions are all results of our thoughts. All negative qualities stem from being self-ignorant, or lying to ourselves about our nature and tendencies. Once we fully realize and acknowledge our flaws and wrong-doings, then only we can try to remove them. One cannot claim to possess the traits of the chariot of dharma, when one's actions clearly say otherwise. If we pretend that our faults don't exist and that our wrong-doings were actually right, then we can't eradicate them and become a better person.

I realized that every person has a chariot of dharma. We are all the charioteers of our own chariot. If we possess all the qualities of the chariot of dharma, then we will slowly learn of true, inner happiness. If we miss one quality, then that part of the chariot will break down, and we will slow down on our journey to happiness. The more qualities we miss, the slower we shall go, and if one lacks every quality, then they will go nowhere. There is no measurement to the traits; as long as we have them to some extent, as long as our actions reflect these traits, then we are on the path to success. Step by step, I am trying to acquire all the parts of the chariot of dharma. I am working on making sure my actions also exhibit the chariot of dharma. I do not currently possess all the characteristics, but I am confident that I will achieve that soon.

Riddle:

I saved the life of my king
And was granted a wish
Trouble was what the boon would bring
As there was someone I'd want to banish

I was rumored to be the King's favorite wife
We wanted kids so we held a special pooja
Me and two other queens gave four boys life
Whose personalities had no flaw

Our sons grew into men
Rama was set to inherit the throne
I was happy for him, but then
I grew jealous to the bone

I was fueled by utter rage
As I sent the crown prince away
Until he was to gain 14 years of age

Much to the Kingdom's dismay

My son refused the crown

I realized my mistake

People started looking at me with a frown

And from that day on, my heart ached

Simran Mattikalli



Characteristics: Strong (Chariot), Beautiful (Altar), Quiet (Bedroom)

Shriyan Reyya



Garden (Relieving)

Chariot (Vivid)

Couch (Unwinding)

Altar (Heavenly)

There are a few, but significant, reasons why the Vibhishana Gita specifically affected my life and my point of view.

The Vibhishana Gita is expressing the way living should be. For instance, in the Vibhishana Gita, Vibishana was concerned about his companion, Lord Rama, who was not fortified at all. The fact that he was concerned for Rama shows how influential their friendship was. Likewise, we should be like Vibishana towards our friends and family. I felt more connected to them after I studied the Gita. Another way to look at the Vibhishana Gita is that it's like an instructional manual. Instead of working through the problems without the instructional manual, we can use it to get

through difficulties. Correspondingly, I used the Vibhishana Gita to get through several circumstances. It helped me realize that some answers don't have to be complicated; it can just be simple, as long as it fixes the problem.

Furthermore, we all are Vibhishana *attempting* to be Rama. Since I've joined Chinmaya Mission, all I've been hearing is "be more like Lord Rama" or "we have to look up to Sri Rama." And all this time I've been assuming that we are praising Lord Rama because he is a God! But I had it all wrong. The Vibhishana Gita has taught me that whoever we look up to, we become more like that person. In the Gita, Vibhishana looks up to Lord Rama just like how we do.

The Vibhishana Gita has improved the way I look at others and myself. It motivated me to become a more dependable person. The Gita also encouraged me to be a little braver like Vibhishana. After all, what's the worst that could happen?

Riddle:

I'm a woman who followed my duty. And called my husband "My Lord." I was kidnapped by evil because of my beauty. I was brave, confident and courageous for which I was adored. I walked through fire to prove my purity, for the kingdom of my Lord, whose skin was as blue as the sea.

Gauri Vellanoore



1. My favorite room is my study room.
2. My chariot is defying physics. Can you figure out how?
3. My altar is there with the golden accessories.
4. I don't like how the basketball baseboard in my house is broken and we can't fix it until the coronavirus is gone.

The Vibhishana Gita affected my life in many ways. There are many positives of the Vibhishana Gita. Some positives are that it instills good values like compassion and kindness. It shows the idealistic person and how they live life and their personality. Believe or not though it is basically invented to compare us the modern spiritually "devolved" person to Vibhishana. The Vibhishana Gita is an archetype of us in real life. We are Vibhishana in the Vibhishana Gita. We are the people to pray to god spiritually but, there is one undeniable difference that makes us not Vibhishana. We only pray to crave our desires. That is one of the things I learned from the Vibhishana Gita. An example is that a human wants money. He prays to god to get the money but, once he gets it he disregards god and the cycle continues and continues. Whilst Vibhishana prayed for Rama's success we only prayed for our own benefits. Everyone says pray to lord and you will succeed and meditate and you will be better off but they forget one thing that makes these actions the same as normal actions such as playing video games or playing outside. They need to say pray to the lord and meditate to the lord while not wanting anything and then you will be happy. The reason why they don't say this however, is because saying this is a lost cause. Praying aimlessly does not help either because you are just being idle. Instead ideally you should be praying with an aim to get closer to the lord. Everyone can be physically brave or valourous but not just anyone has enough bravery to chant to the lord for 12 hours a day. The Vibhishana Gita also mentions that praying to the lord and not putting in effort does not work. You have to put in both efforts. How will I apply this in my life? I kind of know what I will do but, I don't know if it will work. You always have to adapt and adjust your methods but right now I thought of a rewards and punishment system to help myself. Practicing any of the Vibhishana Gita values will give me 5 points and if I fail I will lose 10 points. If I get 100 points I get a reward while if I

lose 50 points I will get a punishment. I can also practice it by being merciful to everyone and offer everyone things they want or need.

The Vibhishana Gita has taught me that hard work, combined with good values, and praying to god will help me and humans in general semi-perfect because being perfect is impossible.

Riddle:

Who was the OG King of Monkeys in ramayana who fought a demon, who got killed by an arrow to the back by Rama, and took all that Sugreeva took dear

Varun Pillai



Colorful (Altar); Strong (Chariot); Comforting (Bed). One thing I'd change (the ledge at the front door because a lot of people don't notice it and they trip and fall).

This year, the Vibhishana Gita has made an impact on my life. And in different aspects too. I mean this as my point of view and the way I live my life. The Vibhishana Gita contains a lot of morals and key points that one should have in their life. Now this could be from the chariot, or the characters and the way they react to situations.

For me personally, the parts of the chariot have taught me how to control different aspects of myself in order to be a better person. We learned what each part of the chariot is and how it relates to ourselves. The main one being the charioteer, the one who controls the chariot. When you use that analogy, the charioteer is the one who controls the chariot and the parts they represent, just like how I'm able to control the way I react to things. The parts of the chariot represent different types of traits one should have when going about life. For example, the flags represent truthfulness (*satya*), and good character (*sila*). This definitely made a huge impact on my life as I realized it is more than just being a good person on the outside. It represents that I should have a good character and good mentality on the inside as well.

Aside from the mental perspective, the horses of the chariot represent the physical changes in my life, the ones others can see. The horses stand for strength (*bala*), discrimination of right and wrong (*bibeka*), self control (*dama*), and care for others (*parahita*). All four of these horses made a big impact on my life. The first one, strength, meant to me having the willpower (and/or strength) to do my homework on time. Last year, I would procrastinate a lot and end up having to rush and do my homework the morning before. This resulted in bad grades due to rushed, silly mistakes. So when I learned about the strength aspect, I realized that it is me who has to build the strength to do things on time. The next one, discrimination, was also important because it helped me realize that I need to think things out before making impulsive decisions. Discrimination in this context means differentiating right and wrong. Personally, I still need to work on this and think my decisions through and ask myself, *is this a good or bad idea?* Before making an impulsive definition. The next one is self control and this one can be valid for many people about many aspects. Whether it's food, work, or playing on electronics, we all tend to do too much of it. This is why I realized why having self control over how much I use my phone and laptop is so important. Once I started limiting myself, I realized how much I was missing out on because I was preoccupied. Finally, the last horse, care for others, was one that was pretty important, but it was not

as significant as the others. Personally, I did not have to make a big change in my life for this one but it helped me understand why we should do things for everyone's benefit rather than our own, or a couple of people.

All aspects of the chariot and the Vibhishana Gita as a whole were very helpful to me and guided me on how I should go about doing things in life, but the charioteer and the horses were probably the most helpful. Next year, I will apply all of these things to my life and reflect on how much of a difference has been made.

Riddle:

I am part eagle, part human and sometimes Vishnu's vehicle. My front two hands are in namaste and the other two hold a jar of amrita. Who am I?

Hridaya Babu



Characteristics: Comfortable (Coach), colorful (Altar), strong (Chariot)

I think of the Vibhishana Gita as a guide on how to live my life. It shows me many concepts and characteristics I should follow. If I do I can overcome any challenge that comes my way.

In the Vibhishana Gita, Ravana comes to the battlefield with armor, weapons, and chariot. Seeing this Vibhishana got worried for Rama because Rama only had a bow and arrow and expressed his concern to him. Rama responds to Vibhishana by saying Ravana may be equipped with armor and have a chariot but I have something he does not. The chariot of dharma. The chariot of dharma consists of many qualities such as forgiveness, discrimination, and compassion.

The 3rd horse, self-control has played a major role in my life. I can now control my thoughts. I can now stay on task and finish my work on time. For example, when we started to have online school my friends used to play games during the time they were supposed to do work. I used to be so tempted to play I would play and forget to do my work. Now I do my school work then go and play with my friends.

On the other hand, there are still things I need to work on such as Forgiveness. I try to be more forgiving now. When someone makes a mistake I try to stay calm instead of getting mad at them. For example when my sister puts the scissors in the wrong places. Instead of getting mad at her I stay calm and forgive her.

Riddle: When a child once tried to eat the sun, found Sita, son of Vayu the wind god

Roshni Suresh

The Vibhishana Gita has affected my life in many different ways. It's taught me characteristics and ideas that can change my life.

In the gita Rama comes to the battlefield without any armour and only a bow and arrows. Ravana comes fully prepared with armour and weapons. Vibhishana is worried for Rama but Rama says that he has something that Ravana does not have: the chariot of dharma. It consists of forgiveness and compassion and discrimination.

The chariot symbolizes how we should live life, the third horse in the chariot is self control and that has played a big part in my life these past few months. With distance learning I have to manage my time and make sure I get my work done. I created a schedule for each week and that has helped me get my work done on time.

However, I need to work on forgiveness because I get mad easily and hold grudges. The Vibhishana Gita has affected my life in many ways.

Riddle:

I was once a king

Now I am a great and wise man

Answer: Viswamitra

Shyla Narula

The Vibhishana Gita is a scripture that is part of the Ramayana. It starts off with Vibhishana, Ravana's brother, surrendering to Rama. Once he sees Rama's army and supplies, he worries about the fate of the war. He asks Rama how they win the war when they do not have as many supplies as Ravana. Then, Rama explains the virtues that he has and how it resembles a chariot which will help him win the war.

Here, the chariot is an extended metaphor with each part of it representing various meaningful traits that we need to win the battle of our life. For example, the wheels of the chariot stand for valour and fortitude. By embodying these two virtues you will be able to move forward in life. Just like how the wheels of the chariot moves warriors through the battlefield. The horses help to move the chariot and work in concert with the wheels to propel us forward. The four qualities that are assigned to each horse are detachment, self-control, discrimination, and compassion. We should not be obsessed with material things like people, money, clothing etc. It is because when we pass away, we will not have any of these things with us, only our relationship with God will hold up. Likewise, discrimination is knowing dharma over adharma. By fulfilling our dharma, we will reach moksha or enlightenment which is the ultimate goal of our lives. By acquiring these traits and more it will build the perfect "chariot" for us. Which will carry us through the battlefield of life.

Even though none of us here are going through an actual war. Our life could be the war and the chariot that we've built with these values will help us get through it. Something that I've done and will continue to do is to have faith in God. It is because without God, you are driving your own chariot. If you have faith and only faith in God, he will help guide you throughout life. Which is a theme provided in the Bhagavad Gita as well. Something that I hope to use from this scripture is to practice forgiveness more. Many times after someone does something wrong to me, I will hold a grudge against them. But holding that grudge will really only affect me. I am putting so much energy in doing so which prevents me from doing my dharma and not having inner peace. Finally, this taught me to stick to my dharma and do what is right. When Vibhishana left Ravana's side and went to Rama, Vibhisana wasn't thrilled about it because he left his brother. But, he did this because he understood that his brother was not standing on the right side of the war and that his dharma is to fight for the right thing. Something like this could happen to me and you all too. With peer pressure, "friends" will try to steer us off the path of dharma and it is our job to not leave it. Even if you are influenced by others, just like Vibhishna.

In conclusion, the Vibhishana Gita teaches us how to live our life by embodying all of the traits that Rama shared and that he has. I can only hope and work towards doing the same, so I can win the war of life.

Riddle:

I am a humpbacked maid in King Dasharatha's palace.

I poisoned my master to take what I believed was rightfully her son's.

I told her to exile Rama which was done in malice.

Now, I am the person that everyone shuns.

My existence is a blessing in disguise.

If I didn't poison Kaikeyi, Ravana wouldn't have been killed.

But, I am still wicked in everyone's eyes.

Arjun Nair

One Important thing I learned from the Vibhishana Gita is that there are certain qualities in life that help you steer your life in the correct path. In the vibhishana gita these qualities are referred to what make a chariot. If you did not have the wheels you could not drive. Like that each quality is a part of our life. One quality that I should definitely apply is viveka or discrimination which means knowing right from wrong. Lately I have been procrastinating on almost everything but to apply viveka I should know that procrastinating is wrong because you may feel stressed and in some cases forget or may not do your work on time. So from now on I will stop procrastinating and will get work done early so I have time for other things.

Riddle:

I left my brother's side because I knew he was doing wrong. Then I joined Rama's side

Answer : Vibhishana

Abhay



Characteristics: My room (peaceful), altar (calming), and cheerio chariot (unique).

I also have a fish tank that I haven't cleaned in a while.

Vibhishana Gita is important to me because it provides me with a set of values I need in my life. In the Vibhishana Gita, Rama is barefoot with only a bow and a few arrows. Ravana is in a chariot with armor and many weapons. Vibhishana becomes worried for Rama after seeing this and asks Rama how he plans to defeat Ravana. Rama tells Vibhishana about the Chariot of Dharma which is made of different qualities. If you have these qualities, you can achieve your goals in life.

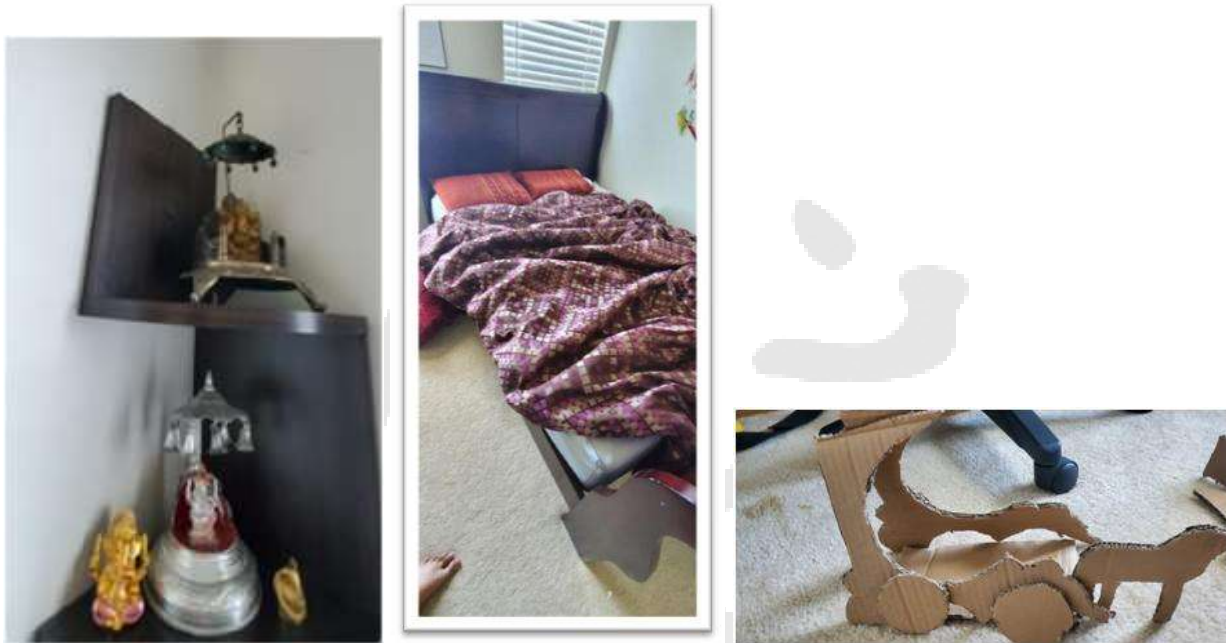
The Vibhishana Gita has been applicable to me in many ways. It has changed the way that I deal with conflict. Before reading the Vibhishana Gita, I would argue more. Nowadays, I am able to look at both sides of the argument and I can reach an agreement more often. It has also changed the way that I look at life. Nowadays, I am more optimistic about the future.

Riddle (Shatrughna):

I am the youngest of King Dhasaratha's sons.

Who am I?

Pranav Gaddam



Characteristics:

Room-Relaxing

Altar-Holy

Chariot-Ruined (My sister sat on my chariot so it doesn't really look that good)

Samarth S



Srijan Kyasa



My thoughts on joining a study group

Sahana Kukke

Though I heard about the value of Vedanta study groups, I made many excuses for not joining one; the time isn't right, other things require my attention, the circumstances won't allow it. However, my recent experience participating in a weekly Self-Unfoldment study group revealed something I had been overlooking all along. Perhaps the time *did* pose a challenge - my children are still young and their activities require my presence - but now I understand it was also the circumstances *within me* that did not allow it. By the Grace of my Guru, Swami Dheeranandaji, the circumstances within me began to shift in such a way that I was finally ready to make a commitment to group study. It would be easy to say that the reason it worked out was because the coming of COVID-19 forced the study group to move online at a time of the morning when my children were still asleep. But, as Pujya Gurudev explains in Self-Unfoldment that we would do well to first prepare the mind through japa before launching into meditation, I had to first prepare myself before I could be ready to hear and honestly consider the thoughtful reflections of other spiritual seekers. This preparation was not something prescribed or scheduled, but a byproduct of listening to Swamiji and following his loving and selfless guidance. As the weeks passed by, I found study group meetings to be a safe place of curiosity and earnest learning that invigorated and refined my thinking and contemplation. As hard as it is to imagine the passing of COVID-19 and a return to my old time-whipped ways, I cannot imagine letting go of the weekly study group. If I am meant to stay involved, then I am sure the conditions - within and without - will align accordingly.

Shradhanjali to Dr. Vimala Nayar



CHINMAYA MISSION®
WASHINGTON REGIONAL CENTER

Maximum happiness for Maximum people for Maximum time



Dr. Vimala Nayar



It is with great regret that we inform the community of the passing of Dr. Vimala Nayar on the morning of June 1st. She is survived by her husband, Dr. Sankaran Nayar and her two children. Vimala came to the US in 1972 and was a Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics, in practice alongside her husband. She was deeply spiritual, maintaining an attitude of devotion and service in all that she did, throughout her life. She was an ardent devotee of Swami Chinmayananda and was actively engaged in the Chinmaya Mission for thirty years. She was dedicated to her family, a loving mother and wife, with a beautiful soul. She will be deeply missed.

Dr. Vimala, together with Dr. Sankaran Nayar, are among the founding members of CMWRC. A student of Vedanta, she regularly attended Swamiji's weekend adult session at Chinmayam and Thursday evening Vedanta classes.

Shradhanjali to Shri Bishnu Poudel (contd)

Various CMWRC members

[**Editor's Note:** Messages of condolence and tribute have continued to pour in from the innumerable CMWRC members whose lives were touched and enriched by Shri Bishnu Poudel. This is the second installment of messages from various CMWRC members]

Bishnuji was a very learned and evolved being and having him in our Gita sessions every Tuesday was a grace or prasad for me. What I will remember him forever was his utmost humility, his approachability and accessibility that made our sessions an inclusive experience - no question, query or comment was too small or not worthy of attention. He embodies the quality of "equipoise" that is so often highlighted in the Gita. His positive spirit and joie de vivre always left me feeling hopeful instead of hopeless. Vijay Kumarji rightly said he will live in many hearts forever and in that vein when I think of Bishnuji the words of the poet Maya Angelou come to mind

People Will Forget What You Said,

People Will Forget What You Did, but

People Will Never Forget How You Made Them Feel

And in the case of Bishnu ji he left so many of us with the feeling of hope.

Sharmila Hardi

I had the good fortune of knowing Bishnuji over the past few years. He graced the Gita study sessions with his comments which were highly nuanced, but conveyed in as simple words as possible and without the abstractions of spiritual concepts. In spite of his deep knowledge of the Gita and his wisdom, he was a humble person to the core. No pride or ego about his grasp of the Gita and other scriptures, and his wisdom - a true sanyasi leading a contemporary life. He always prefaced his comments, with utmost humility, as a "footnote" to what was being discussed. But most of us realized that what Bishnuji had to say was the essence of the shloka, which he was urging us to remember and reflect upon. I used to really look forward to Bishnuji's "footnotes" in every Gita study session.

The biggest take-away for me from Bishnuji's commentary was that it is important to understand the verses in the Gita and read the interpretations by the sages and scholars. But more important than that, he would urge us to reflect on key words in the shloka in our own situational context. Reason it out in your mind, he would say, and then accept it. This was best illustrated when, on some occasions, he led the Gita study session. He called on every single participant to talk about the shloka. His style was not one of passive listening, but very engaging.

Bishnuji is a multi-talented man with tons of energy. I am using the present tense to describe him, because he is still with us in spirit and his guidance will always be there. Nonetheless, Bishnuji, we will miss very much your physical presence in our Gita sessions.

May his soul rest in peace.

Vilas Mandlekar

It is not easy to describe Bishnuji in few words, sentences or paragraphs. He had a personality that leaves an impression on you for life. His curiosity to learn, help others and live his life as he wanted to, were some of the qualities that we all want to emulate! He had deep knowledge about education, politics, philanthropy, spirituality and many other topics. He always shared his knowledge with the others. No question was stupid to him or no task was small. In summary, Dr Poudel ji, was very enterprising, curious about everything, willing to share his wealth of knowledge, and was very confident and humble person.

I am going miss his special greetings and byes after the Gita class.

May his soul Rest In Peace

Surendra Goel

To describe Bishnuji in few words would not do justice to who he was, neither can it express the tremendous loss I am feeling right now. For more than five years now, Bishnuji has always showed up for each and every class -

such was his dedication to part his knowledge with all of us. He was a living encyclopedia on scriptures and his valuable insights were tailored to give us personalized solutions to our very mundane and naive questions. Bishnuji was a guiding light that will remain shining on us till eternity. His wisdom, love of life and enthusiasm will be missed dearly.

I feel fortunate to have him in my life and find solace in the fact that he will forever remain in my heart.

Sangeeta Mandlekar

I am trying to contact Amma on their home phone but could not contact. Please convey my condolences to promilaji . He lived his life fully and has reached his final destination no more to be born again. Love Anubhavananda

Swami Anubhavananda

Dr Poudel was a true Vedanta scholar who was also very fun loving, happy and patient. This elevated soul will be missed sorely especially in our Gita class. Our best wishes and prayers are with his family.

Apra Rajpal

What I will remember most about Bishnuji is how he had tremendous knowledge, Gyaan from scriptures and carried it and shared it with so much humility.

He was kind and gentle.

And he always a personal touch when he would meet you. I think each one of us feels that we had a personal bond with him.

I will miss his presence!

May his soul rest at the Lotus feet of the Lord

Kanchan Anand

I consider myself blessed to have been associated with Bishnuji and PramilaJi for over 15 years.

Bishnuji epitomized the type of life that Krishna advocates in the Geeta. In outline form, what struck me the most about Bishnuji were the following:

1. His lifelong passion for learning and teaching

2. He accepted, without complaining, even the most difficult challenges in life, and dealt with them with samatvam

3. He pursued a diverse range of interests - Rotary Club, Durga temple board, leading various scriptural study groups, teaching at business school, charitable causes, Democratic politics, and more

4. He was humble and always approachable

5. He was intellectually brilliant and blessed with a photographic memory

Krishnan Subramaniam

Today, April 14, 2020 I lost someone who started as my Gita-study group guru. What enables someone to become another's guru? What qualities endeared him towards me? Besides his very learned look, his laughter, his interesting perspective and outlook towards life, his larger-than-life self and character, his ability to listen and understand my questions/comments/perspective, his forever caring nature, his ability to step into different situations and roles, his encouraging nature, his limitless capacity to be supportive, most of all, he stood by me. Texting me and encouraging me to share my perspectives on life and my study on the ways of life and living, my off-the wall questions and my fundamentally differing convictions on what represents "God". This, he did, without judgment and without fail. He leaves a void, an urge to use my time on earth wisely, a need to not live in vacuums. In his death, he has left an indelible mark, a deep sense of ensuring that tasks and connections are not be left incomplete. It is wondrous how a single man leaves behind such valuable lessons. And for that, I am eternally grateful. I wish for my guruji, Dr. Bishnuji Poudel, eternal peace. I wish for him to be one step closer to his goal, his desire...Rest in Peace, Dear Bishnuji. I will miss you and your footnotes. You are on the right path was always his message to me.

Manisha Maniyar

I felt like hearing the sound of falling of a huge lush green tree when the news of the sudden demise of Dr Bisnu Poudel broke. I had that kind of feeling very rarely earlier in my life.

I knew Bishnuji right from my childhood since he is closely related to me through my cousin Pramilaji. Bishnuji was always well dressed, spoke with authority, and was an activist at all fronts right from his young age. He got his

school and college education in Benares where I guess his religious belief rooted and grew right from early age. He went to Delhi for his Masters' and completed PhD. He was active student leader and cultivated friendship with distinguished Nepalese and Indian political leaders. He moved to USA in 1968 since Nepal was too small for his huge mind and ambition.

I met Bishnuji again in 1975 during my first visit in USA as a student. He gave me wonderful briefing about the life as a student in America. My interaction with Dr Poudel became intense when I permanently moved to USA in 2008 after retiring from FAO of the UN. Since then he became my google, a mentor and guru. He was knowledgeable at all fronts. His mind was very sharp and had impressive memory. His respect and love to his wife is an example among the Nepalese community in general and within my extended family in particular. He will be missed at all occasions in the family. His departure is a great personal loss to me.

May his soul rest in peace.

Kumar Upadhaya

I cannot believe Bishnu ji is no more in his bodily form. He will live in our hearts for ever.

Bishnu ji loved life and lived every moment to its fullest, giving to his family, friends and community in whatever way he could. His heart was full of love for everyone. He lived on the principles of Bhagwad Gita. He happily accepted everything that came on his plate as Prasad from the Supreme - never complained about anything in life or spoke ill of anyone

He had a great thirst for knowledge - vedantic and otherwise. Conversations with him were always very engaging because he truly took interest in you. For last 7 years, I saw him every week for our Gita discussion which he rarely missed. He was a beacon of light, guide and mentor who will be dearly missed.

Shuchi Marwaha

Dr. Poudelji's peaceful smile would radiate a loving energy that naturally shined on and touched all who had the fortune of entering his life. I could sense how his loving stoic presence humbly enveloped his infinite wisdom, Vedanta knowledge, and curiosity. This special professor taught me to know *all is as it is*, and to *reflect within, as it is all in me already*. I loved how he celebrated

every moment with passion, patiently encouraging and sharing his unparalleled Jyaan with all who were ready to receive. His calmness, compassion and confidence, with a dignified gentle touch of humor were just a few of his non-wavering qualities. Just humbled, grateful and awed to have had an opportunity to be in his presence and experience the breadth and depth of his philanthropy and love. I would remember Dr. Poudelji as the "Yoda" of my time.

Rajni Goel

It is indeed very sad from my selfish viewpoint that our guiding light has moved on towards immortality, even though I truly think that our guiding light left his body with a big smile. I am sure that almighty has been very proudly watching how many lives this soul has lighted during his lifetime, but even he all of a sudden became restless to embrace tightly this young lad of his.

My association with Bishnuji has been short, even though I have been a acquaintance since long time. I remember the very first time I met him was at our communities Vedic hawan gathering. Back then, he spoke at length about Vedanta. I did not know the basic "V" of Vedanta then and a lot of us in the group were rolling our eyes with the expression when he will stop speaking. Little did I know that if I had heard him well that day I could be a much better man that I am today. Anyway, I am so grateful that my path crossed again in a very beautiful and meaning way. When I used to go to pick him up for class our pravachan would start in the car itself. His often spoken words still keep ringing in my ears, "it is not about us, it is about me, my knowledge, my enlightenment". As all learned people say you are alone in the journey of enlightenment, you have to lift yourself, no one can do it for you.

I have truly lost my father, mentor, guide, friend and most importantly my GURU, my teacher in the body form, but his light will continue to illumine my path. I am not grieving and neither should anyone, as if we do, all his teachings to us would be loss. Remember, he will continue to show us the path from heaven, we just need to experience it.

He certainly has become one with Brahman.

Ajay Marwaha

Reflections on Narayaneeyam – Dasaka 1 -The Glory of the Lord

Kodanate Lakshmanan

Editor's Note: *With the grace and blessings of Swami Dheeranandaji, this is the second in a series of reflections on Narayaneeyam, a devotional composition by Melpathur Narayana Bhattathiripad, containing the essence of Srimad Bhagawatham.*

Narayaneeyam



Om Ganeshaya Namaha. Om Saraswatyai Namaha. Om Shri Gurubhyo Namaha.

Invoking the blessings and guidance of Pujya Gurudev and Swami Dheeranandaji, I am starting a new series with this edition with my reflections on the various chapters of Narayaneeyam, a devotional work that is a condensed summary of the Srimad Bhagwatam.

In the introduction, we looked at the historical significance of Guruvayoor and the circumstances that led to the reknowned scholar Bhattatiri composing the

Narayaneeyam. In the opening chapter (Dasaka – each chapter composed of around 10 verses is referred to as a Dasaka), the glory of the Lord is brought out.

The opening verse of this Dasaka is a summary of Vedanta. Describing the Lord of Guruvayoor (Shri Krishna) as one who has embodied the essence of Brahman, the verse seamlessly assimilates the concept of Nirguna Brahman with Saguna Brahman. Brahman, which is of the nature of concentrated Bliss and Consciousness and free from the constraints of space and time is present in concrete form in the temple of Guruvayoor. This is indeed due to the unparalleled good fortune of the people.

It is often the case that when a great treasure is easily available in one's neighborhood, people often tend to overlook the importance. The Lord has made Himself readily available, but people are mostly lost in the pursuit of worldly pleasures. The poet beseeches the sincere devotees to turn towards the Lord who is indeed the soul of all beings and the eternal abode of happiness.

Continuing the melodic description of the Lord's infinite glories, the poet quotes Sage Vyasa who has said that the Lord is made up of the five subtle elements constituting pure Sattva. Hence, the Lord's image is supremely resplendent and shines out unobstructed. Moreover, being in a concrete form, the Saguna form can be much more easily grasped by sincere devotees. This echoes the statement made by Shri Krishna in the Bhagvad Gita (Chapter 12, Verse 5).

The poet compares the form of the Lord to a wave rising on the pure ocean of Brahma. Indeed, Lord Krishna is considered a Purna Avatara possessing all the six qualities that define auspiciousness. The Bhakti school of thought followed by devout Bhagavatas considers the Personal God as identical with Brahman. The Narayaneeyam verses reinforce this notion; while many of the verses are steeped in deep spiritual Vedantic thoughts, they also refer to the form and past times of the Lord. This has made the work increasingly popular in this day and age.

Verse 5 describes the relationship between the Lord, who is birthless and of the nature of Pure Sattva and Prakriti. At the beginning of every cycle of creation (Kalpa), the Lord manifests Himself in the universe using Prakriti. This concept is beautifully explained by the Lord in Chapter 9

of the Bhagvad Gita. The Lord is desireless; in his mere presence, all activities are triggered. Unlike ordinary mortals whose Sattva is tinged with Rajas and Tamas, the Lord's Pure Sattva is unobstructed.

Having described the glory of the Lord using Upanisadhic language in the first 5 verses, Bhattatiri shifts to describing the Lord with a series of brilliant comparisons. Comparing the Lord to a fresh rain bearing cloud or a bunch of beautiful lily flowers, the poet goes on to say that devotees can meditate on the beautiful form of the Lord and be soaked in a flow of nectar. The Lord of Guruvayoor has the Goddess Lakshmi sporting in His heart. Indeed, only those devotees who have performed many meritorious deeds in their past life can enjoy this divine experience.

Verse 7 shows that mere contemplation upon the form of the Lord helps in developing a healthy perspective. Instead of blaming the Lord for the sufferings of the people (which was his original state of mind before beginning this work), the poet acknowledges that this suffering drives people to seek solace and ultimately revel in the delightful form of the Lord.

Comparing the Lord to the legendary Parijatha tree which is inaccessible to the common person since it is only found in heaven, the poet rightly points out that the Parijatha tree has limited powers in that it can only bestow on the seeker the wishes (s)he entertains. The Lord, on the other hand, is not only accessible to everyone but is also willing to confer countless blessings on devotees. Indeed, the merciful Lord who can confer the highest knowledge through a mere glance is infinitely superior to any other object or being.

It is often mentioned in the Puranas that prayers to various deities yield specific results. The Karma Kanda of the Vedas lays out elaborate rules and procedures for performing various Yagnas. However, Lord Krishna, being of the nature of Brahman Himself is constantly reveling in His own Self and is capable of giving his devotees the supreme joy of union with Himself.

The concluding verse of the opening Dasaka summarizes the glory of the Lord and reinforces the devotees' belief in the supreme power of Lord Krishna. Referring to the Lord through one of the Puranic names as the slayer of the demon Mura, the poet glorifies Lord Krishna as the supreme Lord who is omnipotent and omniscient. (a technique commonly used in Hindu spiritual texts where a particular deity to whom a work is dedicated is considered the Supreme God or Goddess). Typically, the

concluding verse in most of the Dasakas in the Narayaneeyam conclude with a prayer to the Lord to relieve the poet from his physical distress and eventually grant him spiritual knowledge. However, the first Dasaka dedicated to the glory of the Lord is somewhat unique in this regard.

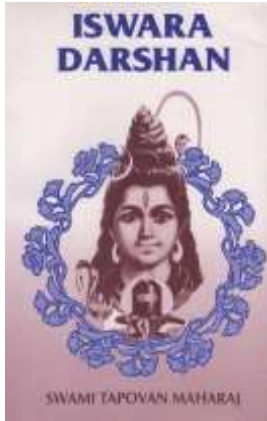
In the next Dasaka, the poet Narayana Bhattatiri will begin a poetic description of the beautiful form of the Lord of Guruvayoor.

To Be Continued

Messages from an autobiography of a Mahatma -19 (Iswara Darshan)

Sitaram Kowtha

Editor's Note: In this series, selected excerpts from the book "Iswara Darshan" by Pujya Swami Tapovan Maharaj of Uttar Kashi, are provided by Sitaram Kowthaji to inspire the students of Vedanta to delve deeply into the glories of a mahatma who inspired our sadhguru, Swami Chinmayananda.



Part 2 Chapter 9 – Basking in the Divine Beauty of Gangotri and Gomukh

Gangotri

At the beginning of Vaisakha, Swamiji left Rishikesh for Uttar Kashi. He was accompanied by a sannyasin from Kerala, by name of Vivekananda. Upon reaching his destination, he set up he stay at Kailas ashram. There he started teaching Upanishads, Brahma Sutra and Bhagavad Geeta. Another sannyasin who hailed from Bengal, Paramananda, became another earnest pupil.

As the weather warmed, Swamiji, accompanied by Swami Vivekananda and Swami Paramananda set out to Gangotri. They took up stay in a two storied cave near the temple of Ganga. Swami Paramananda turned out to be adept at worldly affairs and made arrangements to tend to Swamiji's needs. Swamiji was able to spend time in Gangotri, where life is difficult, in spiritual thought and mental peace. The daily bath in ice cold Ganga was itself tapsya. Though the peaceful mood is disturbed by pilgrims, mostly the atmosphere was conducive for invoking spiritual mood. Unlike Badrinath, Gangotri does not accord much opportunity for walk. The Brahmins who conduct worship at the temple come from a village 16 miles below. They are not well versed in the scriptures

but have firm faith in Hindu practices and are devoted to Sadhus.

A dangerous flooding of Ganga occurred in the month of Shraavan. All the houses on her banks were swept away, and people plunged into unspeakable misery. Swamiji's cave also was flooded and became uninhabitable. Swamiji had to shift his residence to village of Dharalee, which was below Gangotri. The villagers took care of Swamiji. Swamiji returned to Gangotri after about a month and stayed at the cave of Gowrikunda. The priests at the temple provided food supply to him. During the month of Ashwin, Swamiji, accompanied with Swami Paramananda set out to visit Gomukh glacier, the source of water for Ganga. There was no track to follow as they made their way. Over boulders, through forests, crossing streams with strong currents, at the end of first day, they reached the edge of a forest of deodar trees. They spent a very cold night sitting near a fire they kindled. They resumed their journey in the morning. They enjoyed sights of beautiful rare flowers, grass, creepers, bowers, etc. Upon reaching Pushpavasa mountain region, Swamiji's heart danced. They were surrounded by snow-capped mountains, glittering in the dazzling light of the bright Autumn morning. His mind was lifted into an ineffable state of oneness with the Supreme Self.

Gomukh Glacier

The glacier lay long and broad, shining in the sun. It looked like an incarnation of divine beauty, protected on both sides by the snow peaks. The grandmother of Bheeshma renders Bharat Varsha holier and holier still.

Swamiji washed himself in the clear blue waters of a perfectly circular and beautiful lake called Suryakunda. Ganga emerges into view coming out of a cave, where the snowbank at the mouth of the cave is in the form of the mouth of a cow. It is extremely difficult to approach that grand holy cave. There, Swamiji bathed in the holy Ganga, and sitting on a flat piece of rock worshipped the mother of the world singing sacred hymns to her. (Swamiji's works – Gowmukhee yatra and Gangotri kshetra Mahatmyam, provide descriptions of glory of Gangotri and Gomukh).

By early afternoon, Swamiji and his companions, started retracing their steps back to Gangotri. They did not pause any where for rest for fear of snowfall. They rested

overnight in a cave, and it snowed in the night. Next day, they day reached Gangotri despite the intense cold weather. Extraordinary indeed is the spiritual influence of places like Gangotri and Gomukh, secluded and purely satvik by nature. Swamiji resolved to visit them every year. Swamiji then returned to Rishikesh for the winter.

1932 onwards

The retirement to Gangotri during hot season started in 1932 and continued without break every year after that. Swamiji spend some months in Rishkesh, some in Uttar Kashi and some in Gangotri. Though his devotees pressed him, he did not go anywhere else. At Rishikesh, Swamiji's visitors ranged from illiterate to learned, rich and poor, kings and subjects, natives and foreigners, modern graduates and old-fashioned scholars, and men and women. He would cheer them with discourses on devotion, true knowledge, morality, and subjects connected with divine life. While the wealthy devotees attempted to gift him with luxuries, Swamiji rejected them as an insult to his spirit of renunciation.

A friend of Swamiji, Sri Ganga Sankar, made arrangements with a pahadi (a native of the mountains) to have a cottage built at Gangotri. Swami Paramananda took up the project to have the cottage built into a huge rock. There were two rooms in the cottage – one for Swamiji and the other shared by the two sadhus. There was constant fear that the cottage would be destroyed during a landslide (which are common in the Himalayas). The common people nearby would visit Swamiji to learn about karma, bhakti and jnana. Swamiji stayed in this cottage for two years when he visited Gangotri. The second year, he left Gangotri early and spent some time in a nearby (20 miles away) village of Neelang. A few days after he left Gangotri, a severe rainstorm unleashed landslide, and the cottage was destroyed. If Swamiji were to have been there, he would have been crushed as well. Mother Ganga had affectionately warned him in time and saved him from the jaws of death. For the next three years, Swamiji would reside at Gangotri wherever it was convenient to do so. In 1932, another devotee of Swamiji engaged the same pahadi and had a cottage built on the other side of the river, where the bank was broader and more beautiful. It was at this cottage that Swamiji lived without distraction year after year. There he spent his days in uninterrupted bliss.

Poetic composition on Gangotri and Gomukh

After Swamiji's first pilgrimage to Gomukh, he recollected his emotions in tranquility in the form of ten stanzas in

Sardula Vkreeditha metre. This was published by Sri Vallabha Rama Sarma under the title 'Sri Gomukhee Yatra'. After this several distinguished brahmins of Gangotri asked him to describe the glory of Gangotri, noting Badrinath is glorified in the Kedarakhanda of Skanda Purana. Swamiji composed 'Gangotri Kshetra Mahatmyam' and 'Sri Ganga Stotram'. These were translated and published broadly, and Swamiji's fame spread.

While residing at Gangotri, many educated young sannyasins had evinced an eagerness to learn Vedanta from him. The company of such virtuous and devoted young men was pleasing. There were also several mahatmas like Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati, Sri Swami Krishnasramam, Sri Swami Pragnanath and Sri Swami Keshavanandavudhuta. To see them and talk to them was an exhilarating experience.

Wanderings among the high peaks near Gangotri

It became a custom for Swamiji to wander up the mountains near Gangotri. One of his disciples, a young brahmachari named Prabodhananda studied Vedanta, loved to travel, and was strong, well-built. He became a useful secretary for Swamiji. In one of his wandering among the peaks, he went to a plain called Chatuskoshti. He plucked rare and beautiful flowers and made garland to worship the Lord of Kailas. One such flower was Brahmakamala, a flower that looks very much like lotus but grows on snowcapped mountains. On another occasion, he made his way from plains, he climbed with difficulty to top of Matanga mountain, in order to get a clear view of Sumeru mountain. It was clear, cloudless day, and he could not only see the peak of Sumeru mountain, but also Bhrgupatha. The view was indescribable, matchless, wonderful, celestial! The students of Hindu puranas, with bowed heads, will shed tears of joy and forget themselves in happiness, saying to themselves, "indeed I am blessed this day. My life's object is fulfilled for I have set my eyes upon the mountain of gods". Swamiji worshipped the great mountain with great devotion offering divine flowers like the 'Brahmakamala' and sweet fruits like grapes. After that, Swamiji climbed Matanga mountain twice, but could not get to see Sumeru because of clouds blocking the view. On yet another occasion, Swamiji and his companions climbed a high, inaccessible peak. There they saw a small but beautiful lake that filled them with wonder and joy. The sight around was such indeed as to drench all the senses with pleasure! Lovely flowers like the Brahmakamala, shrubs and creepers and climbers full of leaves and flowers, gurgling streams and lovely

landscapes seen nowhere else. Swamiji and his brahmin companions offered flowers and sweet meats to the goddess of the lake. Presently dark clouds gathered, and the group quickly retreated, benumbed by cold rain, and reached a village below by nighttime.

Above Gomukh

Swamiji made it a point to visit Gomukh every year, and except for one or twice, he was able to complete them. On one occasion, he desired to visit the peaks above Gomukh, a plain called Tapovanam, from where one can get a bird's eye view of the glacier. He was able to reach it. The plain was as large as a football field. Among the mounds of snow, there were small lakes, full of clear, blue water. In one of them, Swamiji bathed. Beyond a glacier, he could Bhageerath mountain. He also noted a reddish-brown glacier, Keerthi and worshipped it with all due rites. Like the Keerthi glacier, the glacier Meru at the foot of Sivalinga mountain also afforded him much pleasure. The Gomukh glacier thus extends several miles from Gomukh to the peak Choukhamba. The ancients call this region Alakpuri. It is here that Alakananda has her source. In the puranas this region is described as an abode of yaksha and kinnara, a highly planned and civilized society, described by Vyasa and Kalidas.

To the right of the Gangotri glacier lies the mountain peaks – Choukhamba, Manthani, Sumeru, Kedarnath, Sivalinga, etc. To the left are Chandram, Sathyapatham, Vasuki, Bhageerath, etc. From this location, Badrinath temple can be reached in three to four hours. Himalayas are the source of great rivers – Ganga, Sarayu, Jamuna, Brahmaputra, Sarayu and Sindhu.

Teaching Vedanta at Gangotri

If Swamiji is not on treks to high peaks or Gomukh, Swamiji availed his time to meet pilgrims who were visiting the temple and others who traveled to meet him. Most who visit him were interested in gaining knowledge and Swamiji would offer discourses or answer their questions. There would be some who would respectfully ask why Swamiji and other like him waste their energy at such high altitudes instead of living in population centers and do something productive. Swamiji would gently reply to them that he is only serving his motherland. "Know, there is no greater service than what I render. On the basis of the scriptures, I am giving here practice to seekers of the Supreme Truth and imparting spiritual instructions to them. In this worldly existence red-hot with the fire of sorrow, all that give relief and comfort and happiness is the peace of the Self. Men and women follow the

pursharthas (Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha) solely to this end. People desire name and fame, position and wealth and status, all for this purpose. The peace of the Self, alas, looks like an invaluable treasure unattainable anywhere. If, through the spiritual advice of and his example of a calm, peaceful life, such peace becomes attainable to the world. Who does more good than he? Let these great Rishis, who ever abide in the Self, remain wherever they be, on mountain tops or caves. Know that they are the most valuable ornaments to the world."

Honor and Dishonor

Since Swamiji stayed long at Gangotri, year after year, people of the place understood his holy life and character and began to praise him highly, for his severe tapas and noble qualities. It is an observed fact that the number of man's enemies increases in proportion to his worldly rise. The low valleys (of the Himalayan region) are subject to heavy rains. The high mountains, on the other hand are also subject to the havoc caused by mighty winds. The still higher peaks are assailed by snowfalls also. There is one difference. The low maintains are easily affected, disfigured, and dissolved by rains. On the contrary, the high mountains stand four square to the battering winds and terrible snow falls. They are not broken up or destroyed by these natural forces that assail them. It is the distinction of the truly great that under no circumstance they lose their balance or their dignity. Since all the mighty blow fail to dislocate them, they only add to their beauty by bringing out their nonchalance and their invincibility.

Some envious of Swamiji's fame and standing, which came to him unsought, began to spread scandals to bring his public esteem down. Chief among their attacks was that he was non-brahmin. None of the vile propaganda failed to provoke Swamiji. This is only being brought out to only show how thorny worldly prosperity is and how it increases the number of enemies. For the great ones, who have realized God and know they are nothing but the homogeneous and true Self that never waxes and wanes and who find unceasing bliss in the Supreme Self, rise and fall, honor and dishonor are all the same.

India's Independence

It was at Gangotri that the news of India's independence reached Swamiji in August 1947. He rejoiced heartily over this liberation from foreign yoke. Liberty in the true sense, is not of the land or the body, but spiritual. He prayed that this freedom attained by God's grace or won by manly heroism might be preserved by the children of

Bharat as a single nation forgetting all differences of caste, creed or color.

Uttar Kashi

Sri Ganga Sankar decided to build a cottage at Uttar Kashi for Swamiji's use, in 1935. The cottage was situated at the foot of Varanavata mountain, above Kailashashram, at the center of Ujaily inhabited by Sadhus. Two cottages were built. Since then, whenever Swamiji was Uttar Kashi, he stayed in the larger cottage, and the smaller one was occupied other Sadhus. The cottage stood in a solitary garden, far from the haunts of common men. It was congenial for peaceful meditation and study of scriptures. During the early years of his stay in the cottage, some educated, and well qualified persons used to come to study Vedanta. Swami Atmananda and Swami Dhiresananda were two such men. They were full of humility, and to clear their doubts gave Swamiji pleasure. Inspired by Swamiji, Swami Atmananda wrote and published books like 'Chitta Sambodhanam'.

Swamiji continued to stay in the cottage and no changes such as expansion or rebuilding was done. The natives of Uttar Kashi and Sadhus from the plains and pilgrims on their way to Gangotri used to flock to his ashram for satsang and study of Vedanta. Swamiji devoted a considerable part of his time to many common and distinguished people who would come to his ashram for counsel.

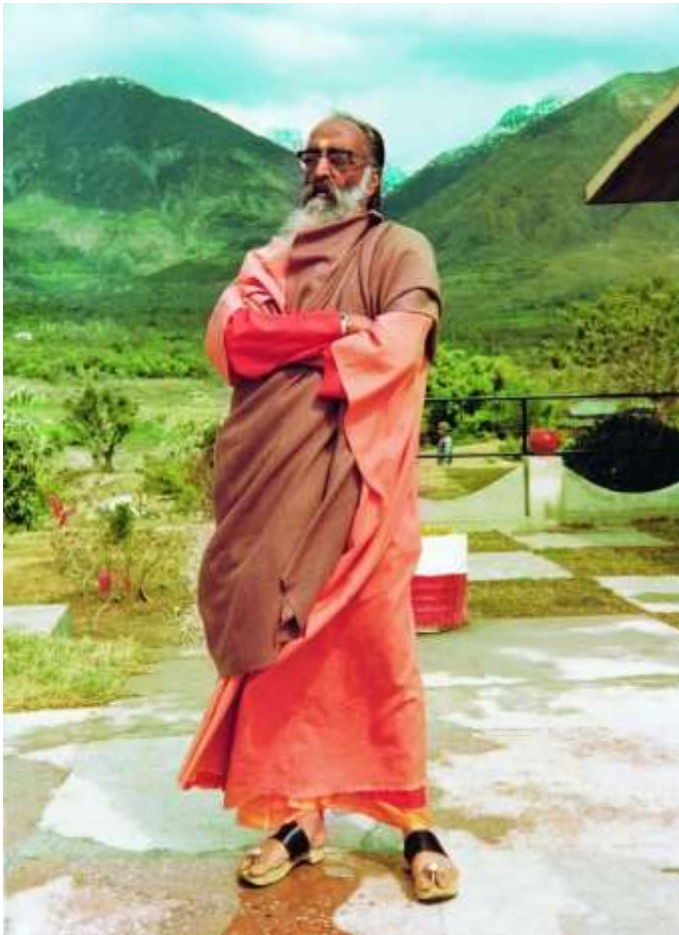
Swamiji began to enjoy the solitude at Uttar Kashi and began to realize that Rishikesh and Gangotri were becoming less important. He started staying at Uttar Kashi through winter. From the very childhood, Swamiji's chosen ideal was the Lord of Kailas. Perhaps that was why he was able to go to Him and stay near Him. Kasi is Brahmaidya itself and the residence at Kasi, is therefore, abidance in Brahmaidya. As he did in Kerala, he lived in a peaceful secluded spot, ate only once a day, and only pure satvik food. He would drink milk at night. He also accepted tea into his routine.

There it was – peace, peace, peace, always. There were no external distractions whatsoever because there was nothing there apart from Brahmaidya. To know it, to follow it, to lead worthy qualified people along towards it. How can any pleasure arising out of worldly activities compared with the sense of satisfaction and happiness resulting from activities?

To Be Continued

Gurudev Uvacha

Inspiring Quotes from Pujya Gurudev Chinmayananda



[Editor's Note: Continuing the series of inspiring quotes from Gurudev sourced from the weekly Chinmayam announcements].

The longer you and I live we will have to see everyone known to us dropping out. This is the price we pay in living long!! But remember Him who is the One Immutable Essence over which (upon which) all these tumultuous changes are taking place.

Tragedies come from the world. Don't worry about them. He gives. He takes away. Don't lose your faith in Him. You offered your worldly and spiritual wealth to the Lord--- when trouble comes, you want it back. You want something which the Lord decides not to give you. It is ultimately for your good. He will protect you. How dare you worry over it?

At the foot of every Altar, it is Krishna, the Self, that constantly supplies more and more faith to water the expanding fields of devotion in the sincere devotee.

There is no failure in meditation.... there can be no mistakes in meditation.... regularly practice to get yourself in the lap of meditation---- thereafter it will guide you. It will take charge of you.

Leap from the shores of duality into the rigged boat of discrimination and ply ceaselessly towards the Horizons of Experience. Let the helmsman be Sraddha and keep the boat steadily towards the Pole-Star, the Mahavakya. Carefully navigate round the dangerous rocks of thy own lower nature. Thou shalt reach the Eternal Haven of Peace and Bliss: TRUTH.