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AUPA eNEWSLETTER

ENDING OF SORROW

The Supreme Purpose of Vedānta

Something or the other bothers us, all the time, as we are caught in the ego process of thought. The rich and the poor, the educated and the illiterate, practically everyone, has one's own sorrow. Self-knowledge puts an end to this sorrow for good.

The one with this wisdom crosses sorrow, is no more into sin; freed from desires, one becomes immortal.

tarati shokam, tarati pāpmānam

guhā-granthibhyo vimuktah, amrito bhavati

Mundaka Upanishad 3.2.9

(Mundaka 3, Khanda 2, Mantra 9)

The independent works, called '*prakarana-granthas*' therefore define the purpose of Vedānta studies as "ending of sorrow for ever and coming upon everlasting happiness" (*ātyantika-duhkha-nivritti* and *paramānanda-prāpti*).

Light on Self-inquiry

BE THAT

There is no becoming here!

There is no time sequence in spiritual development. You are spiritual here and now. Do not entrap yourself into mental cages of planes, degrees of growth, states of being etc. Do not hug these false limitations. You are the Supreme Self.

Be that.



Sri Ramana Maharshi

{Conscious Immortality, chapter 19}

[Progress, regress, rise and fall are part of the illusion that the little, separate self supports and nurtures. They are valid in the frame of reference called '*avidyā-bhoomi*'. They have no truth in them. – Editors]



The Need to be Alert Here and Now

We need to take care of both 'the intimate' and 'the ultimate', to use the words of Shri Vinoba Bhāve. Many of us study the Vedānta and highly appreciate the lofty thoughts found therein. We are however not careful enough about the way we live our actual life on a daily basis. The Upanishads become, in such a case, mere intellectual stimulation, failing to transform us. There are some scriptural portions – like Vidura Neeti – which awaken us and help us realize our follies in day-to-day life. The wise minister who counselled Dhritarāshtra, the king, throws a lot of light on right living. As most of us know, the Mahābhārata runs into 100,000 verses, divided into 18 cantos called 'parva's. In the 5th canto, Udyoga Parva, the king is seen to have sleepless (*jāgara, prajāgara*) nights for his bosom is full of conflicts and fears. His attachment to his own son Duryodhana made him take a number of foul decisions and, as a result, he now cannot be at peace either during the day or during the nights. This 'Udyoga Parva' is thus called 'Prajāgara Parva' also!

Let us take just a few examples at this point of how Vidura describes a wise man (*pandita*) and helps Dhritarāshtra realize where he did not do what he had to do.

"A wise man ensures that he gets involved in admirable actions; he takes great care to avoid activities that are evil¹." If we follow this thumb rule while choosing our engagements, we surely will rise inwardly and will experience peace and strength.

"When we know our worth (neither overestimating nor undervaluing it), are enterprising, can bear with hardships and adhere to our duty, we surely are wise²." Is not each of these pointers so practical that we will fall from efficiency and grace if we do not have the virtues they show?

"He who keeps secrets and lets people know only when his work gets completed is a wise man³." The context here is obviously such work where divulging the details can be harmful to the project. Anybody among us who knows what is confidential and has the capacity to keep his mouth shut is wise indeed.

We do admit that anybody who reads and understands the descriptions above may not change at all. That would be because their own negative tendencies or habits have been too strong. What we must realize is that those who have the potential to change will, upon getting such guidance, begin to live differently without any delay, like duck taking to water!

Literature like Vidura Neeti therefore may not change 95 out of 100 but the five in a hundred who change can make a big difference to the society or to an organization.

Swāmi Chidānanda

1 *nishevate prashastāni, ninditāni na sevate* 1.21

2 *ātmajñānam samārambhah titikshā dharmanityatā* 1.20

3 *yasya krityam na jānanti, .. kritamevāsya jānanti ..* 1.23

Thus Spake Chinmaya



A GURU IS A MIRROR

A devotee once asked Pujya Swamiji at a Satsang, “Do you answer all questions?”
The master’s reply was, “I do not. I show them a mirror and they discover.”



Pujya Swami Chinmayananda ji

(There was always such humility in all of Gurudev’s work that he took every opportunity to let his students know that all the wisdom they required was within them, in the Self. – Editors)

SHRI

(Wealth – Inner or Outer)

Shri (Shree) means wealth, with the multiple meanings of the word wealth being applicable. Outer wealth of course is what everybody understands – gold, silver, land, cattle and bank balance etc. Inner wealth also is ‘Shri’ – *viveka* (being able to distinguish the true from the false), *vairāgya* (detachment from everything that is impermanent) etc. Many other values, which may be on a lower level on the scale of virtues of life, such as perseverance in mundane work, focus in materialistic endeavours or self-discipline even in profit-oriented activities are also ‘Shri’.

Goddess Lakshmi, the holy consort of Shriman-Nārāyana (Vishnu) is often called Shri. The Lord therefore has the epithets Shridhara and Shripati. In praise of the Divine Mother, especially appearing as Goddess Lakshmi, we have a hymn in the Vedas that is called Shree-Sooktam¹.

The last verse² of Geetā says ‘Shri’, meaning prosperity, will surely mark any enterprise where Pārtha (Arjuna, symbolizing great expertise and marvellous skills) and Krishna (symbolizing divine vision, enhanced spiritual and emotional intelligence) go hand in hand.

Among the seven divine attributes³ that Lord Shri Krishna speaks of, in the context of women of grace and substance, the second one is ‘Shri’. When a woman has ‘Shri’, she enriches her surroundings in unforeseen ways. [In traditional terms (as Ādi Shankarāchārya explains), the seven attributes are seven presiding deities (*devatās*) who bestow their grace upon people. Among them, vāk is the daughter of Brahmā, born of his mind; the remaining six, including Shri, are daughters of Daksha.]

Lastly, as we know in common parlance too, ‘Shri’ is attached to men as an honorific title before their names. For example, Shri Gundappa or Shri Somanātha. [Ladies are referred to as Kumāri Latā or Shrimati Pārvati etc.] Here also, the idea is the gentleman or lady is complementarily considered as someone who brings some kind of enrichment.

Notes:

1 hiranya-varnām harineem suvarna-rajata-srajām ...

2 *yatra yogeshwarah krishno yatra pārtho dhanurdharah...* 18.78

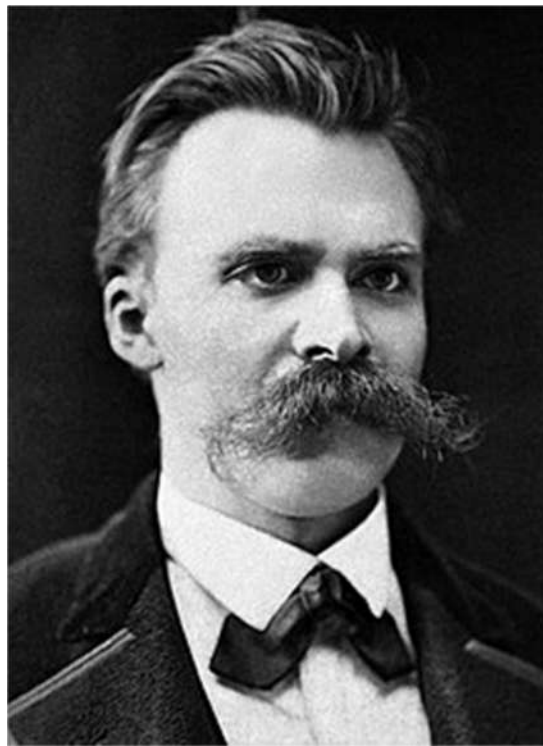
3 *keertih shreer-vāk cha nāreenām, smritir-medhā dhritih kshamā* 10.34.

Quote of the Issue

IS IT EASY TO KNOW THE TRUTH?

All things are subject to interpretation. Whichever interpretation prevails at a given time is a function of power and not truth.

Friedrich Nietzsche



[Nietzsche, 1844 – 1900) was a German philosopher, cultural critic, composer, poet, writer, and philologist whose work has exerted a profound influence on modern intellectual history. He began his career as a classical philologist before turning to philosophy. He became the youngest person ever to hold the Chair of Classical Philology at the University of Basel, Switzerland, at the age of 24. At age 44, he suffered a collapse and afterwards a complete loss of his mental faculties. He lived his remaining years in the care of his mother until her death in 1897 and then with his sister.]

(Philology means the branch of knowledge that deals with the structure, historical development, and relationships of a language or languages.)

TIPS FROM THE UPANISHADS

DIG DEEPER

Find the Hidden Truth of Life

“Truth and nonviolence,” Gandhiji said, “are as old as the mountains.” He called truth God and maintained that nonviolence was no different from truth. The Upanishads, from time immemorial, have held truthfulness as the greatest virtue.

A story in the Sāma Veda talks about somebody who was accused of some theft. As a part of the process of inquiry and investigation, the police – in those ancient times – ask the accused to touch a hot axe!



“He who is united with truth does not get burnt; he gets released.”

satyābhisandhah na dahyate atha muchyate

Chāndogya Upanishad, 6.16.2

Such was the faith in truth and, it is rightly said, faith can move mountains. Irrespective of the question whether we must take the story as literally true, the message of the Upanishads is undoubtedly emphasis on truthfulness.

Dr. G wrote:

UNDERSTAND BEFORE OFFERING TO HELP

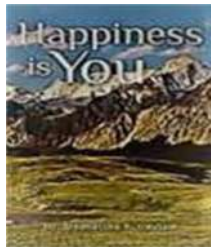
Your idea of help and theirs

An important distinction to make (in the context of being of ‘help’ to someone) is that *what you offer* someone in need is not *your* idea of help, but *theirs*. When your daughter is in tears because her first boyfriend broke her heart, that is not the time to lecture her about how she is too young to have a serious boyfriend anyway. She doesn’t need to hear that. Instead she

just wants you to hold her hand and let her cry. Similarly when your best friend does nothing but complain about her husband to you, she isn't actually expecting you to give her the name of a good therapist or a good lawyer even though that may be what she needs. She may just be looking for your reassurance that she deserves better treatment. Sometimes what a person needs is obvious and sometimes your instincts will lead you to the right answer. But if you still don't know exactly what someone needs, rather than turning away and offering nothing, at least take the time to say, "You seem to be in trouble; how can I help?"



This process will come more naturally to you as you become comfortable with the concept of the divinity within us all. Then, when you see fear in someone else's eyes, or hear frustration in his voice, you will recognize it as your own fear, your own frustration.



[The above is an extract from the book **HAPPINESS IS YOU** by Dr Siddhartha B. Gautam, pages 56, 57.]

**Smt. Indira
Gautam writes
from USA**

CONTINUED UNCERTAINTY

Smiling amidst a Storm

..from North Carolina

Dear friends,

"Every adversity has hidden blessings in it," is a statement of saints, in which we believe. For more than a year, the whole world has been facing the crisis caused by the pandemic. We are not sure if we are clearly seeing 'light at the end of the tunnel'.



At such times, we must remember that Geeta was taught to Arjuna by Shri Krishna at a very difficult time when huge armies stood face to face, with cousins bent upon killing each other! Geeta was not taught at times of peace or comfort.

I am of course not suggesting that we must invite trouble or welcome hard times. The point however is that, when tough times come in our life, we must try to measure up to the challenges. The Vedanta assures us that unimaginable strength is within every one of us. True spirituality guides us on how to tap this energy.

Let us, time and again, reflect on 'what it is that we can do'. The journey of a thousand miles, they say, begins with the first step. We must keep walking, in the right direction, with all the fortitude.

Let us hope peace and prosperity will again be on the earth, and may everyone everywhere receive noble thoughts, leading them towards noble actions.

sarve santu nirāmayah | May everyone be without any ill health. |

Harih Om

**Words from
Guest writers**

**Did the Sage Dream He Was a Butterfly?
Or did the butterfly dream it was the sage?**

Srikumar Rao

1

Great teachers frequently use parables to explain profound truths in a manner that really sinks into the minds of their followers.

The Chinese philosopher, Chuang Tzu, supposedly dreamt that he was a butterfly and, on waking, was puzzled about whether he dreamed he was a butterfly or whether the butterfly

was now dreaming it was a sage.

There is a parable about King Janaka that has been used by Indian sages for centuries. It is a powerful teaching tool. Here is my version of it.

King Janaka was at the height of his power and fame. His army was large and well trained and there were no enemies of consequence. His ministers were competent. His people were well fed and prosperous. His concubines were many and pleasing.

Life was good.

There is always a worm in the woodwork.

A neighbouring king, who had been a well-behaved vassal, had ambitions. He not only put together a clandestine army but also suborned a division of Janaka's own forces with the help of a traitorous general.

The attack was sudden, and it came at dawn.

The palace guards were quickly subdued and slain. Hearing the clash of swords, Janaka's personal bodyguards quickly spirited him out of the palace, still in his night clothes, and then turned to confront the invaders. They were killed but Janaka was able to slip away.

Janaka, alone and on foot, came to a distant village in his kingdom. He was trying to reach a regional capital that housed an army division that, he believed, was loyal to him.

He was tired. And hungry. And thirsty.

He was barefoot and clad only in a loincloth. He had discarded his night robe and sandals because they carried the royal insignia and would have given him away. He had rubbed mud on his face and body and concealed his features behind a strip of cloth dangling from a makeshift turban.

In this garb, he was indistinguishable from the beggars who always thronged the center of the village.

A housewife saw his desperate condition and took pity on him. She offered him some rice, but he had no vessel to receive it. So she tore a plantain leaf from a nearby tree and gave it to him to use as a plate.

The leaf was big.

As Janaka looked for a place to sit, a cow bit the protruding end of the leaf and pulled. The rice spilled to the ground and scattered.

Janaka knelt down and reached for a clump of the fallen rice.

A stray dog, emaciated and mangy, was also eying the same chunk of rice. As Janaka's hand came close to it, the dog bit it viciously.

The pain was so sharp that Janaka screamed.

And found himself shaking and on his royal bed in the royal bedroom he had fled a few days ago.

So vivid was the dream that Janaka was perturbed.

A question kept nagging him and it would not go away.

Which was 'real'?

Was the king who ruled a peaceful, prosperous kingdom 'real'?

Or, was the defeated king desperately trying to regain his kingdom 'real'?

The wisest men in the kingdom tried to answer his question.

Janaka did not find their feeble explanations satisfactory and he had them jailed.

Among the jailed was the sage Uddalaka.

When Uddalaka's son, Ashtavakra, came to know this, he decided to come to King Janaka's court to answer his question and free his father.

What did Ashtavakra tell Janaka? Which was 'real', the king or the deposed king in desperate straits?

2

A question that nagged him constantly and would not let him be.

Which was 'real'?

Was it 'real' that he was a king who ruled a prosperous kingdom with happy subjects?

Or, was it 'real' that he had been deposed and was desperately trying to regain his kingdom?

Many wise men had tried to answer this question. Their explanations were

deemed inadequate and they were jailed.

Uddalaka, was one of those imprisoned and his son, Ashtavakra, came to the court to answer Janaka's question and free his father.

Ashtavakra was short, unprepossessing and physically deformed and there were many snickers when he appeared before the king.

"Why do you have so many cobblers in your court?" he asked Janaka.

"Why do you insult my ministers?" countered Janaka?

"They must be cobblers," said Ashtavakra coolly, "Because they see only my age and skin and bodily deformity. Do they not know that ultimate knowledge is beyond time and not restricted to any shape or form?"

Janaka realized that the youth was a towering intellect and a spiritual adept and they moved to private conference.

Janaka narrated his tale about the still vivid dream.

"Is the dream 'real'?" asked Janaka.

"No, your Majesty," replied Ashtavakra. "That which is real will always exist. It cannot be negated. Where is your enemy now? Where are your turncoat soldiers? Can you produce them now? They are all figments of your imagination."

"I thought so," said the King, relieved. "Then what is real is that I am king. Perhaps I am a king who has bad dreams."

He laughed at his own joke.

"Not so, again, your Majesty," said Ashtavakra. "Remember what I told you. That which is real will always be there. When you were fleeing for your life in your dream, where were your loyal soldiers and your palaces?"

"Then what is 'real'?" asked Janaka, bewildered.

"You are real." Said Ashtavakra instantly. "You were the observer of your dream travails and you are the observer of your waking state pleasures. You are the observer of your body as it ages and decays. That observer is ever changeless and cannot die. That is your nature and that is who you are and that is 'real'."

The story goes that Janaka then rose from his throne and prostrated to Ashtavakra and accepted him as his teacher. Uddalaka was freed and loaded with presents.

And Janaka became the enlightened king of mythical lore as he first heard Ashtavakra and then realized the truth that was relayed to him.

So there you have it.

You are not this skin encased pile of bones and bile. That will age and decompose. Identifying with it is the original, cardinal error. And this error is the source of ALL of your misery.

When you identify with the ever present and unchanging witness of all that happens, then every day is joyous.

And even this is inaccurate because there are no more 'days' in what is beyond time.

Words fail at this stage.

This is the 'truth that will set you free.'

Peace!



Prof. Srikumar Rao (born 1951) is a speaker, author, former business school professor and creator of Creativity and Personal Mastery (CPM), a course designed to effect personal transformation. He is a TED speaker, and has authored *Are You Ready to Succeed: Unconventional Strategies for Achieving Personal Mastery in Business and Life*, which is an international best seller, and *Happiness at Work: Be Resilient, Motivated and Successful – No Matter What*, a best seller on *Inc.*'s "The Business Book Bestseller List."

Story time

A ROAD TO HAPPINESS

I got on to the bus. Seeing the crowd inside, I was upset. There was no place to sit. Just then, a person vacated his seat. The man standing next to the vacant seat could have sat there, but instead he offered the seat to me.

At the next stop, the same thing happened again. He gave his seat to another. This happened four times during the entire journey. The man looked like a normal worker, returning home after a long day at work...

At the last stop when all of us got off, I spoke to him.



"Why were you giving your seat to another person every time you got a vacant seat?"

His answer took me by surprise.

"I haven't studied much in my life nor do I know many things. I don't have much money either. So I don't have anything much to give to anyone. That is why I do this every day. It is something I can do easily.

"After working all day, I can stand for a little longer. I gave my seat to you and you said, 'Thank you'. That gave me the satisfaction that I did something for someone.

"I do this daily and feel I am contributing to the society in some way. I go back home refreshed and happy every day that I give something to someone."

I was speechless!!! Wanting to do something for someone on a daily basis is an extraordinary outlook, a great gift.

This stranger taught me a lot.

How easy it is to be rich from within!

Beautiful clothes, lots of money in the bank account, expensive gadgets, accessories and luxuries or even educational degrees – may or may not make us rich and happy but little acts of giving are enough to make us feel rich and happy every day!

[The story above is collected and re-narrated by Shalini Keshavan.]

NEWS

General

Despite the continuing Covid-19 scenario, online classes went on as before and a few programs took place offline also.

Mysuru, March 1 thru 7

The 7 day discourse series at Ramana Jnāna Kendra went off very well, with about 80 people attending every evening. Swāmiji spoke on 25 selected verses of the devotional work – Shivānanda Lahari – which originally has 100 verses. Swami Hamsānandaji and his team at Sādhana Mandira had conceived this event in view of the great festival – Mahā Shivarātri – coming up on the 11th of March.

Visit to an Ayurvedic Centre, March 7:

Prajna Kuteera Ayurveda Centre, a unique centre for Ayurveda, Panchakarma, Rejuvenation and Yoga, the brainchild of Dr. N. V. Krishnamurthy and his spouse Dr. Poornima Krishnamurthy, was founded in the year 1990, under the umbrella of its parent organization, Swami Vivekananda Research Institute of Medical Sciences and Rural Development Centre [SVRIMS & RDC], a non-profit organization.

Its sister concern Abhijna International Academy of Ayurveda and Yoga has also been promoting these two traditional sciences, for well over two decades now. Whilst Prajna Kuteera is for therapeutics in Ayurveda and Yoga, Abhijna International Academy is into Academics and Research. The centre also serves as a platform to the Global Alliance of Traditional Health Systems [GATHS], India and the Mind Body Spirit Society of India [MBSSI], India.



Swāmiji was invited by Dr Poornima Krishnamurthy, also a trustee of Sadhana Mandira, to visit Prajna Kuteera on Sunday, the 7th March. Swamiji addressed about 30 of the staff members of the Centre and another 30 of Swamiji's students joined the event. Everybody enjoyed seeing this beautiful place. Both the founders took good care of all the guests. Dr Mysore Manjunath, a famed violinist, also joined this event, along with his wife, and spoke a few words after the *pravachan* by Swamiji. All the guests were treated to a delicious meal after the event.

Bengaluru:

Shri Mahadeviah, the vice president of Suvarnamukhi Samskriti Dhāma, is also a retired police officer and, even now, imparts training to new constables who join the Karnataka State Reserve Police Force. He had the KRPF Battalion 4 invite Dr Nagaraju and Swāmiji to their training centre in Madivala on March 9, where both addressed the constables undergoing training.

School of Ancient Wisdom, Weekly Classes on Katha Upanishad

The new online series which began on February 27 under the banner of the School of Ancient Wisdom has been running. These sessions are at 6.30 pm every Saturday. Those who wish to join may Email mgravi2000@gmail.com, who will supply the CISCO WEBEX link to them.

Regular Weekly Classes on Geetā and Upanishads

The regular weekly classes by Swāmiji on YouTube Live (channel FOWAI) have been going on. People anywhere in the world can watch and attend these classes at 7 am (IST) every Wednesday and 8.30 pm (IST) every Friday respectively. These classes are receiving encouraging response with nearly 150 people attending them from the East and the West.

Talks in Kannada

Every Wednesday, Swāmiji speaks on selected topics of Geetā over Google Meet, under the banner of Suvarnamukhi Samskriti Dhāma. This gets broadcast also on Monday mornings over an FM station in Mysuru.

National Workshop on Leadership and Management in Sanskrit Literature

The Teaching Learning Centre (TLC) at the Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri National Sanskrit University (SLBSNSU) in New Delhi organized a 5 day “National Workshop” online. Swamiji delivered two lectures at this online program, drawing from Upanishads and from Vidura Neeti.

WEBINARS, done:

Webinar 195 – Dharma-Shastra in Kenopanishad, by Swami Chidananda on March 14, 2021.
Webinar 196 – LIVING IN ERROR – based on Vidura Neeti, by Swami Chidananda on March 28, 2021

WEBINARS, to come up:

We will have webinars 197 and 198 on April 11 and 25 respectively. The topics and the speakers will be announced.

[Those who wish to join the webinars may please write to fowaiforum@yahoo.com]



The audience at Prajna Kuteera, an elegant Ayurveda Centre in Mysuru, March 7, 2021



Dr Mysore Manjunath, the internationally acclaimed violinist, graced the occasion and spoke briefly after Swamiji's talk at Prajna Kuteera, March 7, 2021.



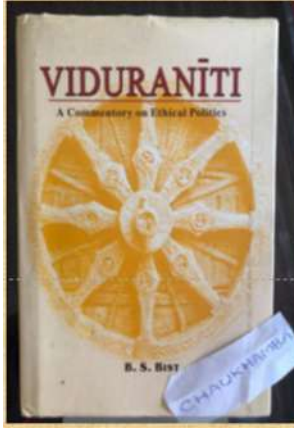
A break from online events: Swamiji spoke on Shivānanda Lahari at Ramana Jnāna Kendra, Mysuru, March 1 thru 7, 2021.



Students took Swāmiji for a walk around the famous Kukkarahalli Lake in Mysuru, March 6, 2021.



Prof. Amita Pandey Bhardwaj was the chief coordinator for the 5 day National Workshop on Leadership and Management in Education in Sanskrit Literature, March 15 thru 19, 2021.



विदुर नीति

- महाभारत
- उद्योगपर्व / प्रजागर पर्व
- 592 श्लोक,
8 अध्यायों में



2

One of the slides presented by Swamiji as he spoke at the National Workshop organized by Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri National Sanskrit University, New Delhi, March 18, 2021.



Dr M Nāgarāju, the President of Suvarnamukhi Samskrit Dhāma, addressed nearly 80 police constables in training at Bengaluru on Indian Cultural Heritage, March 9, 2021.



Swamiji kept police constables under training absorbed in a discussion on "dharma for strength and peace" at the KRPF, Battallion 4, Bengaluru, March 9.

Upcoming Events

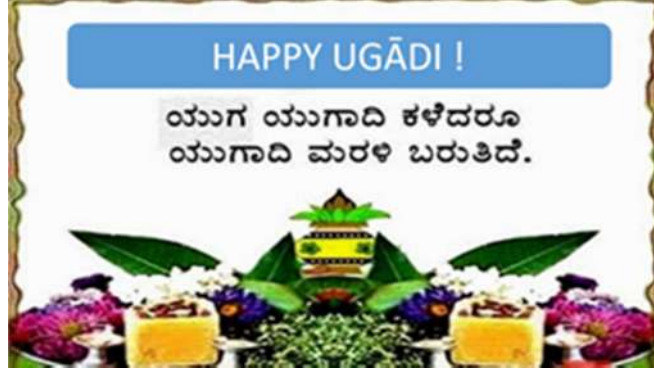
The weekly online classes on Geetā and Upanishads will continue. Their time will remain the same in the West. For example, they will be at 6.30pm on Tuesdays and 8 am on Fridays on the West Coast of USA. In India however, the time now is 7 am Wednesdays and 8.30 pm Fridays, because the West began "day light saving" again on March 15.

Kathopanishad (online) classes will go on, under the banner of the School of Ancient Wisdom, every Saturday at 6.30 pm. The software used is Cisco's Webex.

The 30 mins talks in Kannada, under the banner of the Suvarnamukhi Samskriti Dhāma, will also continue.

WISH YOU HAPPY
UGADI / GUDI PADWA / JHULELAL JAYANTI / BAISAKHI

Tuesday, April 13, 2021

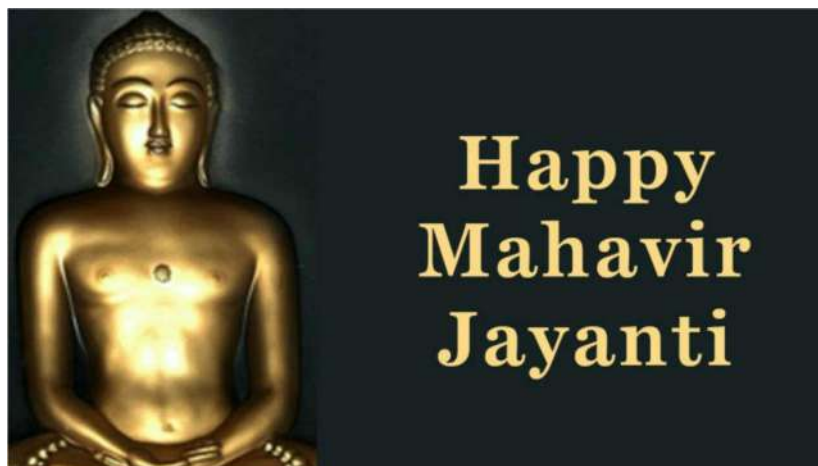




Wednesday, April 14, 2021



Ram Navami, Wednesday, April 21, 2021



Sunday, April 25, 2021



Tuesday, April 27, 2021

We wish all our readers **renewed enthusiasm**, especially on the inner journey of spiritual discoveries, as these festive occasions greet you.

TEAM AUPA

(AUPA is the short form of AUPANISHADA-PURUSHA, the truth of the sacred source called Upanishads. This e-newsletter comes from Project Manager of the website: aupa.in – Upanishad Wisdom).

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