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AUPA eNEWSLETTER

A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING *And Everything in Its Place*

Life is a many-splendored affair. We are attached to life because it has so much to offer, so much that we go on discovering about it. It would be a misunderstanding if we imagine that the Upanishads are exclusively into renunciation where we have to shut the doors to certain aspects of life.

A man enjoys life through dynamic action; he rises to greater enjoyment when he appreciates finer aspects of life.

avidyayā mrityum teertvā vidyayā amritam ashnute

Ishāvāsya Upanishad, mantra 11

The translation above may raise eyebrows because it is not the literal meaning of the mantra quoted. It is however in line with the spirit of the interpretation given by great masters like Ādi Shankarāchārya. 'avidyā' means karma or action and vidyā stands for 'upāsana' or powerful visualization. Lazy life is no better than death (*mrityu*). When we stop being lazy and get active in mundane spheres, we begin to enjoy the glory of life. Proceeding further, when we appreciate art, music, literature and other refined human engagements, we find life has nectar (*amrita*) in it. [Both these levels are of course way below *brahma-jnāna*, which blesses us with lasting joy.]

LIFE'S MEANING



What value has this life without the knowledge born of Realization?

It is not worth even speaking about, O Arunāchala!

Sri Ramana Maharshi as said in Akshara-manamālai (Marital Garland of Letters) 46.

[This utterance is much like the mantra in Sāmaveda's Kenopanishad (2.5), "What a great loss it is if the Supreme Truth is not known in this life!" – Editors]



LIVING INTELLIGENTLY

Scriptures like the Upanishads and the Geetā, it seems, awaken us to take cognizance of our erroneous ways of living and to begin to live wisely. Their teachings cover a wide spectrum of possibilities of human life. From gross situations where foolish and intelligent choices are in sharp contrast like darkness and light, to scenarios where the right way emerges out of alert silence, our life is amazingly filled with variety and diversity.

1 To let our mind simply obey the commands and demands of our sense organs would be unintelligent. To question ourselves and thus steer clear of storms on the seas would be intelligent. Shri Krishna compares a mind that is controlled by the senses with a boat¹ on sail being dragged in dangerous directions by unfavourable winds.

2 To waste our emotional energies on the 'outcome' of our work would be unintelligent. To do work with sincerity and dedication and move on with life in graceful acceptance of divine will would be intelligent. To focus on making the best contributions and let go of our anxiety over rewards and recognition is the way to peace².

3 In all our verbal communication, to speak in ways that agitate others or mislead them would be wrong on our part. To put across messages in ways that are marked by truth and that really benefit them would be right. Mature communication³ is a prominent teaching of great books of wisdom.

4 To eat excessively would be unintelligent. To be moderate⁴ in food, sleep and speech would be intelligent. Shri Krishna advises us to avoid both excess and denial, and calls such a middle path as conducive to effective meditation. Denying to the body, for example, the rest it needs would indeed be foolish.

The list goes on. Many are the departments of life where, if we rightly understand and pay heed to the voice of the wise spiritual traditions, our life will advance on right tracks. We will have lived well and, irrespective of external recognition, we will have peace in our hearts.

Notes:

1 *vāyur-nāvam-ivāmbhasi* – Geetā 2.67

2 *shāntim-āpnoti naisthikeem* – Geetā 5.12

3 *vāk-mayam tapah* – Geetā 1.23

4 *yuktāhāra-vihārasya.. yogo bhavati* – Geetā 6.17

Swāmi Chidānanda



BEWARE OF THE TRICKS
THAT YOUR MIND MAY PLAY

A man's mind is like a monkey
riding on the donkey of his body
in the circus of life.

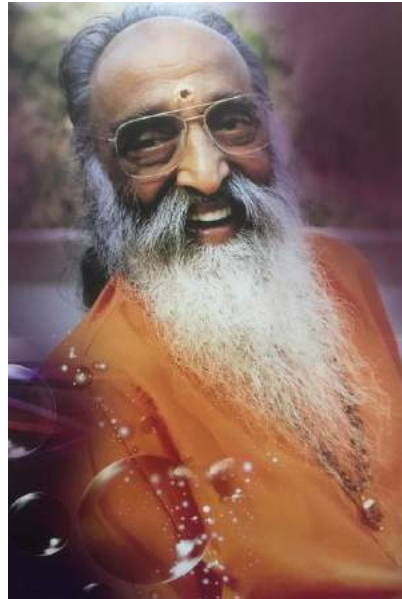
– Swami Chinmayananda



HOMAGE TO A SPIRITUAL COLOSSUS

CHINMAYA JAYANTI

Saturday, May 8, 2021



Words fail to describe the debt we owe to Pujya Swāmi Chinmayānandaji who touched millions of lives – especially Hindus in all the parts of India and the Hindu diaspora in all the corners of the world. He carried the message of dynamic spirituality through his powerful discourses on the Geetā and other Vedānta works. His work had tremendous passion and a touch of humour. He was an inspired teacher, a far-reaching visionary, an energetic missionary and a great organizer – all rolled into one.

॥ *Om Shri Chinmaya Sadgurave Namah* ॥

JNEYA

(That which needs to be known)

In the context of the 'science of liberation' (*moksha-shāstra*), '*jneya*' is nothing but the Supreme Truth, referred to as Brahman. "One becomes immortal upon knowing *that which needs to be known*," says¹ Shri Krishna.

A popular, independent work (*prakarana-grantha*) of Vedānta declares², "That alone is to be known, the true nature of which is established in the Upanishads". Blessed are the people, the work named "Eight Verses on Blessedness" says who are clear in their minds that human life is meant for knowing the Supreme Truth and who accordingly strive to study and realize Brahman. Everyone else, according to the composition, are going in circles in the domain of endless confusion.

Can Brahman be 'knowable' at all? We learn in the Vedāntas that the Supreme Truth can never be objectified. It is the light in which everything is known but it itself can never be known. How is it then justified to consider Brahman as '*jneya*'?

Ādi Shankarāchārya, in his commentary on Geetā, clarifies³ that the Ultimate Reality is never 'an object' and is rather the 'Self'. It is referred to as '*jneya*' (something to be known) in frame of reference of ignorance (*avidyā*). As we dig deep, we will find that negation of all false attributes is all that needs to be done. This negation – *neti, neti* – is the process involved in the matter and there is no true 'knowing'. It is never unknown! It is, in fact, ever evident!

We conclude thus that, in our ignorance of the subtleties of the Vedānta Shāstra, we label Brahman as 'that which needs to be known' – *jneya*. When we let go of false identifications, the truth shines unhindered and it becomes clear that Brahman was never in the camp (*varga*) of things to be known.

Notes:

1 *yat-jnātvā amritam-ashnute* – Geetā 13.12

2 *tat-jneyam yat-upanishatsu nischitārtham* – Dhanyāstakam, verse 1

3 *avishayatvāt, ātmatvāt cha* – Bhāshya on Geetā 13.12.

Quote of the Issue

ARE YOU A WORSHIPPER OF BEAUTY?

“For beautiful eyes, look for the good in others; for beautiful lips, speak only words of kindness; and for poise, walk with the knowledge that you are never alone.”

Audrey Hepburn



[Audrey Hepburn (1929 – 1993) was a British actress and humanitarian. She rose to stardom in the romantic comedy *Roman Holiday* (1953) alongside Gregory Peck, for which she was the first actress to win an Oscar, a Golden Globe Award, and a BAFTA Award for a single performance. Recognised as both a film and fashion icon, she was ranked by the American Film Institute as the third-greatest female screen legend from the Golden Age of Hollywood, and was inducted into the International Best Dressed List Hall of Fame.]

TIPS FROM THE UPANISHADS

REVERENCE FOR THE ILLUMINED

We receive when we give



At a given point of time, there is neither equality among all human beings nor some semblance of any greatness in the vast majority of us. The Vedānta however is emphatic in saying every one of us is

potentially divine. As the idiomatic phrase goes, “hitch your wagon to a star,” we have to connect ourselves to someone who is far superior. God or Guru is such a principle that is unimaginably higher than us, considering our level of manifestation at present.

“Divine virtues manifest in us when we adore divine and illumined beings.”

*yasya deve parā bhaktiḥ yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hyarthāḥ prakāśante mahātmanah*

Shwetāshwatara Upanishad, 6.23

Neither God nor Guru gains anything when we hold them in awe. It is we who begin to rise on the scale of consciousness. This vertical rise in consciousness is called spiritual progress.

Dr. G wrote:

BE HAPPY, MAKE OTHERS HAPPY

Happiness is You



There is no doubt that, if you practice the Golden Rule¹ every day, you will bring moments of happiness into the lives of others. But just as important, these simple acts will also reveal to you the happiness within yourself. The intent of the Golden Rule is not to sacrifice yourself for the sake of others. It is to increase the happiness of all, including yourself. Remember the assumption behind, “love your neighbour as you love yourself” is that you first love yourself! For, if you don’t love yourself, how can you love others? When you love your neighbour and make the Golden Rule a daily habit, you will feel more confident, more assured that you are a good person who does good things, a person

who deserves to be happy, a person who is content. And you will know more than ever that *happiness is you*.

1 (The Golden Rule) *Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.* (Luke 6:31)

[The above is an extract from the book HAPPINESS IS YOU by Dr Siddhartha B. Gautam, page 58.]

**Smt. Indira
Gautam writes
from USA**



NATURE'S MESS

Are we hearing?

....from North Carolina

Dear friends,

Humanity is locked down; everybody is staying indoor, suspending all activities. The trees, the rivers, the hills, the animals, the birds, the sun, the moon and so much else of Nature seem to be as active, silently, as ever before. It seems to be *business as usual* for them!

Mother Nature seems to send us a message, "You are not necessary. The air, earth, water and sky – without you – are fine. When you come back, remember that you are my guests. Not my masters."

Even as disease and death are around us, everywhere in the world, with especially India facing an unforeseen crisis of huge proportions, we should not only introspect but must prepare to live differently whenever things return to normal.

Nature protects her protectors. '*prakritih rakshati rakshitā* '.

May we, the humans, promptly learn the lessons. May we not err again.

Harih Om.

Words from
Guest writers



ABSENCE OF JEALOUSY

The Test of Nonviolence

Swami Atmashraddhananda

Non-violence is the basis of all virtues. *Ahimsā paramo dharmah*—“Non-violence is the highest form of righteousness,” says the Mahābhārata. Non-violence, or not harming anyone in thought, word and deed, is the highest value.

In terms of practice of non-violence, one finds, in the order of complexity, practice of non-violence in action somewhat easier. Further, practice of non-violence in our speech is more tedious and harder to practice. Harsh words, caustic remarks, pinching comments and sharp tongue, we all have our troubles with practicing non-violence in speech.

But the most difficult of all is the practice of non-violence in thoughts, and emotions. Not thinking of negative, non-violent thoughts and not harbouring violent feelings towards others is indeed most challenging of all. It is so because as the things become subtler, they progressively become difficult to grasp and handle. Thoughts are not easily “visible” to us and hence we do not know what kind of thoughts (or motives and impulses) are goading us. We do not, hence, know what is happening in our own minds!

While we can talk of or write about nonviolence, thinking, feeling and “doing” nonviolence is not easy. It requires much understanding and courage to do so. Now, how do we know if we are really “thinking” nonviolence? The best way is to check if we are free from jealousy. Says Swami Vivekananda,

The test of ahimsā is absence of jealousy. Any man may do a good deed or make a good gift on the spur of the moment or under the pressure of some superstition or priest-craft; but the real lover of mankind is he who is jealous of none. The so-called great men of the world may all be seen to become jealous of each other for a small name, for a little fame, and for a few bits of gold. So long as this jealousy exists in a heart, it is far away from the perfection of ahimsā. The cow does not eat meat, nor does the sheep. Are they great Yogis, great non-injurers (*ahimsakas*)? Any fool may abstain from eating this or that; surely that gives him no more distinction than to herbivorous animals. The man who will mercilessly cheat widows and orphans and do the vilest deed for money is worse than any brute, even if he lives entirely on grass. The man whose heart never cherishes even the thought of injury to anyone, who rejoices at the prosperity of even his greatest enemy, is the *bhakta*; he is the Yogi; he is the guru of all. . . . [Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, 3:67-68]

This, then, is the highest and the most genuine way to know if we are truly seekers of spiritual life and are non-violent: freedom from jealousy and envy. In other words, we have to go deeper and reach the very core of our thoughts to know if we are truly practicing non-violence.

Understanding Jealousy

The term jealousy comes from the Greek word *zelos*, connoting “to boil” or “to ferment.” In a positive sense, it could mean “emulation, zeal.” So, *zelos* can be used to mean either. Again, often the colour green is associated with jealousy and envy, from which the expressions “green with envy,” and “green-eyed monster” are derived. When one is infected by the jealousy-bug, one is supposed to have been “bitten by the green-eyed monster.”

Jealousy is an emotion, intense and overwhelming, that is associated with the loss or possible loss of something. It can be, thus, seen or experienced in family circles, among siblings, at workplace, in inter-personal relationships and even between friends. It is, in a way, present all over our personal and collective lives.

Jealousy leads to rivalry. Family jealousy, for example, can affect all ages and different members of family. Jealousy can arise from lack of attention from a specific member in the family. More attention towards another member of the family can cause jealousy. Or there can be jealousy between colleagues holding similar job positions. If one worker receives positive opinion from the boss while the other employee feels like he deserved that, jealousy can arise. The attention received towards one employee, and not the other, may cause jealousy. The same holds good, in some measure or the other, in other areas of life such as workings of a group or in friendship.

Comparison and competition are two things that are at the core of jealousy. A jealous person invariably compares himself or his situation with someone whom he thinks is better placed or is being favoured—and he feels it is unfair to him. He or she feels that he or she deserves a better deal. There is a feeling of lack, some kind of emptiness caused by the other person who, according to the victim of jealousy, has somehow usurped what was rightfully his or hers. Jealousy leads to violence, in some form or the other. For, the jealous person wishes to set right the matter or “square the account” and for that, violence is the means. Violence can be physical or verbal or by creating unfavourable circumstances. A jealous person justifies his stand and feels glad when the person being jealous of suffers a loss or is pained.

When a person is seized with a feeling of discontent or covetousness with regard to another’s advantages, success, possessions, position and so on, his thinking becomes muddled and confused. In that state, one may feel anguish and resentment and develop grudge and ill-will. In a slight difference in shades of meaning between jealousy and envy, envy may be just a desire, a form of covetousness but jealousy generally leads to some form of violence. Envy may result from low self-image or self-esteem but jealousy is more active and goads one to “do something.”

Jealousy is Powerful

Obviously, jealousy is a negative emotion. While, at times, envy may make a person work harder to do better, it is surely a negative and debasing tendency making the mind restless and polluted. Some of the most tragic incidents of history owe their origin to this emotion. The Mahābhārata, the mighty epic story of a great war between Kauravas and Pāndavas, is rooted in the envy and jealousy of Kauravas against their kin, the Pāndavas. Such wars continue to be fought even today, in different settings and smaller scales, with different characters and roles being played!

Swami Vivekananda called jealousy to be the chief characteristic of slaves. He said, Jealousy is the root of all evil, and a most difficult thing to conquer. [CW, 4:6]

A slave is one who has been deprived of freedom to act or think and feels helpless. He is beggarly and mean. Swamiji rightly said, “That jealousy, that absence of conjoint action is the very nature of enslaved nations. But we must try to shake it off. The terrible jealousy is characteristic of us. . . . You will be convinced of this if you visit some other countries. Our fellows in this respect are the enfranchised negroes of this country—if but one amongst them rises to greatness, all the others would

at once set themselves against him and try to level him down by making a common cause with the whites. . . ."[CW, 6:286]

It has been said, in a humorous manner, that slaves are like crabs. If you put crabs in an open basket, be assured that they will not be able to climb out. For the simple reason that, as soon as one of them rises up, the others pull it down. Hence, all crabs, despite their struggles to come out, remain where they are.

So are the men with jealous hearts. They do not want anyone to progress, and busy themselves with pulling down others!

Overcoming Jealousy

Jealousy is characterized by a kind of mental burning which makes the jealous person uncomfortable. He feels weak and empty, comparing himself to someone who has something or is likely to have something that he himself wanted. In other words, it is desire, greed, endless greed, that is at the root of jealousy.

And it is jealousy that kills all the nobility and humanity in the heart of the sufferer.

Of course, one needs to introspect and learn to think in a larger perspective. In this context, the following counsel may be helpful:

Most people are deeply scripted in what I call the Scarcity Mentality. They see life as having only so much, as though there were only one pie out there. And if someone were to get a big piece of the pie, it would be less for everybody else. The Scarcity Mentality is the zero-sum paradigm of life.

People with a Scarcity Mentality have a very difficult time sharing recognition and credit, power or profit—even with those who help in the production. They also have a very hard time being genuinely happy for the successes of other people—even, and sometimes especially, members of their own family or close friends and associates. It's almost as if something is being taken from them when someone else receives special recognition or windfall gain or has remarkable success or achievement.

Although they might verbally express happiness for others' success, inwardly they are eating their hearts out. Their sense of worth comes from being compared, and someone else's success, to some degree, means their failure. . . . Often, people with Scarcity Mentality harbour secret hopes that others might suffer misfortune—not terrible misfortune, but acceptable misfortune that would keep them "in their place." They're always comparing, always competing. They give their energies to possessing things or other people in order to increase their sense of worth. . . . It's difficult for people with a Scarcity Mentality to be members of complementary team. They look on differences as signs of insubordination and disloyalty.

The Abundance Mentality, on the other hand, flows out of a deep inner sense of personal worth and security. It is the paradigm that there is plenty out there and enough to spare for everybody. It results in sharing of prestige, of recognition, of profits, of decision making. It opens possibilities, options, alternatives, and creativity. The Abundance mentality takes the personal joy, satisfaction, and fulfilment [and] recognizes the unlimited possibilities for positive interactive growth and development.

Public Victory does not mean victory over other people. It means success in effective interaction that brings mutually beneficial results to everyone involved. Public Victory means working together, communicating together, making things happen together, that even the same people couldn't make happen by working independently. And Public Victory is an outgrowth of the Abundance Mentality paradigm. [The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, Stephen Covey, Pp. 219-220]

From the viewpoint of Vedānta, jealousy comes from identifying ourselves with our lower self. It comes from attachment to sensory enjoyments and desire for the fruits of actions. Jealousy is a trait of unfulfilled mind, an empty life and a lack of proper understanding.

Instead of thinking of what one does not have, one should learn to think of what one has. One should develop “an abundant mentality” instead of being consumed by the “scarcity mentality.” One of the best ways is to practice generosity and desist from making any comparisons and uncharitable comments about others’ progress.

Let us remember Swamiji’s words, “If all understand one day for one minute that one cannot become great by the mere wish, that he only rises whom He [God] raises, and he falls whom He brings down, then all trouble is at an end. But there is that egotism—hollow in itself, and without the power to move a finger: how ludicrous of it to say, “I won’t let anyone rise!” That jealousy, that absence of conjoint action is the very nature of enslaved nations. But we must try to shake it off.” [CW, 6:285]

Deriving inspiration from others’ progress and achievement is quite a helpful way of looking at them, but trying to pull down others only injures us in the long run. Jealousy is the sign of a morally and spiritually sick mind. It bespeaks of immaturity and lack of understanding of our divine nature, the ātman within, which is ever fulfilled and ever content. Whether one follows the path of devotion or self-analysis or meditation or selfless action, getting rid of jealousy is essential to living a higher life.

Jealousy makes one narrow-minded and intolerant. One loses sight of the real purpose of human life, that of Self-realization. Just as a tree does not remain green if fire is placed in the hollow of its trunk, so also there cannot be any joy and peace in life if the heart of a person is stung by the “green-eyed monster.” Peace means putting off the burning of blaze of jealousy with the cool waters of contentment and right understanding. No wonder, Patanjali has prescribed, among the five *niyamas*, *santosha* or contentment as one of the requirements for the practice of meditation.

Conclusion

Quoting the Bhagavad Gitā (12th chapter) in explaining the state of mind of a perfectly matured mind, Swami Vivekananda said, “He who hates none, who is the friend of all, who is merciful to all, who has nothing of his own, who is free from egoism, who is even-minded in pain and pleasure, who is forbearing, who is always satisfied, who works always in Yoga, whose self has become controlled, whose will is firm, whose mind and intellect are given up unto Me, such a one is My beloved Bhakta. From whom comes no disturbance, who cannot be disturbed by others, who is free from joy, anger, fear, and anxiety, such a one is My beloved. He who does not depend on anything, who is pure and active, who does not care whether good comes or evil, and never becomes miserable, who has given up all efforts for himself; who is the same in praise or in blame, with a silent, thoughtful mind, blessed with what little comes in his way, homeless, for the whole world is his home, and who is steady in his ideas, such a one is my beloved *bhakta*. [CW 1:193]

This is the ideal of a man free from all jealousy, once and for all.

(Courtesy: Vedānta Kesari, where this article was the editorial in October 2011.)

{Swami Atmashradhdhananda joined the Ramakrishna Monastic Order in 1989 at its Bangalore Centre and received his final Sannyasa vows in 1999. He spent 13 years at Bangalore and Mysore centres of Ramakrishna Math, besides 2 years at Belur Math. From 2004 to 2016, he was in Chennai Ramakrishna Math where he was the editor of The Vedanta Kesari, a cultural and spiritual monthly for over a century. He has edited, translated and authored a couple of books on some aspects of spiritual life, Indian culture and higher values. For 12 years he was the guide for the Vivekananda Study Circle at IIT Madras where he used to conduct a Sunday class for the Study Circle. For about two years, he was one of the monastic guides and instructors at the Monastic Probationers’ Training Centre at Ramakrishna Math, Belur Math, near Kolkata in West Bengal. Since October 2018, he has been the Secretary of Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh.}

K ĀLIDĀSA, THE SUPERINTELLIGENT POET

The Man who had been a Dullard

[Here is a short, biographical narration of Kālidāsa's life, of the transformation brought about by the Princess of Kashi in his life and how he had been an uneducated, illiterate and dull witted young man who went on to be the most famous Sanskrit poet. This account also explains the four special words – *asti kaschid vāg visheshah*- that feature in the story]



Kālidāsa (whose earlier name is not known) was a devotee of Lord Shiva. Initially Kālidāsa was illiterate, uneducated, and intellectually dull and hence others would tease him and play dirty tricks on him. However, an unbelievable transformation occurred in his life during his interaction with the Princess of Kāshī (modern Vārānasi). This transformation is revealed ahead as the story unfolds.

The princess was uniquely intelligent, talented and a well-versed scholar. She was unmatched in her literary and fine arts skills. By her talents and capabilities, she very easily overpowered the many fine, young suitors who came asking for her hand in marriage. Those suitors felt highly insulted and swore to take revenge!

They approached a foolish young man and lured him with promises of good food and fine clothing. They taught him to remain silent in front of the princess without answering any of her

questions. It would suffice if he just remained silent in front of her, they assured him. The dull-witted young man the suitors had chosen was none other than Kālidāsa, the protagonist of this true life story.

One fine day, they dressed up this young man in silk robes and jewellery and spread the word that he was a highly intelligent scholar and philosopher. They brought him before the Princess of Kāshi and introduced him as a worthy suitor.

The Princess asked the young man many technical questions for which he just nodded his head in silence and gave her a look of indifference. The other suitors had introduced him as a highly talented one, the pinnacle of intelligence, and they read (interpreted) his nod and silence in a completely different light! They attributed his responses to his deep thoughts arising from an inner silence! His silence being thus explained, the princess was quite convinced, and she was soon married to this young man.

Later the princess realised that she had been duped and the young man she had married was a dullard, an illiterate! Enraged, she insulted him with abusive words. She asked him to leave the palace at once, and not to return until he became the eminent scholar that he was portrayed to be.

Although the young man was dull of intellect, he was honest and pure at heart. He realised that the evil-minded scholars had used him to get back at the princess. He realised his mistake of falling prey to their plan for revenge. He went straight to the temple of Mahākālī. He stayed at the temple all night. He was not able to decide on his next course of action

The temple priest asked him to worship Mother Kālī. The young man sat in the worship of Mother Kālī and performed severe tapas, as advised by the priest. One night, the young man saw the Goddess appear, emerging from the idol. The Divine Mother approached the young man and wrote on his tongue, the Beejāksharas (primordial sounds/seed-words). She blessed him and declared that he would be a great scholar and a great poet, a Mahākavi. She also gave him the name Kālidāsa.

After that, Kālidāsa returned to the palace to meet the princess. The Princess of Kāshi asked him thus, “*asti kaschid vāg visheshah (kim)?*” (Meaning – *Is there any different literary speech (now)? Why have you come back here? Have you acquired some scholarship?*)

Kālidāsa replied to her questions with the starting verses from the four Mahākāvya (epic poems) that he had composed! Each verse started with one of the four words that constituted the princess’s question. Also, he recited (portions of) the four Mahākāvya one after the other, quite effortlessly! Each one of these is of a high standard in terms of grammar and literary beauty.

1. *asti*: The Mahākāvya Kumāra-sambhava begins thus with the word āsti.

asti uttarasyām dishi devatātmā... and so on.

Meaning: *The Lord of the mountains namely Himālaya, who is to the northern direction and is the abode of the devas.. stands as majestically..*

2. *kaschid*: The Mahākāvya Meghadoota begins with *kascaida* and goes thus –

Kaschit kanta - viraha – gurunā svadhikarat pramattah... (the first line of the first verse)

Meaning: A certain Yaksha, *who had strayed from his duty, anxious due to the separation from his beloved, whose superiority had been reduced to naught by the curse of Kubera...*

3. *vāg*: The Mahākāya Raghuvamsha begins thus –

Vāgarthaviva samprikatu vāgartha – pratipattaye....

Jagatah pitarau vande Pārvati - Parameshvarau

Meaning: *I bow down to Pārvati and Parameshwara, the parents of the Universe, who are perfectly ever united just as the words are united with their meanings.*

4. *visheshah*: Ritusamhāra, the last of the Mahākāvyas begins as follows:

visheshah – suryah sprhaneeya- chandramāh....

(The first line of the first verse)

Meaning: *Oh, dear, this utterly sweltering season of the highly rampant sun... with the fascinating moon.....*

Thus did such a scholarly and talented Kālidāsa become the most famous of the Nine Gems of the court of Vikramāditya, the King of Ujjain.

NEWS

General

Online classes increased a bit amidst all the scary escalation in cases of the pandemic across India and in some parts of the world. There was hardly any offline event in the past month.

Rām Navami Celebrations, April 21

Though the 80+ students had left the campus, a simple function was held to celebrate Shri Ram Navami at the Suvarnamukhi Samskriti Dhāma (SSD). Both Dr Nāgarāju, the President, and Swāmiji addressed the small gathering.

Death Anniversary Satsang, April 22, 2021

Smt Ratna Bhatia was an enthusiastic supporter of FOWAI FORUM, and was associated with Swāmiji since the year 1994. On April 22 (in USA) this year, a special Satsang online was held in her honour as a year passed since she breathed her last.

Geetā and Leadership, April 26 – 30:

Swāmiji delivered five online lectures in Hindi between April 26 and 30, addressing the first cohort of The Leadership School TLS. Some 22 participants were physically located at Asia Plateau in Panchgani and four joined from their own native places in Rajasthan, Chattisgarh etc. Swāmiji also used portions of Valmiki Rāmāyan to bring home certain points. In December last year, Swāmiji was a member of the Selection Panel when TLS held a 6 day Selection Process at Nagalok, Nagpur.

Lecture Series at Sampurnānand Sanskrit University, April 29:

Prof. Rajaram Shukla, the Vice Chancellor of Sampurnānand Sanskrit University, had requested Swāmiji to deliver a talk as part of the 'Ved-Vigyān-Vyākhyān-Mālā', Swāmiji delivered the 58th lecture in the online series where he spoke on Vidur Neeti. The hour long talk was in Hindi, supported by PowerPoint slides, and the organizers informed later that about 2000 people watched the event from different parts of the world.

Bengaluru, May 2:

In the late 1980s (1986 thru 1990), there were a bunch of young women and men who used to regularly meet Swāmiji (not yet Swāmiji at that time, to be precise). Some 12 of them reconnected on May 2 with a 90 mins session online where Shri Rajagopalan (who also conducted CHYK study groups those days and who is now 80 years old, living in Chennai) and Swāmiji spoke (from Goa, to the audience in Bengaluru) on chapter 3 of the Bhagavad Geetā. Shri Venkatakrisna coordinated the event.

Goa, May 2:

Swāmiji arrived in Goa on April 27. A number of friends and Vedānta students joined an online Satsang held in the evening of May 2, where Swāmiji spoke on "Geetā throws light on Intelligence and Foolishness". Aditya Kulkarni and Shreya Chari, the young couple in Margao, were the masters of ceremony. A good number of friends from Karnataka and Mumbai also joined this event.

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.

WEBINARS, done:

Webinar 197 – Wisdom of Liberation in Taittiriya Upanishad – 2, by Swami Chidananda on April 11, 2021.

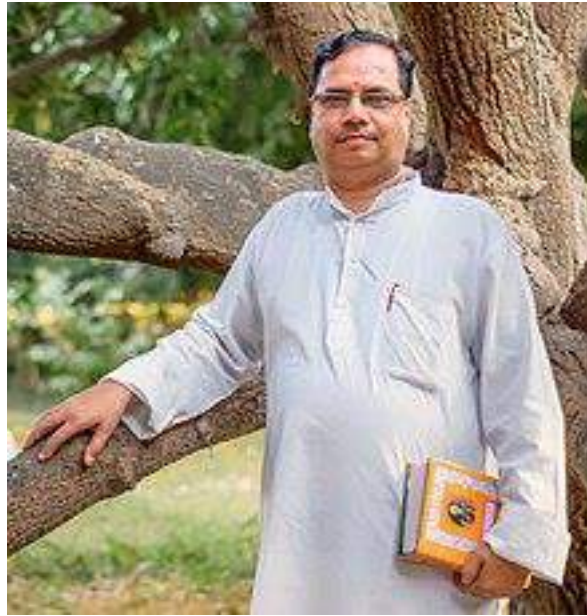
Webinar 198 – In Praise of Intelligence – More Wisdom from Vidura Neeti, by Swami Chidananda on April 25, 2021.



Asia Plateau, the venue of TLS (The Leadership School) (See News)



Sampurnanand Sanskrit University in Varanasi



Prof. Rajaram Shukla, Vice Chancellor of Sampurnanand Sanskrit University

REMEMBERING HER FONDLY...
WE PRAY FOR HER PEACE
AND WELL-BEING

SATSANG
22 APRIL 2021

A collage of images on a blue background. At the top left is a lit diya. Below it is a pair of hands in a prayer gesture. To the right is a portrait of a woman with a blue shawl. At the bottom right is a large field of colorful flowers under a blue sky with a rainbow.

Satsang on Non-materialism: Geeta and St Francis of Assisi



Dr Sunderraj Ellur flanked by his wife Dr Netravathi M and Swamiji at Suvarnamukhi Samskriti Dhāma in Feb 2021. He will present the 199th webinar.



Dr Ranjini Manian will present the 200th webinar under FOWAI FORUM

Upcoming Events

The weekly online classes on Geetā and Upanishads will continue. In India the time of these lectures is 7 am Wednesdays and 8.30 pm Fridays.

Kathopanishad (online) classes are also 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, also continue.

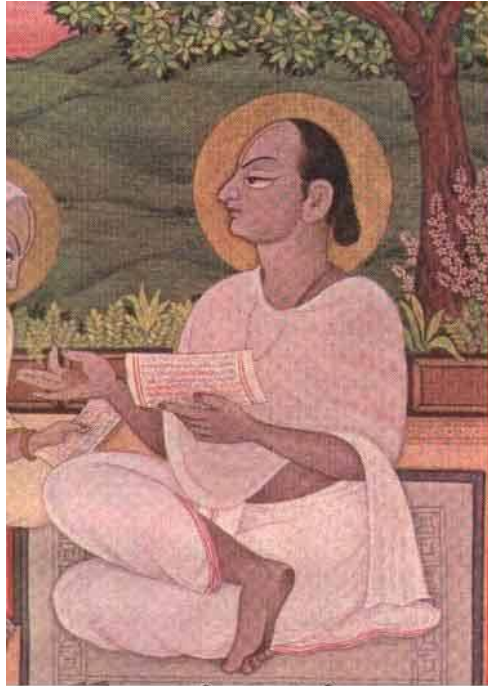
WEBINARS, to come up:

Webinar 199 – Reflections on Chapter 1 of Geeta – Dr Sunderraj Ellur, physician at St John's Hospital, Bengaluru, on May 16, 2021

Webinar 200 – Mind Full to Mindfulness – Dr Ranjini Manian, Head of "Champion Woman Movement" on May 30, 2021.

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

REMEMBERING SHRI VALLABHĀCHĀRYA



जगद्गुरु महाप्रभु श्रीमद्दवल्लभाचार्यचरणेन १५३५

Vallabhāchārya (1479–1531 CE), founded the Krishna-centered Pushti sect of Vaishnavism in the Braj region of India, and the philosophy of Shuddha advaita (Pure Nondualism).

Vallabha was born in a Telugu family that had been living in Vārānasi, who escaped to Champāran of Chhattisgarh state while expecting Vallabha, expecting a Muslim invasion, which ultimately didn't

happen, during the late 15th century.^[4] Vallabha studied the Vedas and the Upanishads as a child, then travelled throughout the Indian subcontinent over 20 years. He became one of the important leaders of the devotional Bhakti movement. Vallabhāchārya's mother was Illamma who was the daughter of a family priest serving the rulers of the empire of Vijayanagara. The hagiographies written by his followers, just like those for other Bhakti leaders, claim that he won many philosophical debates against the followers of Rāmānuja, Madhvāchārya and others, had visions and performed miracles.

He is the Āchārya and Guru of the Pushti sub-tradition, which he founded after his own interpretation of the Vedānta philosophy. Vallabha rejected asceticism and monastic life, suggested that through loving devotion to God Krishna, any householder could achieve salvation – an idea that became influential all over India, proven by his 84 Baithakjis (places of worship) in Uttar Pradesh, Rājasthan, Gujarāt, Mahārāshtra, Tamil Nādu, Āndhra Pradesh, Karnātika, Kerala, Uttarākhand, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Goa and various other parts of India.

He authored many texts including the Anubhāshya (a commentary on Brahma Sutra), Shodash Granth or sixteen 'stotras' (tracts) and several commentaries on the Bhāgavata Purāna. Vallabha's writings and *kirtan* compositions focus on baby Krishna and his childhood pranks with Yashodā (unconditional motherly love), as well as a youthful Krishna's protection of the good (divine grace) and his victory over demons and evils, all with allegory and symbolism. His legacy is best preserved in the Braj region, and particularly at Nathdwara in Mewar region of India – an important Krishna pilgrimage center. He called himself an incarnation of Agni.

WE SALUTE SHRI VALLABHĀCHĀRYA ON HIS BIRTHDAY, FRIDAY, MAY 7, 2021.

WE BOW DOWN BEFORE THE GREATS 2021



BUDDHA JAYANTI MAY 26



SHANKARA JAYANTI MAY 17



SUR DĀS JAYANTI MAY 17

(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: upa.in – Upanishad Wisdom).

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