

Sri Gurubhyo Namah

PARAMAARTHA TATTVAM

परमार्थ तत्त्वम्



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**With Humble Pranams at the Lotus Feet of their Holinesses
Sri Mahasannidhanam and Sri Sannidhanam**

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Sanātana Dharma Yajña Maṇḍalī

Sringeri Vidya Bharati Foundation Inc, USA



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VEDA SAMMELANAM, USA – 2016

With the Grace of Sri Sharadamba and Blessings of the Jagadgurus
Sri Sri Bharati Teertha Mahasannidhanam and
Sri Sri Vidhusekhara Bharati Sannidhanam

वेदोऽखिलो धर्ममूलम् ।



Vedas are the root of
all dharmas

Vedic Scholars across North America are invited to participate in the
Veda Sammelanam 2016
in coincidence with Adi Sankara Jayanthi celebrations.

|| All Devotees are Welcome ||

Date: Saturday, May 7, 2016

Time: 8:30 AM - 6:00 PM

Place: Sri Sharadamba Temple,
327 Cays Road, Stroudsburg, PA 18360

The program includes ceremonious procession with Vedic Scriptures,
Rudrabhishekam, Recitation of all four Vedas and other Scriptures, Special Vedic
offering to Sharadamba, Vedokta Aseervadam (blessing by the Scholars),
and Honoring of the Scholars.

|| Mahaprasadam (Annadanam) for all devotees! ||

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Table of Contents

• Guru Vandanam.....	5
• Jagadguru's Blessing Message.....	6
• Chairman's Message.....	9
• Editor's Note.....	15
• Jagadguru Speaks.....	17
• A Report on the first Veda Sammelanam of North America..... <i>Chandrasekharan Raman</i>	21
• Śrī Śankara Bhagavatpāda – Commentator <i>Par Excellence</i> <i>H. H. Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāswamī</i>	25
• Veda Vidya..... <i>Srinivas Mallapragada</i>	33
• Brahma Satyam Jagan Mithya..... <i>Swami Paramarthananda</i>	37
• The Practical Gita..... <i>M. R. Dwarakanath</i>	41
• Jagadguru Speaks.....	51
• Praśnottara Ratna Mālika of Śaṅkarāchārya.....	53
• Sanatana Dharma..... <i>S. S. Iyer</i>	57
• Vedasāraśiva Stotram of Śaṅkarāchārya.....	63
• Devī Māhātmyam..... <i>Jyotsna Kalavar</i>	71
• Sādhana Pañchakam of Śaṅkarāchārya.....	79
• Children's Corner.....	83
• Profiles of participant Vedic Scholars.....	87

॥ श्रीगुरुवन्दनम् ॥

श्रीगुरुभ्यो नमः

शङ्करूपेण मच्चित्तं पङ्कीकृतमभूद्यया ।
किङ्करी यस्य सा माया शङ्कराचार्यमाश्रये ॥

प्रह्लादवरदो देवो यो नृसिंहः परो हरिः ।
नृसिंहोपासकं नित्यं तं नृसिंहगुरुं भजे ॥

श्रीसच्चिदानन्दशिवाभिनवनृसिंहभारत्यभिधान् यतीन्द्रान् ।
विद्यानिधीन् मन्त्रनिधीन् सदात्मनिष्ठान् भजे मानवशम्भुरूपान् ॥

सदात्मध्याननिरतं विषयेभ्यः पराङ्मुखम् ।
नौमि शास्त्रेषु निष्णातं चन्द्रशेखरभारतीम् ॥

विवेकिनं महाप्रज्ञं धैर्यौदार्यक्षमानिधिम् ।
सदाभिनवपूर्वं तं विद्यातीर्थगुरुं भजे ॥

अज्ञानां जाह्नवीतीर्थं विद्यातीर्थं विवेकिनाम् ।
सर्वेषां सुखदं तीर्थं भारतीतीर्थमाश्रये ॥

विद्याविनयसम्पन्नं वीतरागं विवेकिनम् ।
वन्दे वेदान्ततत्त्वज्ञं विधुशेखरभारतीम् ॥

पञ्चाशलिपिभिर्विभक्तमुखदोः पन्मध्यवक्षस्थलां
भास्वन्मौलिनिबद्धचन्द्रशकलामापीनतुङ्गस्तनीम् ।
मुद्रामक्षगुणं सुधाढ्यकलशं विद्याश्च हस्ताम्बुजैः
बिभ्राणां विशदप्रभां त्रिनयनां वाग्देवतामाश्रये ॥

श्रीमत्परमहंस-परिव्राजकाचार्यवर्य-पदवाक्यप्रमाणपारावारपारीण-

यमनियमासनप्राणायामप्रत्याहारधारणाध्यानसमाध्यष्टाङ्गयोगानुष्ठाननिष्ठ-तपश्चक्रवर्ति-

अनाद्यविच्छिन्नश्रीशङ्कराचार्यगुरुपरंपराप्राप्त-षड्दर्शनस्थापनाचार्य-व्याख्यानसिंहासनाधीश्वर-सकलनिगमागमसारहृदय-

सांख्यत्रयप्रतिपादक-वैदिकमार्गप्रवर्तक-सर्वतन्त्रस्वतन्त्र-आदिराजधानी-विद्यानगरमहाराजधानी-

कर्णाटकसिंहासनप्रतिष्ठापनाचार्य-श्रीमद्राजाधिराजगुरु-भूमण्डलाचार्य-ऋष्यशृङ्गपुरवराधीश्वर-तुङ्गभद्रातीरवासि-

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श्रीमज्जगद्गुरु-श्रीभारतीतीर्थमहास्वामिनां-

तत्करकमलसञ्जात-श्रीमज्जगद्गुरु-श्रीविधुशेखरभारतीमहास्वामिनां च

चरणारविन्दयोः साष्टाङ्गप्रणामान् समर्पयामः ॥



श्री श्री जगद्गुरु शङ्कराचार्य महासंस्थानम् , दक्षिणाम्नाय श्री शारदापीठम् , शृङ्गेरी
Sri Sri Jagadguru Shankaracharya Mahasamstanam
Dakshinamnaya Sri Sharada Peetham, Sringeri - 577 139, Karnataka. INDIA.



V.R. Gowri Shankar BE, DISC, MIMA,
CEO & Administrator
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9th April 2016

I am very happy that, with the Blessings of Jagadguru Shankaracharya Sri Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahasannidhanam and Jagadguru Shankaracharya Sri Sri Vidhusekhara Bharati Sannidhanam, Sringeri Vidya Bharathi Foundation is organizing a Vedic Sammelan for Vedic scholars across North America for the second time.

Our Dharma is called Sanatana Vaidika Dharma. It is Sanatana or eternal as unlike other faiths, there is neither no specific originator nor a specific starting point to which it can be traced to. It is Vaidika Dharma as the tenets of our Dharma is based on the Vedas – the source of all knowledge. The very word “Veda” indicates knowledge; that kind of knowledge that is beyond ordinary sense perception or inference. The Vedic Mantras spread across the four Vedas of Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva were “heard” by Rishis in their advanced states of meditation and hence the Vedas are also known by the name “Shruti-s” or “that which is heard”. The Vedas are *Apaurusheya* – those that do not originate from any human being – with the Rishis serving as transmitters of these Cosmic eternal sounds.

All our culture and tradition stems from the Vedas and the Vedic way of life expounded therein. It is to sustain this Sanatana Vedic Dharma that the Supreme Lord descends, sports various incarnations and graces all mankind.

More than twelve centuries ago, Lord Parameshwara descended as Sri Adi Shankara Bhagavatpada to revive this Sanatana Vaidika Dharma, propagated the Vedic philosophy of Advaita and by a short life of 32 years, filled with mammoth achievements and the production of eternal Vedantic works and devotional hymns, brought about the welfare of all mankind.

It is most fitting that Sringeri Vidya Bharati Foundation, USA has chosen to organize the Vedic Sammelan in 2016 in coincidence with the celebrations of the Jayanti of Sri Adi Shankara Bhagavatpadacharya.



श्री श्री जगद्गुरु शङ्कराचार्य महासंस्थानम् , दक्षिणाम्नाय श्री शारदापीठम् , शृङ्गेरी

Sri Sri Jagadguru Shankaracharya Mahasamstanam

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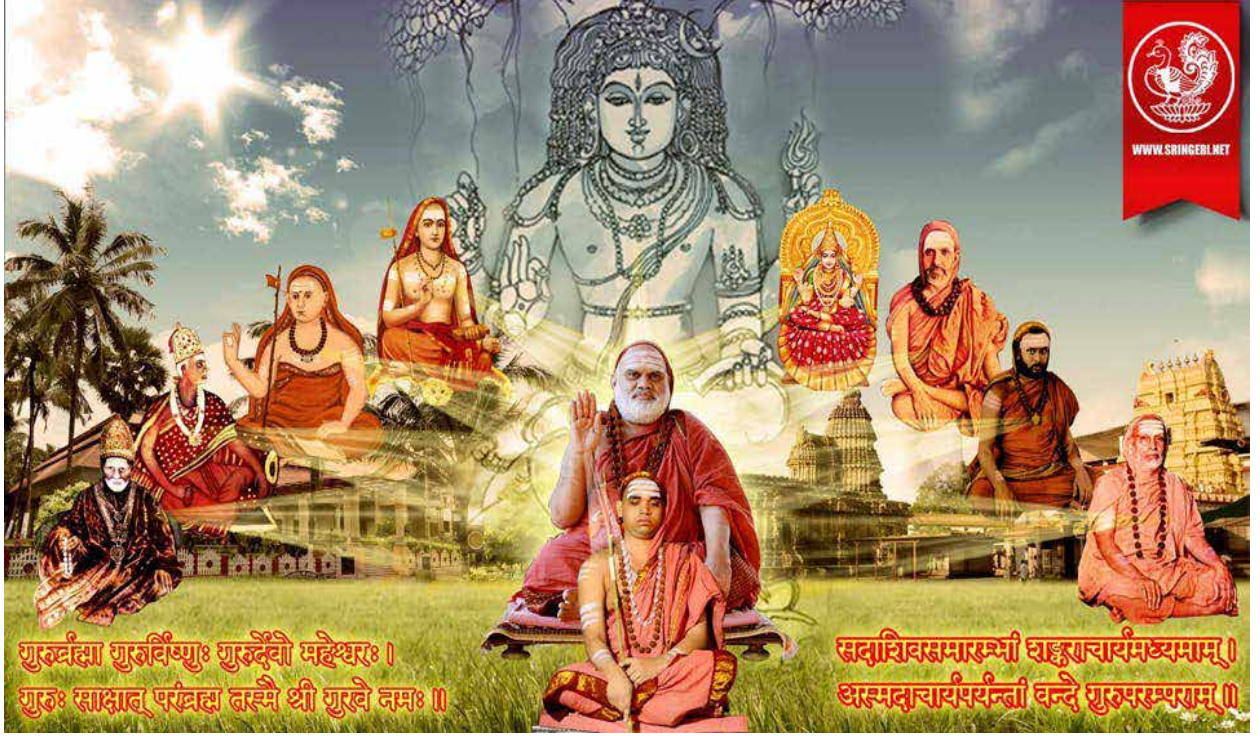
The Sannelan serves to bring together Vedic scholars, Shivacharyas and Bhattacharyas spread across various cities and temples of North America, in particular the USA and Canada in one place. That such a Sannelan takes place at the temple of Goddess Sharadamba, the Divinity of Knowledge is a blessing for every attendee. Every follower of Sanatana Dharma in North America would deem this as a lifetime opportunity to participate in it, listen to the sacred vibrations of the Vedic chants by all these scholars and participate in honouring these scholars.

I am pleased to convey the Gracious Blessings of Their Holinesses for the successful conduct of the Vedic Sannelan and for the welfare of every member of SVBF and every attendee of the Sannelan.

Sri Sharada Archana Prasadams blessed by Their Holinesses is enclosed.

Yours sincerely

V.R.Gowrishankar



Man must make this sacred human birth meaningful. To do that he must conform to a tradition, righteousness, a code of conduct and a set of rituals. That is what distinguishes man from animals. Without these principles human birth will be wasted. It cannot be definitely said if one will get another birth like this. It depends on one's karma.

Important among sadhanas are the daily worship of Iswara and reading a portion of the Bhagavad Gita. Rendered by God himself, the Gita will purify the layman as well as the learned. With these habits, good thoughts will shine forth in all matters. We bless all to purify their lives by following the path of virtues.

H.H. Jagadguru Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal

**Our Anantakoti Sashtanga Namaskaras
at the lotus feet of Their Holinesses
Jagadguru Sri Sri Maha Sannidhanam and
Jagadguru Sri Sri Sannidhanam**

Geetha & V. R. Gowrishankar
Abhinav Chandra & Chinmayee Sharada

SRINGERI VIDYA BHARATI FOUNDATION INC., USA

Veda Sammelanam of North America – 2016

Chairman's Message

Dear Fellow Devotees:

With the grace of Shri Sharadamba and the blessings of the Jagadgurus Sri Sri Bharati Teertha Mahasannidhanam and Sri Sri Vidhusekhara Bharati Sannidhanam, SVBF is pleased to organize the 2nd Veda Sammelanam of North America at the Sharada Temple in Stroudsburg, PA and the first-ever Veda Sammelanam of North America was organized in 2008 by SVBF.

The Sringeri Peetham, India, organizes Veda Sammelans all across the length and breath of India annually since 2001 in which over 3,000 Vedic Scholars are honored. As the overseas affiliate of the Peetham, SVBF organizes the Sammelanams also, though not that frequently. The Jagadgurs consider these events of such a high importance that They send the CEO of the Peetham Padmashree Awardee, Dr. V. R. Gowrishankar to participate personally and to deliver Their blessing message during the events. We would like to place on record our sincere appreciation and gratitude to Dr. V. R. Gowrishankar for his guidance and participation, coming from India and providing all the support in the conduct of this year's event also.

Our *Sanatana Dharma* (or Vedic Hindu faith) is based on our basic scriptures, known as Vedas. The word *veda* is derived from the Sanskrit root *vid* which means "to know". Since our religion follows the Vedic Injunctions, it is known as "Vedic Religion". The word religion implies the meaning of *dharma*.

The texts that give us the complete knowledge of *dharma* are called *dharmapramana*. They are fourteen and the following *sloka* gives them as,

अङ्गानि वेदाश्चत्वारो मीमांसा न्याय विस्तरः

पुराणं धर्मशास्त्रं च विद्या ह्येताश्चतुर्दशा ॥

(aṅgāni vedāścatvāro mīmāṃsā nyāya vistarah
purāṇam dharmasāstraṃ ca vidyā hyetāścaturdaśā ॥)

Four *vedas*, (*Rig, Yajur, Sāma & Atharva*), six *Vedāngas* (organs of *Vedas*) – *sikshā* (euphony & pronunciation), *vyākarna* (grammar), *chandas* (meter), *nirukta* (etymology), *jyotisha*

(astronomy), *kalpa* (procedure); and four *Upāngas* (secondary organs) *mīmāṃsā* (inquiry), *nyāya* (logic) *purāna* (mythology) and *dharma sāstra* (codes of conduct). These 14 are hailed as *vidyāsthānas* - the abode of knowledge.

The Glory of the Vedas

Apastambha Sutra describes *Vedas* as the *pramāṇa*:-authority-*pramāṇam vedāscā*);

Manu Smriti hails them as- *vedokhilo dharma mūlam* – the root of all *dharmas*;

Bhagavan Sri Krishna says: *vedaisca sarvairahamevedya*: I am known through the *Vedas*)

The *Vedas* are Infinite: *anantā vai vedāh*;

They are the very breath of *Iswara* : - *yasya nisvasitam vedāh*.

They are without beginning: *anādi*; and of non-human origin: *apourushayah*..

They teach the glories of all creations and the principles of *dharma*; they enshrine true knowledge. That is why our scriptures proclaim: *vedo nityamadhīyatām*; *taduditam karma svanushīyatām* (practice the *Vedas* daily; practice well their prescriptions)

It is our great fortune that we have inherited such a rich and cherished *dharmic* tradition and lineage. It should be our foremost duty and goal to preserve such a tradition. Our ancestors led a peaceful and contented life following the path set by the Vedic guidelines. That path withstood the tests of historic times and was smooth to follow without obstacles.

Codification of Vedas

The *Vedas* were codified into the four divisions in the beginning of *Kali Yuga* by Veda Vyāsa. (*Kali Yuga* has a span of 432,000 years and is believed to have started around 3000 B.C. The four *yugas* are *Satya* or *Krita* (1,728,000 y), *Treta* (1,296,000 y), *Dwapara* (864,000 y) and *Kali*.) *Bhagavan Veda Vyāsa* classified the four *Vedas* consisting of 1131 recensions (*shākhās*) - 21 in *Rigveda*, 101 in *Yajurveda*, 1000 in *Sāmaveda* and 9 in the *Atharvaveda*. Among these, the *Yajurveda* has two schools known as *Krishnayajurveda* and *Suklayajurveda*. The *Vedas* were propagated in the line (*parampara*) of Seers (*Rishis*) as follows:

<i>Paila</i> :	<i>Rigveda</i>
<i>Vaishampaayana</i> :	<i>Yajurveda</i>
<i>Jaimini</i> :	<i>Sāmaveda and</i>
<i>Sumanthu</i> :	<i>Atharvaveda</i>

They were propagated by oral tradition, from father-to-son and guru-to-disciple. Of these 1131, only 10 recensions are available today, and only 2 of them are complete! The 10 recensions are:

1. Sākala -	Rigveda
2. Madhyandina –	Sukla Yajurveda
3. Kanva –	Sukla Yajurveda
4. Taittiriya –	Krishna Yajurveda
5. Maitrayaniya –	Krishna Yajurveda
6. Jaimini –	Sāmaveda
7. Kauthuma –	Sāmaveda
8. Ranayaniya –	Sāmaveda
9. Pippalada –	Atharvaveda
10. Saunaka -	Atharvaveda

Each of the *Veda Shākhās* has three portions called *Samhitā* (which is the main text of the Vedas), *Brāhmana* (the portion dealing with rituals) and the *Āranyaka* (dealing with the inner meaning contained in the *Samhitā* and the *Brāhmanas*.) *Upanishads* are placed at the end of the *Āranyakas* and deal with the realization of the Supreme through the path of knowledge (*jnana mārga*). In this context, the *Upanishads*, *Brahma Sutras* (aphorisms which contain all that is propounded by the *Upanishads*), and the *Bhagavad Gita* are given a special name, *prasthānatrayī* - the texts of *tattvajñāna* or metaphysics.

What are given above are only a part of the vast amount of our Vedic literature. We are all very fortunate that we have inherited such a rich and intellectually sophisticated tradition and philosophy. **As much as the scriptures are the root of this Vedic tradition, the Vedic and Āgamic scholar is the fundamental entity through whose dedication and commitment to this dharma, our time-immemorial scriptures and tradition are still in practice all across the world!** It is the duty of every one of us to recognize and support these scholars and the Vedic / Āgamic schools (*pāṭhaśālās*). With this intention, and to communicate to our younger generation, the importance of this commitment, SVBF organizes this event in which all *Vedic* and *Saiva* and *Vaishnava Āgamic* scholars of North America are invited and honored. It is also unique to seek the collective blessings of so many scholars assembled in one place, for the welfare of all of us in particular and the world community in general.

Om, śānti: śānti: śānti:

S. Veegasubramanian

Chairman, SVBF – North America



Perform Vyasa Puja and take the vow of Chaturmasya Vratam, Sringeri Jagadguru Sri Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahasannidhanam and Sri Sri Vidhushekhara Bharathi Sannidhanam.

However great the inconvenience may be, one should not allow one's mind to drift towards adharma. With great effort, dharma should be followed.

H.H Jagadguru Abhinava Vidyateertha Mahaswamigal

**Our Anantakoti Sashtanga Namaskaras at the lotus feet of
Their Holinesses
Jagadguru Sri Sri Maha Sannidhanam and
Jagadguru Sri Sri Sannidhanam**

Rajalakshmi & Yegnasubramanian
Sridhar Yegnasubramanian

Paramārtha Tattvam

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Mission of SVBF

1. To follow and propagate the authentic practice of our Vedic culture as prescribed in the scriptures and guided by the unbroken tradition of the Sringeri Sankaracharya Mutt.
2. To enable the understanding of our,
 - o scriptures,
 - o rituals that are based on the scriptures and their significance in day-to-day life, and
 - o philosophy, by appropriate tools of teaching, education and research.
3. To support Veda Pathashalas and encourage Vedic priesthood.
4. To actively participate in humanitarian and charitable community services in accordance with the prescriptions of our Dharma.

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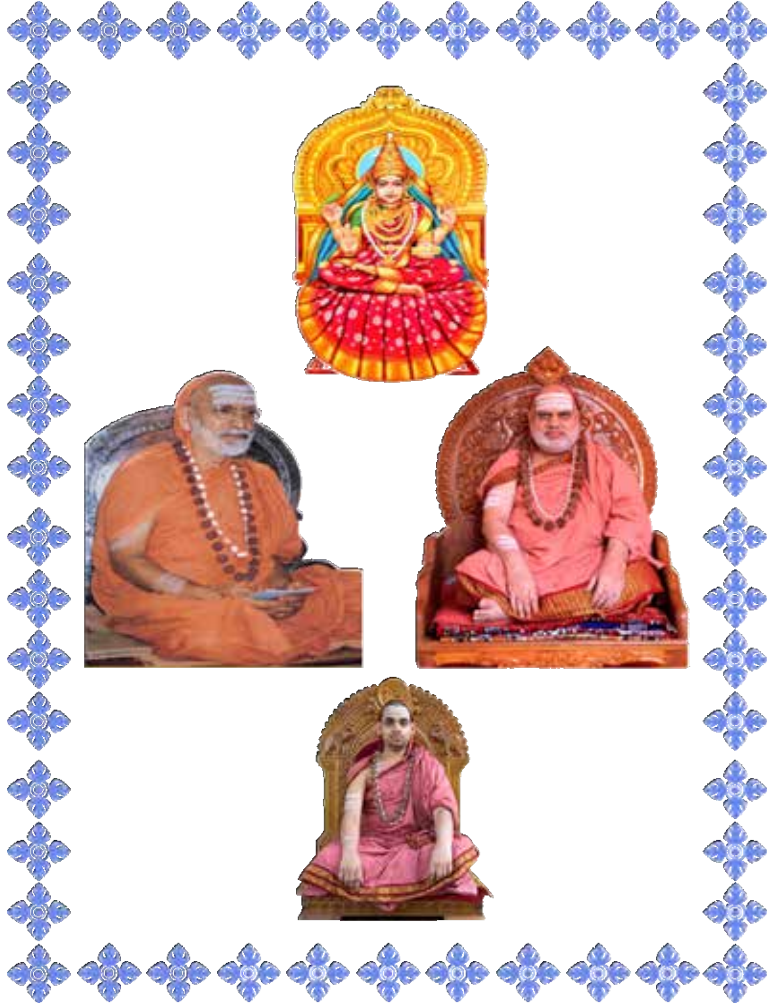
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Tendencies develop, regardless of the characteristic of the action performed.
Hence, he who wishes to lead a proper life will do well to avoid evil deeds and to
repeatedly perform virtuous deeds.

- H.H Jagadguru Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahaswamigal

With Humble Pranams at the lotus feet of
Sri Mahasannidhanam and Sri
Sannidhanam

Padma and Shrinivas S Iyer, New Jersey



Editors' Note

We are pleased to bring out the special issue of *Paramārtha Tattvam* on the occasion of the second *Veda Sammelanam* of North America conducted by SVBF at the Śringerī Śāradāmbā Temple in Stroudsburg, PA.

Paramārtha Tattvam, the quarterly journal of SVBF, USA was started with the blessings of His Holiness Śrī Jagadguru Śankarāchārya Śrī Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāsannidhānam of Śringerī Śāradā Pītham, for the sake of propagating our Vedic culture as prescribed in the scriptures and guided by the unbroken tradition of the Śringerī Śankarāchārya Mutt. We seek the blessings of our *Ācharya* and the entire *Guru Parampara* to guide us in this mission for the years to come. In His *Anugraha Bhāṣanam*, the Jagadguru aptly speaks about Śankarāchārya as the Universal Benefactor who blessed us with all His works ranging from commentaries to *stotras* and also as the World Teacher who teaches us about *karma*, *bhakti* and *jñāna*.

The Chairman's message provides the background and scope of the second *Veda Sammelanam* of North America – 2016. The report on the first *Veda Sammelanam* held in 2012 evokes pleasant memories of a previous memorable event.

On the auspicious occasion of *Śankara Jayanti* celebrations, we are pleased to reprint an article on Śrī Śankara Bhagavatpāda by His Holiness Śrī Jagadguru Śankarāchārya Śrī Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāsannidhānam of Śringerī Śāradā Pītham. Swamī Paramārthānanda's article on '*Brahma Satyam Jagan Mithya*' brings out the compelling need to study *Vedāntic* scriptures. The articles '*Veda Vidyā*', '*The Practical Gītā*', '*Sanātana Dharma*' and '*Devī Māhātmyam*' are a delightful treat to the readers. In the children's corner, young *brahmachārīs* passionately address the topic of *karmānuṣṭhānas*.

The profiles of all priests who attended the *Veda Sammelanam* event have been published. We hope that this would serve as a useful database of priests practicing in North America.

We gratefully acknowledge all the sponsors for their generous support.

We hope that readers will enjoy reading all the articles.

Editors.



It is true that in the world of practical life, you cannot do without wealth. But do not attach more importance to money than it deserves. Never forget that money is only a means of happiness and not happiness itself.

H.H. Jagadguru Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamigal

Our Anantakoti Sashtanga Namaskaras at the lotus
feet of Their Holinesses
Jagadguru Sri Sri Maha Sannidhanam and
Jagadguru Sri Sri Sannidhanam

Lakshmi & Srinivasan Yegnasubramanian
Aditi Sharada & Gopal Krishna

Jagadguru Speaks.....

Sankara, the World Teacher

There are many kinds of people in the world. Their lifestyle is formed in accordance with their own *samskaras*. Only the one who can show all of them the way to lead a righteous life can be called a *Jagadguru*. There is no doubt that Adi Sankara was such a *Jagadguru*.

Sankara gave *upadesa* in *jnana* to those who wished to tread the path of knowledge. In his works, he has given extensive advice on *jnana*. For those people who could not go along the *jnana marga*, he taught *karma marga*.

वेदो नित्यमधीयतां तदुतितं कर्मस्वनुष्ठियताम् ।

His valuable advice to chant the *Vedas* daily and do the prescribed *karmas* was meant for those following the path of duty. For those who were unable to follow this advice, he prescribed the way of *bhakti*.

गेयं गीता नामसहस्रं ध्येयं श्रीपति रूपमजस्रम् ।

As he said, such people will find it useful to recite the *Gita* and *Vishnu Sahasranama* and think of Hari at all times.

The paths of *karma*, *bhakti* and *jnana* are, thus, conducive to man's welfare. Adi Sankara, who prescribed these various *yogas* for all people is, indeed, worshipful. The very remembrance of him is bound to bestow good to all.

शिष्यचतुष्टययुक्तं शिवमिव सनकादि संयुक्तं सततम् ।

शङ्करभगवत्पादं शङ्कारहितेन चेतसा वन्दे ॥

With absolutely no doubt in my mind, I bow to Sankara Bhagavadpada, who, like Lord Siva was always surrounded by four disciples.

Sringeri Vidya Bharati Foundation Inc., USA

VEDA SAMMELANAM-2016

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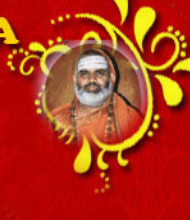
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अस्मदाचार्यपर्यन्तां बन्दे गुरुपरम्पराम् ॥

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Sri Sri Bharati Teertha Maha Sannidhanam
and

Sri Sri Vidhusekhara Bharati Sannidhanam,

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May the Grace of Sri Sharadamba and the Blessings of the Acharyas be with you all !!!

TEMPLE KUMBHABHISHEKAM - 2008



A REPORT ON THE FIRST VEDA SAMMELANAM OF NORTH AMERICA HELD ON APRIL 14, 2012

Chandrasekharan Raman

With the blessings of Jagadguru Śrī Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāswāmi of Śringeri Śāradā Peetham, and the boundless Grace of Goddess Śāradāmbā, the first *Veda Sammelanam* in North America was conducted in a grand manner on April 14, 2012 at the Śringeri Sādhanā Center, Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania. The *Sammelanam* coincided with the 100th year of ascension to the Spiritual Throne by the 34th Pontiff of Śrī Śringeri Śāradā Peetham, Jagadguru Śrī Śrī Chandrasekhara Bhāratī Mahāswāmī. The *Veda Sammelanam* was conducted mainly to honor the Vedic scholars residing in U.S.A and Canada, and to create and propagate awareness of Vedic dharma among all *āstikas* living in this part of the globe.

On the day of the event, around 130 Vedic scholars from all over the continental United States assembled at the Śringeri Sādhanā Center at 8 AM. The event started with *Guru Vandanam*, by praying to the entire *Guru Paramparā* of the *Sanātana Dharma* tradition. A special *pūjā* was performed to H. H. Śrī Chandrasekhara Bhāratī Mahāswāmī to seek His blessings. The *pūjā* was followed by the *abhiṣeka* to Lord Chandramouliśwara in the temple. After the *abhiṣeka* was over, all the Vedic scholars assembled at the *Veda Vyāsa* shrine. Prayers were offered to *Veda Vyāsa*, who codified the Vedas into four major branches. *Pūjā* was also performed to the Vedic scriptural text, the personification of the *Veda Puruṣa*.

The Vedic scriptural text was then placed on a beautifully decorated *pallakkī*, and was carried on the shoulders by the Vedic scholars themselves. The images of Śrī Śāradāmbā, Śrī Adi Śankarācharya, Śrī Chandrasekhara Bhāratī Mahāswāmi, and Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāswāmi led a ceremonious procession that resounded with Veda mantras of different *Śākhās* of *Rig Veda*, *Yajur Veda*, *Sāma Veda*, *Atharva Veda* and also *Dīvyā Prabandams*. It was a fitting tribute to the *Veda Puruṣa*, the *Jagadgurus* and Goddess *Śāradāmbā* as the entire procession advanced on red carpet. Blessed were those people who witnessed a rare procession in their life time. The procession ended at the temple.

The Vedic scholars then assembled in Śrī *Śāradāmbā*'s shrine, and sat in groups according to their own *śākhās*. The assembly of scholars was welcomed by the President of SVBF USA, Dr. S. S. Iyer. He formally welcomed the priests and

Padmashri Dr. V. R. Gowrishankar, CEO, Śringeri Peetham, India. A video message of H. H. Jagadguru Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāswāmi was played. The Jagadguru, in his benedictory message, explained the importance of Vedas and the importance of following our *Dharma*.

The gathering was then addressed by the Chairman, SVBF, Dr. S. Yegnasubramanian. He stressed the importance of fostering the Vedic Dharma and explained how the Vedic scholars play an important role in fostering the dharma. He also pointed out that all other *śāstrās*, like music, dance, etc. will flourish only if the root of all of them, the Vedas is properly nourished. The Vedic scholars are the custodians of the Vedas, and if we need to preserve the treasure of the Vedas, Vedic scholars should be encouraged to send their children to *pāṭhaśālās*, he said. He also mentioned that if *Vaidika dharma* is preserved, it will in turn, protect us. He appreciated the Vedic scholars for turning out in big numbers and showing full support to propagate this *dharma*, which was the main objective of the Peetham.

Dr. V. R. Gowrishankar, who was kind enough to make a flying visit for the event amidst his busy schedule, gave a very good speech on the uniqueness of *Sanātana Dharma*. He recounted an anecdote where H. H. Śrī Abhinava Vidyātīrtha Mahāswāmi posed a question to a group of scholars as to what is unique about our *Sanātana Dharma* that we want to follow this dharma? Even though the scholars came up with many good answers, the saint was not convinced with any of them. The Pontiff Himself gave the answer – our dharma is the only one which is *apauruṣeya*, i.e., not of a human origin. Dr. Gowrishankar also praised the Vedic scholars for their commitment to spread the dharma in this part of the world. He urged them to lead the *āstikas* in the *dharmic* path by giving them the right advice.

A very elaborate and special *aṣṭāvadhāna seva* was offered to Goddess *Śāradāmbā*, the abode of all Knowledge, by the Vedic scholars. It was a rare treat to the audience who enjoyed the recitation for nearly two hours and was a great experience to hear many Vedic scholars, synchronizing to one single voice. A few Veda Mantras from the following *śākhās* were recited:



- *Rig Veda – Śakala śākhā*
- *Shukla Yajur Veda – Kanva śākhā, Madhyamdina śākhā*
- *Krishna Yajur Veda – Taittiriya śākhā*
- *Sama Veda – Kouthuma śākhā, Jaiminiya śākhā, Pranayaniya śākhā*
- *Āgama – Vaikānasa, Śaiva, Pāncharātra, Śiva karana*

The special offering was followed by lunch *prasādam*. All the Vedic scholars were served food in the most traditional style by the volunteers of the foundation.

In the afternoon session, the Chairman of SVBF, Dr. S. Yegnasubramanian gave a very informative lecture-cum-demonstration of the various Vedic recitation practices. He illustrated in simple terms the *prakṛti* and *vikṛti pāthas* of reciting Veda mantras. The oral recitation practices were beautifully demonstrated by the highly qualified priests of SVBF, Br. Śrī. Shringeswara Bhat, Br. Śrī. Shyamasundara Rao and Br. Śrī. A. R. Chandramouli. The different *prakṛti pāthas* – *Samhita, Pada and Krama* – and *vikṛti pathas* – *Jata, Mala (Pushpa Mala), Shika, Rekha, Dwaja, Danda, Ratha (Dwichakra, Trichakra and Chatuschakra), Pancasandhi Ghana and Ghana* – were illustrated and recited. Dr. Yegnasubramanian enlightened the audience with the various chanting methods and the pattern involved in each of the oral recitation patterns. He also illustrated *Varna Krama* – the phonology of accent and classification of each syllable. Br. Śrī. Sivaramakrishna *Salakṣaṇa Ghanapāṭī* from Śrī Guruvayoorappan Temple, Morganville NJ demonstrated the Varna Krama for a single Vedic word “*Saraswatī*”. Dr. Yegnasubramanian described the Vedic method of analysis of each syllable in the Vedas, and explained how 26 parameters of each Vedic syllable, along with the recitation practices served as an impeccable record for propagating the Vedic texts without distortion in an oral tradition. The lecture was well received by an enthusiastic full house audience (more than 300) at the Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Community Center Hall.

The Vedic scholars then assembled at the temple premises again for the concluding session. Every Vedic scholar was individually honored in front of a huge crowd. The Vedic scholars in turn expressed their gratitude to the foundation and praised the efforts of Dr. Yegnasubramanian for his untiring efforts in fostering dharma. The program concluded with *raṣṭra āsīrvādam* by the participating scholars.

All the scholars left the place with rejuvenated energy. It was a very good break from their routine, and they were already looking forward to many more conferences of Vedic scholars in the years to come. All participants greatly appreciated the way the *Sammelanam* was organized and were pleased with the hospitality, food and other facilities provided by the foundation. It was a very fruitful and memorable day for all the participants.

The whole event was well attended and appreciated by many devotees. A group of more than 75 people came from Canada in two buses to witness the *Vedasammelanam*. The event was also webcasted live on the Internet, and was watched by more than 250 people. It was also covered by TV5, a television channel.

The foundation is grateful to the volunteers, who were responsible for pulling the event off to a grand success. Meticulous planning (up to finest details) for two full weeks and faultless execution of tasks by the independent committees were appreciated by all the participants. The volunteers worked as a part of several committees – parking transportation, food, registration, hospitality and religious – to execute the tasks. The volunteers were honored by the organizers at the end of the event.

In summary, with the blessings of the Jagadguru and grace of Śrī Śāradāmbā, the first *Veda Sammelanam* event was a grand success – another good achievement by the Chairman of the foundation and organizers of the event, a matter of pride for the participants, a pleasant treat for the audience, a great source of information for enthusiasts of the Vedas, a great blessing for the devotees, and a big accomplishment for the volunteers.

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1. *Lecture Demonstration on Vedas – Part 1 and Part 2*, by S. Yegnasubramanian. URL : <https://youtu.be/H7s8XWCguoo?list=PL845E7AB0B5E5331B>
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Dharma ranks high among the factors conducive to man's welfare. And charity (dAna) is the foremost among all dharmas. May all attain glory by giving charity according to one's capacity

H.H. Jagadguru Bharati Teertha Mahaswamigal

Our Anantakoti Sashtanga Namaskaras at the lotus feet of Their Holinesses Jagadguru Sri Sri Maha Sannidhanam and Jagadguru Sri Sri Sannidhanam

Anuradha & Mahesh Saptharishi

Śrī Śankara Bhagavatpāda – Commentator *Par Excellence*

His Holiness Śrī Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji

Śrī Śankara Bhagavatpāda, famous for his profound knowledge in all branches of learning, has been acclaimed by all men of letters as the commentator *par excellence* of *Prasthāna Traya*. This consists of the *Upaniṣads*, *Brahma Sūtras* and the *Bhagavad Gītā*. The Bhagavatpāda's commentaries, which deal with matters of deep import, shine as examples of a majestic and magnificent work.

Karma-cum-Jñāna

Śrī Bhagavatpāda has categorically established in his commentary that liberation is attained only through knowledge of the Self, and not by a combination of *karma* and *jñāna*. Even inconsistencies apparent in some of the passages in the *Brahma Sūtras*, *Upaniṣads* and the *Bhagavad Gītā* have been cleared by the Bhagavatpāda by his deep and thorough elucidation.

In the *Bhagavad Gītā*, we have passages, such as कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन, कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वम्, which emphasize the importance of *karma* for mankind. We also have other verses which declare यद् ज्ञात्वा अमृतमश्नुते and ततो मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा | These uphold the path of *jñāna* as the means to liberation. Hence, some people may wonder whether it is not the Lord's intention that only a combination of *karma* and *jñāna* will lead to liberation.

These inconsistencies were explained by the Bhagavatpāda, who said that the two paths – the path of *karma* and the path of *jñāna* – apply to persons of different categories. He wrote in his commentary on the *Gītā*: “The path of *karma* concerns the unenlightened, while the path of *jñāna* is preceded by the abandonment of all *karmas* for the enlightened.”

In the same way, he corrected the wrong impressions based on a superficial reading of some passages in the *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad*. In his commentary, he argued that the two paths are not advocated for all desirous of liberation. Indeed, the applicability of each path depends on the individual qualification. Thus he said there was no inconsistency in the text.

Individual Jīva and Brahman

The Bhagavatpāda held that in reality the individual *jīva* and the universal *Brahman* are not different. Non-dualism was criticized by some people relying on passages in the *Brahma Sūtras* which appeared to suggest duality as, for example, भेदव्यपदेशाच्च (१.१.१७), अधिकं तु भेदनिर्देशात् (२.१.२३), नेतरोऽनुपपत्तेः (१.१.१६) |

Here, the Bhagavatpāda said that duality is fictitious. In his *Sūtra Bhāṣya*, he argued: “The supreme Self (*Brahman*) conditioned by the adjuncts, such as the body, sense organs, mind and intellect, is viewed by the immature as an embodied soul.”



Devotion with sincerity towards one's own duty and towards God are the most essential things which a human being must crave for.

- H.H. Jagadguru Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal

With Humble Pranams at the lotus feet of Sri
Mahasannidhanam and Sri Sannidhanam

Chityala Family, New York

When the oneness of *Brahman* is grasped, as the *mahāvākya*, तत् त्वम् असि, proclaims, the distinction of the doer and the deed, as commonly understood, is negated. Similarly, once the identity of *jīva* and *Brahman* is experienced, liberation ensues, putting an end to all activities.

Bhagāvān Bādarāyaṇa upheld that the entire manifested world is nothing but the Supreme Self (*Brahman*). This view is challenged by many people who argue: “If *Brahman* is accepted as the sole reality, all arguments or proofs leading to direct knowledge in the world of duality are meaningless. Even the scriptures dealing with do’s and don’ts become redundant. So too, is the *mokṣa śāstra*. Similarly, if everything other than *Brahman* is unreal, the *śruti* are unreal. Then, how can one support the truth propounded by the *śrutis* that *Ātman* alone is real?”

The Bhagavatpāda has fully answered these objections. All empirical activities, the prescriptions and prohibitions of the *Upaniṣads* to attain liberation are relevant only till the dawn of non-dual experience. Is it not true that the experiences of the dream state become illusory on waking?

In the same way, the experiences before illumination are true until we attain oneness with the *Brahman*.

The argument that *śrutis* are illusory and, therefore, cannot lead one to liberation is unfounded. In the pre-awakened state, the illusory nature of the *śruti* does not arise at all. They are real then, and there is no incongruity in this.

If it is argued that the *Vedas*, in fact, are illusory, even then what harm is there? Do

we not come across deaths due to grief which is nothing but illusion?

Similarly, does not one get the knowledge of having become rich through a dream, which is entirely an illusion?

In this context, there is a *śruti pramāṇa* which says that if, during the performance of the rites for desired results, the agent sees a woman in dream he should know that those rites will be fruitful because of the vision.

The experience of the dreamer is real in that state, as even an illusory means of knowledge can produce that experience. The state of acquired wealth is an illusion brought by a dream which is also an illusion. There is, therefore, nothing wrong in the exposition of *Jīva-Brahman* identity.

Canonical Interpretations

The Bhagavatpāda’s *Sūtra Bhāṣya* follows in several places the commentary by Sabaraswami in the first part of the *Vedas*, the *karmakānda*. All scholars say that Sabaraswami’s commentary is authentic. Similarly, none will doubt the authenticity of Bhagavatpāda’s commentary.

Both parts of *mimāmsa*, namely, the first part relating to the *Vedas* dealing with *karmas* and the second dealing with the *Brahman*, generally take sentences from the *Vedas* and attempt to establish the correct meaning. There is no doubt in this respect among the learned men. But in dealing with each *adhikaraṇa* (section) and particular *Veda vākyas*, the Acharya’s *bhāṣya* alone should be the authority. In canonical interpretations, the Bhagavatpāda’s intellectual acumen is unparalleled.



The greatness of the Lord is unlimited. To worship Him and to thereby become the recipient of His Grace is what has been traditionally regarded as an ideal to be aspired for. It is everyone's responsibility to keep up this tradition.

God is full of infinite glory. He will ever respond to a true devotee's appeal.

- H.H Jagadguru Bharati Teertha Mahaswamigal

With Humble Pranams at the lotus feet of their holinesses

Shreyas Chityala, New York

In the section of आत्मानन्दमयः, there is a sentence, अन्योऽन्तर आत्मानन्दमयः | Here is the word आत्मानन्दमयः | Does it refer to *jīva* or *Brahman*? Many scholars conclude that it refers to *Brahman*. The Bhagavatpāda, too, while initially pointing out to this view, dismisses it as incorrect on the basis of *śruti pramāṇa*, ब्रह्म पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा | He asked whether the word *Brahma* in this passage was a part of *ānandamaya*, or its independent state as *Brahman*, the substratum.

He concluded in favor of the latter, namely, the independent plenary *Brahman*.

The *sūtram*, अत एव प्राणः (१.१.२३), was introduced to explain the meaning of *prāṇa* occurring in the *Vedas*. There is no dispute about this. But doubts have been raised about the meaning of *prāṇa* in the *sūtra*. Some people think that this *prāṇa* in the *sūtra* refers to *śruti* texts, such as ‘प्राणबन्धनं हि सोम्य मनः’ (छान्दोग्योपनिषद् ६-८-२), ‘प्राणस्य प्राणम्’ (बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद् ४-४-१८) – O Amiable One, the mind is tethered to *prāṇa*, vital force of the vital force – but this is not a graceful interpretation of Bādarāyaṇa *sūtra*.

A *sūtra* is required only when doubt arises about the meaning of a word in the *śruti*. With regard to *prāṇasya prāṇam*, there is no doubt, as not only the word, but the chapter is different. In the *udgitha* section, we find a sentence, ‘कतमा सा देवतेति, प्राण इति होवाच (छान्दोग्योपनिषद् १-११-४)’. Here, the Bhagavadpāda says that the *sūtra* on *prāṇa*

was introduced to clarify and confirm that this word refers to *Brahman* in the text.

Next the *sūtra* कम्पनात् (१.३.३९) (because of vibration) is taken up to decide which *śruti* text is under reference. But no such text occurs with the word *kampana*. Therefore, the Bhagavatpāda says that this *sūtra* is introduced to deal with that *śruti* in which a word with an equal meaning has been used, namely ‘यदिदं किञ्च जगत्सर्वं प्राण एजति निःसृतम् । महद्भयं वज्रमुद्यतं य एतद्विदुरमृतास्ते भवन्ति’ (काठकोपनिषद् २-३-२) (Whatever universe there is, it has emerged and vibrates because of *prāṇa* that is a great terror like an uplifted thunderbolt. Those who know this become immortal.)

View and Counterview

It is the general practice that when a point is discussed under any section, the question is posed first, followed by an answer. In some cases the conclusion is stated, assuming that the opposition has been ruled out. But in the fourth chapter in the third *pāda* (part), called *kāryādhikaraṇa*, an entirely different order has been followed.

Here, the final view comes first, and then the opponent’s view. *Prima facie*, it would appear that what is stated first is the opposition and what follows is the conclusion. But the Bhagavatpāda has explained clearly and at great length that the general practice has not been followed in this instance.

Despite all these intricacies, Śrī Madhavacharya in his *Śankara Digvijaya* has paid high tribute to the Bhagavatpāda’s commentary as being so lucid and valuable that one can overcome the birth and death



- God is extremely dear to persons with faith and an attitude of surrender. They too revel in God, and in God alone. And God looks after them even as a parent looks after a child.

- **H.H Jagadguru Bharati Teertha Mahaswamigal**

With Humble Pranams
Saroja and Sreedhar Menon

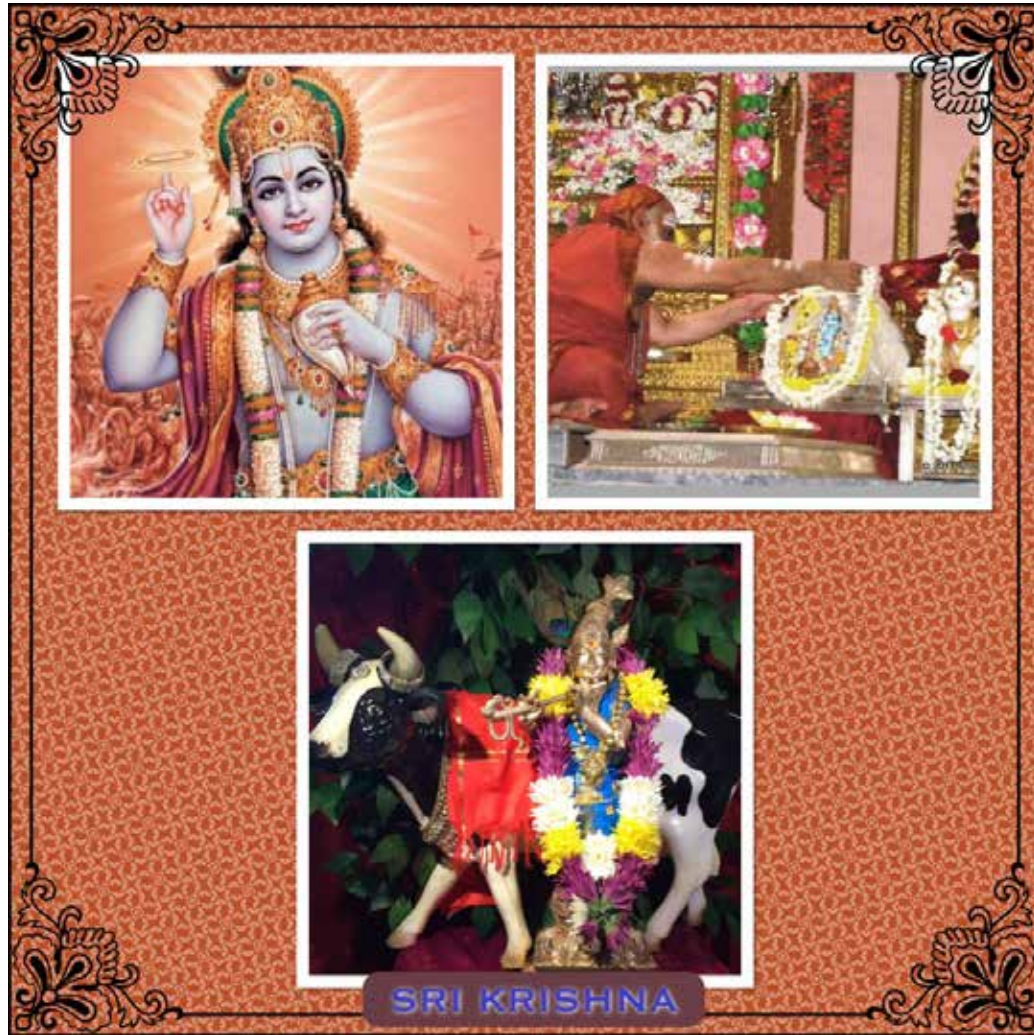
cycle by learning it. He says: “The Acharya’s *bhāṣya* is the fruit of the austerities of all scholars. It is a bunch of flowers that adorns the tresses of *Vedamātā*. It is the immeasurable merit of the *Brahma*

Sūtras. It is the treasure house of *Vāgdevī* designed for her own delight. Those who taste this elixir will know no birth, no death.”

(Reprinted from *Tattvaloka*, April 1988)

Faith in Guru – Golden words of H.H. Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati

- Just as we need a doctor to cure us of our illness, a *guru* is necessary to know what the *sastras* prescribe and to teach us the particular course of action suited to our qualifications.
- Surrender yourself entirely to a *guru*. He will take you by the hand and lead you to the goal. He is not blinded by the enveloping darkness of ignorance and is sure to guide you properly. But you must have true faith in him.
- If you wish for a *guru* in all earnestness, he will be before you in no time. But if you require his presence only to enable you to test his competence of a *guru*, he will be farther off than before.
- Have implicit faith in the words of your *guru* and earnestly follow his instructions for the realization of God and you shall certainly see God.
- A *guru* is bound to teach only those who do not know, but seek to know. If people prefer to remain in ignorance, the teachers are not to blame at all for not attempting to teach them.
- For the purpose of trade and money, we cross the vast oceans and explore the air, but for the purpose of Truth we make no effort. We want the teachers to come to our door and solve our doubts for us. We have no time or desire to learn and practice our *dharmas*.
- Religious teachers are guided by the needs and the competency of the people who come to them for guidance. That is why a teacher gives different pieces of advice to different seekers, just as a doctor prescribes different medicines for different patients.



It is simply not enough to learn about the stories in scriptures like Bhagavatam. It is absolutely necessary to go deep into them and inculcate the values in them and transform one's life for the better.

H.H. Jagadguru Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal

With Humble Pranams,
Mahender Musuku, Samatha,
Yuvna and Shreyas
New Jersey

Veda Vidyā

Srinivas Mallapragada

Our tradition is based on the eternal teachings of the spiritual and scriptural literature called the *Vedas*, which are considered *apauruṣeya* – of non-human origin and *anādi* – without beginning. *Vedas* are also called *śruti* or *śruti granthas*. The spiritual knowledge contained in the compendium of the Vedas, known as the *Veda Vidyā*, is categorized into two parts – *Parā Vidyā* and *Aparā Vidyā*.

Parā Vidyā is also known as *Ātma Vidyā*, *Brahma Vidyā* or *Mokṣa Vidyā*, and is considered as the epitome of human learning. It bestows upon a qualified seeker, the ultimate human achievements of unbound freedom and eternal happiness.

This *Parā Vidyā* is enshrined in the Vedas, in the teachings of special sections called the *Upaniṣads*. *Parā Vidyā* is also known as *Jñāna Kāṇḍa* (knowledge section). It places emphasis on *Jñāna sādhana* or vedantic teaching and learning. A seeker who attained the maturity to imbibe and experience this profound knowledge takes this course under the guidance of a competent Acharya to attain the result.

The result of this *Jñāna sādhana* is everlasting peace, liberty and happiness, which is also called *Mokṣa*.

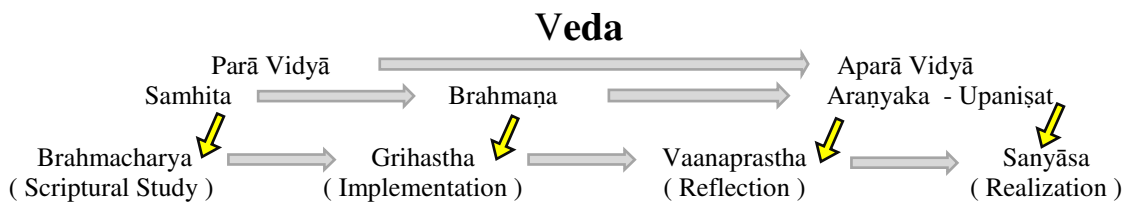
The rest of the Vedic knowledge is considered as *Aparā Vidyā*, the preparatory knowledge that enables and empowers a

beginner seeker in a progressive, step-by-step fashion, and equips him with the qualities of intense discipline, dispassion, discrimination and desire for liberation that propel him into the realm of *Parā Vidyā* / *Jnana Sadhana* with the grace of Guru's teachings.

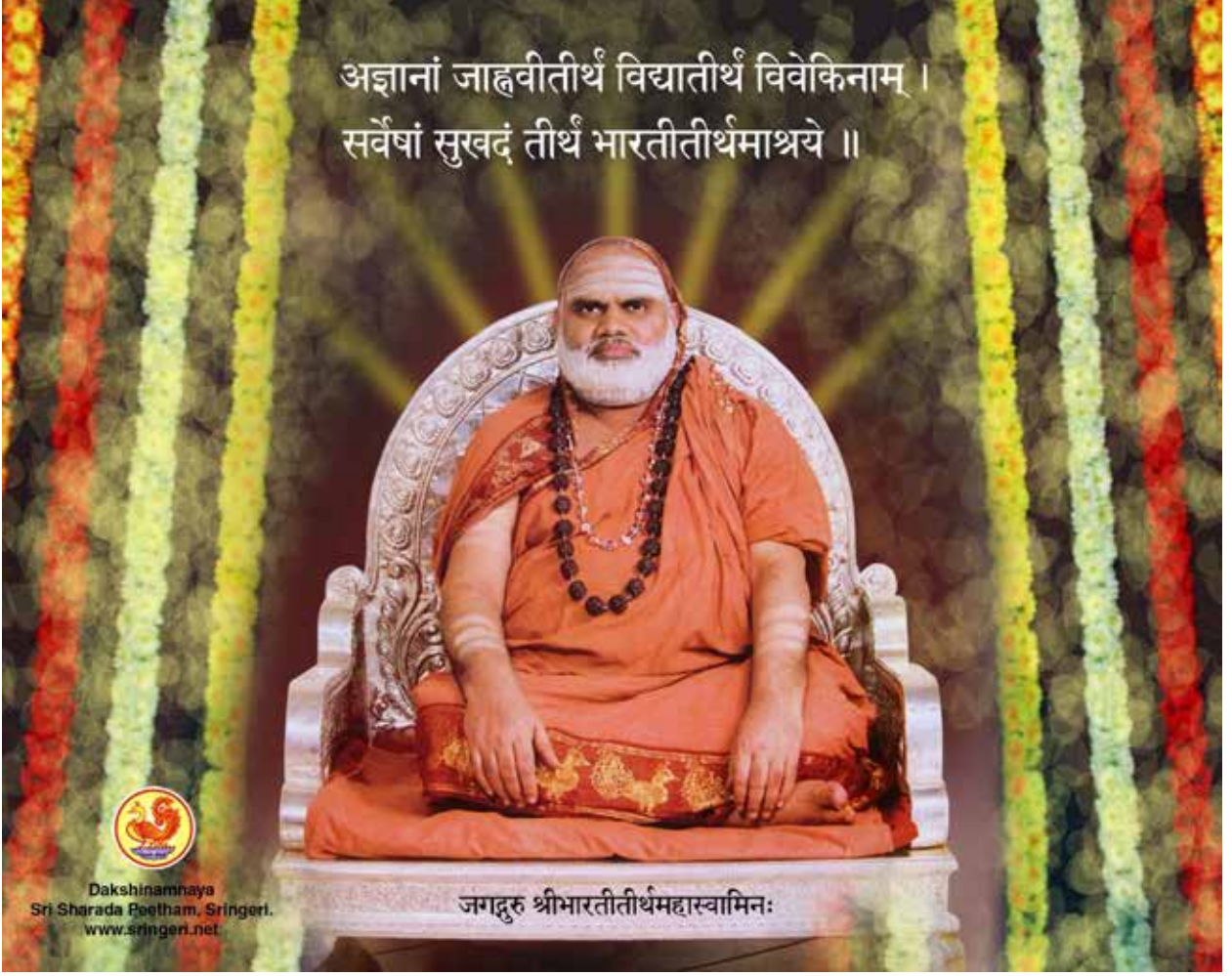
The *Aparā Vidyā*, also known as *Karma Kāṇḍa* and *Upāsanā Kāṇḍa*, is embedded in the portions of the Vedas called the *Samhitas*, *Brahmaṇās* and *Aranyakas*. These sections contain the instructions and *mantras* for various rituals, austerities, *yajñas*, *samskaras* and activities geared toward refining the qualities of a seeker.

Based on this concept, our *ṛṣis* created a methodical and systematic structure of scriptural learning, rules of conduct, ways of action, methods of worship and modes of evolution, eventually aimed at making all human beings qualified for *mokṣa*, the ultimate goal of human life.

However, they created this common system keeping in mind the differences in tendencies and pace of evolution between individuals and between societies. This systematic structure is called the *Varna-Āshrama Dharma*. The following diagram shows an example of how, the seeker progresses gradually from initial scriptural study to final realization as one passes through the various stages of *āshrama dharma* (From *brahmacharya* to *sannyasa*)



अज्ञानां जाह्नवीतीर्थं विद्यातीर्थं विवेकिनाम् ।
सर्वेषां सुखदं तीर्थं भारतीतीर्थमाश्रये ॥



Those who wish happiness in their life should follow the things said in
Dharma with the blessings of Guru.

H.H. Jagadguru Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal

Our Sashtanga Pranams at the Lotus
Feet of Sri Maha Sannidhanam &
Sri Sannidhanam

Venkata Rao, Vijayalakshmi

Venkata Ramana, Padmaja

Hari and Sahiti Koganti,

In addition, the *ṛṣis* also authored many auxiliary and supporting texts to *śruti*, called the *Smṛiti granthas*. Their aim is to aid the understanding and implementation of the Vedic truths based on the above structural

approach. There are innumerable *Smṛiti granthas* that are categorized variously. The following table gives a glimpse of both the *Śruti* and *Smṛiti* literature as well as their broad categorization:

Vedangas Vedas	Rig	Yajur (Shukla, Krishna)	Saama	Atharva		
	Samhita		Braahmana	Aaranyaka / Upanishat		
Veda Upangas	Siksha e.g: Narada	Vyakarana e.g: Panini	Chandas e.g: Pingala	Nirukta e.g: Yaska	Jyotisha e.g: Bhaskara	Kalpa { See Sutras }
	Purva Mimamsa Jaimini	Nyaya/Tarka Goutama Visheshika Kanada	Puranas 18 Main 18 Sub Vyasa	Dharma Shastram		
				Smritis	Sutras	
	Uttara Mimamsa (Brahmasutras) Vyasa	Sankhya Kapila Yoga Patanjali	Itihasas (2) Ramayana Valmiki Mahabharata (Bhagavadgita) Vyasa	Manu Parashara Goutama Yajnavalkya etc.	Shrouta Sutras	
Grihya Sutras						
				Dharma Sutras		
				Shulba Sutras		
Upa Vedas	Aayurveda Charaka, Sushruta		Dhanurveda Vishvamitra etc.		Gaandharva Veda (Fine arts) Bharata, Dandi	Artha Shaastra Koutilya Sthaapatya Veda
	Bhashyas	Bhashyas	Vartikas	Tikas	Tatparyas	Prakaranas
Commentaries Adi- Shankaracharya Ramanujacharya Madhvacharya etc.		Sub- Commentaries	Sub-sub- Commentaries	Sub-sub-sub- Commentaries	Independent explanatory texts (e.g Viveka Chudamani, Tattva Bodha, Vedanta Sara)	
Other Vidyas	Tantra / Agama		KaLa		Regional Literature	
	Vaishnava, Shaiva		64 Art forms		e.g : Divya Prabandham Bhajans, Stotras, Shatakas	
	Soura, Shakteya		Kaavyas		Periya Puranam	
	Ganapatya		Commentaries on Kaavyas		Kritis / Kirtanas	

Our tradition has been blessed with such an immense and profound system of knowledge passed on from the Lord Himself, and that which has been nurtured, expanded and elaborated by many illustrious *Acharyās*, *mahātmās*, scholars, and seekers through generations for the welfare of all humanity.

As recipients and inheritors of this glorious legacy, it is our foremost duty to sustain this wealth and pass it on meticulously to the future generations by learning, following, and teaching this knowledge and supporting the practitioners of this *Vidyā* to the best of our capacity.

Dedication: With Profound namaskarams at the lotus feet of Their Holinesses Śrī Śrī Bhārati Tīrtha Mahā Sannidhānam, Śrī Śrī Vidhusekhara Bhārati Sannidhānam and my Guru Dharmātmā Dr. Yegnasubramanian.

References: “Vedas” by Śrī Śrī Chandrasekharendra Saraswatī Mahaswamigal, Lectures of Sri Paramārthānanda Saraswatī, “Nomenclature of the Vedas” by Swāminī Ātmaprajnānanda Saraswatī, Lectures of Dharmātmā Dr. Yegnasubramanian.



The Guru guides in accordance to the needs and competence of the people who come to Him for guidance. That is why the Guru gives different pieces of advice to different seekers, just as a doctor prescribes different medicines for different patients.

- **H.H. Jagadguru Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal**

With Humble Pranams at the lotus feet of Sri
Mahasannidhanam and Sri Sannidhanam

Sujatha Rau & Gopal Rau

Swaminathan Sambasivan & Janaki Sambasivan

Brahma Satyam Jagan Mithya

Swami Paramarthananda

One of the ticklish questions any human intellect will put is, "How did this universe come?" This question has kept many philosophers thinking and many philosophies are the outcome. Let us analyse this in the light of our scriptures.

Let us assume that the universe has come out of some particular cause. Still it will not solve the problem because that cause can be only a relative cause and not the fundamental cause. We know that every father (cause) was a son (effect) and seed (cause) was a tree (effect). Thus, whatever be the cause of the universe that we assume, it will be an effect requiring another cause. The problem will be one of infinite regress. In short, this will be the lot of any cause which is finite.

The other alternative is to say that infinite is the cause of the universe and that there is no cause for the infinite. But this will be a contradiction because infinite is beyond time and space. Naturally, it cannot undergo any change. If it cannot change, how can it become an effect? To become is to change.

So we are in a corner. Neither a finite entity nor an infinite entity can be the fundamental cause of the universe.

Power of Maya

This problem is solved in our scriptures in an ingenious manner. Lord Krishna gives the clue in the *Gita* (IV-6):

अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ।
प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय सम्भवाम्यात्ममायया ॥ 4-6॥

"Though I am unborn, imperishable and Lord of all beings, I am born through *Maya* keeping my *Prakriti* under my control."

From this it is clear that the Lord (infinite) is born as a finite one with the help of *Maya* without undergoing any change. Just as the waker appears as the dream world and just as the rope appears as snake without undergoing any change, the infinite appears as the creation without undergoing any change. Just as the dream world and the snake are illogical and apparent, the universe also is illogical and apparent.

If the infinite (*Brahman*) is the cause of an illogical and apparent creation, then such a status for the infinite also must be illogical and apparent. The power that is responsible for such a status is *maya*. It goes without saying that *maya* which brings about an illogical and apparent status of causality for the Truth is also illogical and apparent. Hence, *maya* is illogical, that is, undefinable (*Anivachaneeyam*) an apparent (*Mithya*).

Thus infinite (*Brahman*) is the Truth (*Satyam*) and the universe is an illogical and apparent one caused by *Maya* which itself is illogical and apparent.



Blessings are the monopoly of God and we must all pray for his gracious
blessings

H.H Jagadguru Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamigal

With Humble Pranams at the lotus feet of
Their Holinesses
Jagadguru Sri Sri Maha Sannidhanam
and Jagadguru Sri Sri Sannidhanam

Srinivasan, Hema, Sriram and Smruthi

Experience of the World

Let us look at the whole thing from another angle. When we come to a philosophical enquiry regarding the cause of the universe, we take it for granted that there is a universe. It is here that we commit a mistake.

To accept the existence of a world purely on the basis of experience is a premature conclusion. The sunrise, the blue sky, the mirage water, the dream world, etc., are universal experiences which factually do not exist. So experiential data are too inadequate to prove the existence of the world. Hence, when we ask for the cause of the world, our scriptures ask us to prove the world first.

When we enquire into the world with the help of scriptures, inference and experience, we come to know that there is only one *Brahman* in all the three periods of time. We cannot prove the existence of a world as an entity separate from *Brahman*. It is *Asat* (non-existent) itself. Naturally, we cannot answer any question regarding the world or its cause, because both of them are non-existent.

So, when we say that world or *Maya* is *Anadi* (beginningless), we do not mean that it exists from beginningless time. *Anadi* means that whose beginning cannot be

traced because it is non-existent. When we say world or *Maya* ends (in *moksha*), we do not mean it in the normal sense of the term. If we accept an end for *Maya*, we are accepting its existence and we will have to trace its beginning. Hence, the end of *Maya* is nothing but the discovery that there is no such thing called world or *Maya* separate from *Brahman*.

Appearance and Reality

But this does not mean that we deny the experience of the world. In fact, it is because of its experience that we give it a new name *Mithya*. That which is not there but appears is *Mithya*.

Now the question is: If the world is beginningless and endless, what do we get by understanding that it is *Mithya*? The answer is simple. Once I know that *Brahman* is *Satyam* and the world is *Mithya*, I know that the world cannot affect *Brahman*, the *Satyam*, just as the snake, the mirage water, etc., do not affect the rope, the sand, etc., That *Brahman* being myself as revealed by scriptures, I am unaffected by anything.

Thus, the recognition of myself as *Brahman* and the recognition of the world as *Mithya* by the study of scriptures becomes the means for liberation.

(This article has been reprinted from “Sankara – The Universal Teacher”, a Tattvaloka publication)





One should neither be elated on getting what he likes nor be dejected on any unpleasant happening. One should, therefore, conduct one's life in the light of what Bhagavan says.

- H.H Jagadguru Bharati Teertha Mahaswamigal

**Our Anantakoti Sashtanga Namaskaras at the lotus feet of
Their Holinesses**

**Jagadguru Sri Sri Maha Sannidhanam
and Jagadguru Sri Sri Sannidhanam**

Vanitha, Srinivas and Srinidhi Mallapragada

The Practical Gita

M. R. Dwarakanath

The *Bhagavadgita* is known as the Song Divine; it encapsulates simultaneously both the spirituality and the ethos of the Hindu tradition in a single short work. The *Gita* is as much a practical guide to life as it is to metaphysics; it is practical psychology and a self help manual. This article will focus on the practical rather than the metaphysical. The very setting of the *Gita* is highly unusual for teaching anything, let alone metaphysics and dispassion, as strong passions are stirred up on the battlefield. The battlefield of the *Gita* is merely allegorical as everyone is waging internal battles dealing with the vicissitudes of life. The battle is between the mind and the intellect. The mind is fickle, directed outwards reacting to various sensory stimuli, both from the desirable and the undesirable. The intellect tries to rationalize and decide whether to go along with the dictates of the mind or slam on the brakes. *Arjuna's* own internal battle is between retribution for the wrongs heaped on his family and the love for a wider clan. Krishna, the psychologist, lets *Arjuna* vent out his frustration without interruption until he is exhausted and seeks help in dealing with his torment. Teaching is effective only when a mind is ready to receive and not consumed by its set agenda.

As a text, the *Gita* is extremely well organized. It offers a *raison d'être*, an introduction and a summary. It is logical, reiterates key ideas for emphasis, provides

novel insights and utility. Special topics are handled separately. Although the *Gita* contains 700 verses, the essence of it may be found in the 2nd chapter of 72 verses. Of these 72, the first ten are still addressing the *raison d'être*. The instruction begins with the 11th verse of the second chapter which contains its essence as a preview / summary of the text. The *Gita* is set on a battlefield in the manner of a dialog between *Arjuna*, the pupil and Krishna, the preceptor. *Arjuna* is befuddled by the complex moral dilemma involved in any war. This is life! Life is full of dilemmas and hard choices. *Gita* is a guide to making these choices wisely. Krishna's teaching begins with the 11th verse of the 2nd chapter. If this chapter contains the essence, then the very beginning and the end of the chapter would form its quintessence. So let us see what is said there. The 11th verse itself is a gentle rebuke of *Arjuna* who has harangued Krishna with his moral quandary and rationalizations thereof. Krishna deftly dismisses *Arjuna's* arguments with a simple statement that he is unable to discriminate between the eternal and the ephemeral. The final verse of the 2nd chapter is like a benediction. It states the benefits of practicing what has just been taught. This is called फलश्रुति।

Let us then take the penultimate verse of the 2nd chapter first. It says:



To err is human. Accepting one's error and correcting oneself is a mark of nobility. Humility is the primary path to achieving nobility.

- H.H. Jagadguru Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal

With Humble Pranams

Geetha Shivagiri & Shivagiri Nallicheri
Kendall Park, New Jersey

विहाय कामान्यः सर्वान् पुमांश्चरति निःस्पृहः।
निर्ममो निरहंकारः स शान्तिमधिगच्छति॥

(2-71)

“A person who abandons all passions / attachments and goes about life without desires, who covets nothing as his own, and who is not egotistical, will attain lasting peace.” What can be truer than this statement? This peace is not the fleeting peace one experiences on occasion. Everyone seeks happiness and each wrongly believes material acquisitions to be the key to happiness. Yes, material possessions give some happiness in the process of acquiring them. Once acquired, the goal moves to the next shiny object and also towards safeguarding what was just acquired. Whereas some happiness is gained in the pursuit and acquiring the desired, it remains short lived. However, intense misery follows when the goal is out of reach or is in some way denied. This is the reason for Krishna asking us to abandon all attachments and desires.

Coveting is hoarding or stashing material things away for future use. This causes an anxiety to protect what is hoarded. Anxiety is not the recipe for peace of mind! Finally, Krishna asks one to rid oneself of egoism. Ego is the source of jealousy leading to conflict and unhappiness. How often does one get hurt at the slightest of slights and brood over such slights over long periods of time? Would it not be better to brush it off like cobwebs? A person who can reach this state of detachment is indeed free from the woes of the world. Such a person is called a

जीवन्मुक्तः. In this context, there is no metaphysical implication or promise of a final release.

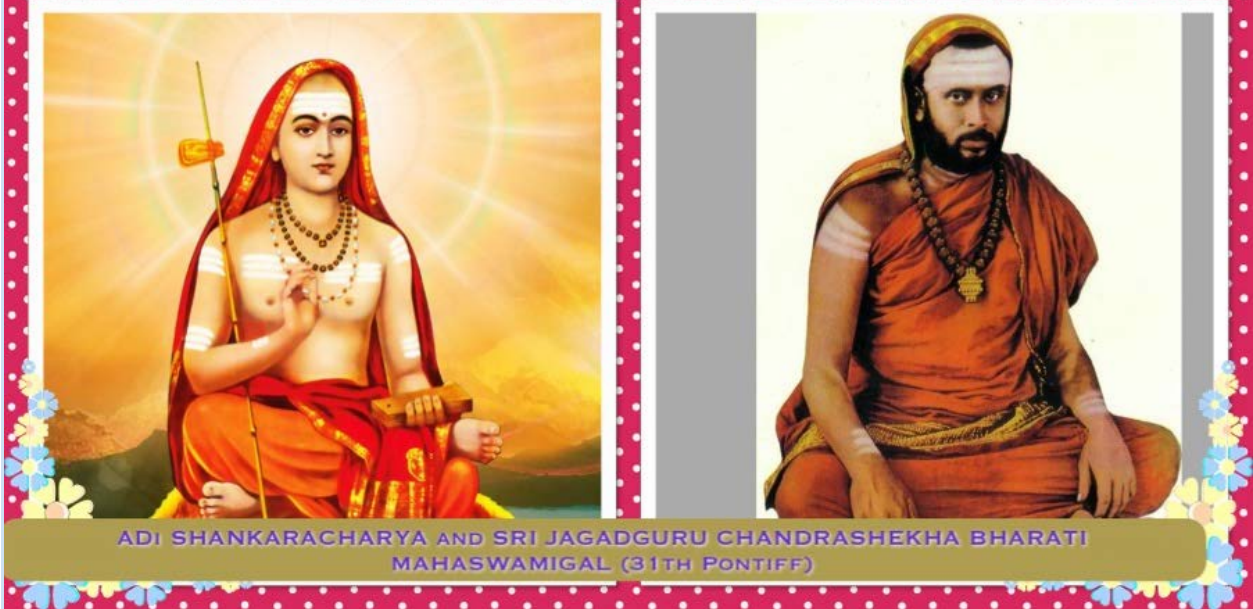
There are obvious objections to the above recommendations. Can one be simultaneously happy and wretched? In America one is encouraged to be self actualized, to be aggressive / assertive, pull and push one's weight around and so on. Are these attributes bad? Should they be shunned? Definitely not, if such urges are under total control. *Gita* does not recommend shunning activity; it categorically states that it is neither possible to refrain from all activity nor is it desirable. It condemns inaction, emphasizes self help and makes discharging one's duty absolutely imperative. However, it cautions that while discharging one's duty one should not have unrealizable expectations. 'Do your duty; may you never be indolent, do not build castles in the air with the proceeds of your puny effort' is the import of the following passage.

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन।

मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूः मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि॥

(2-47)

Gita doesn't encourage wretchedness but expects one to be modest. The archetype of American capitalism is the entrepreneur! The entrepreneur is motivated by dreams and expectations. However, to have dreams and expectations before having done one's due diligence would only lead to failure and despair. Even with a well developed plan, the mission often fails. What distinguishes a successful entrepreneur are resilience and persistence. Being dejected upon a failure will only lead to paralysis and depression without an avenue for a comeback. It is a cause for more pain. Emotions too need to



The Lord Himself has given us His commands in the eternal Vedas. We should not disobey our Scriptures. They are His breath and the fountain-head of all right knowledge. – **H.H Jagadguru Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamigal**

With Humble Pranams at the lotus feet of their holinesses

Sudha & V. Shivakumar
East Brunswick, New Jersey

be in check. Getting overly exuberant over minor successes is not desirable either. Many entrepreneurs snatch defeat from the jaws of success by being over-ambitious and trying to expand their business too rapidly. This is the message of the *Gita* as stated in:

दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः।
वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते॥ (2-56)

The above verse states - 'A person of steady mind says: Do not become despondent in sorrow nor get delirious in happiness. Shed attachment, fear and anger.' Fear and anger are emotions that strike at the very root of good judgment which is a vital asset for any entrepreneur. A constant refrain in the *Gita* is to maintain equanimity in one's affairs in life. Krishna calls a person who is unperturbed by happiness and sorrow as a courageous person - समदुःखसुखं धीरम्। In another context he calls for *Arjuna* to engage in the fight regardless of outcome - सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ। or सिद्धसिद्धोः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते।

A few verses down Krishna says:

यः सर्वत्रानभिस्नेहः तत्तत्प्राप्य शुभाशुभम्।
नाभिनन्दति न द्वेष्टि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता॥

(2-57)

The above verse observes that person to be one of stable mind who accepts whatever befalls him (her), be it good or bad, without attachment; he neither rejoices nor hates the outcome. It may be difficult to accept this level of dispassion, but when emotions are

moderated, one does not succumb to bipolar disorders. Further down, there is this verse:

रागद्वेषवियुक्तैस्तु विषयानिन्द्रियैश्चरन्।
आत्मवश्यैर्विधेयात्मा प्रसादमधिगच्छति॥ (2-64)

Here the message is focused toward sense enjoyments. He is hinting that one does not have to become a hermit by shutting one's self off from civilization and all sense objects; but only to remain without attachment or hate and having self control in their midst. Such a person too will enjoy a placid mind. Having taught how to conduct one's self in life, he warns against indulging in passion and desire which lead to a cavalcade of undesirable events. Association leads to attachment and thence to anger when desires are unfulfilled. Anger perturbs the mind allowing delusion to set in. Delusion distracts from discrimination which leads to bad judgment and bad judgment brings about downfall of the individual. This is no exaggeration; we see this around us all the time – people are dissatisfied with some outcome, they get angry, lose their judgment and act rashly, they kill or harm a person and suffer the rest of their lives in a jail or worse. This is a case of acting in haste out of passion and suffering at leisure. This, *Gita* says is a slippery slope and warns against sliding into one. The message is drilled repeatedly into receptive ears to drive home the concept. However, it should be noted that the *Gita* does not set its sights low; the aim is for perfection in life which is no small feat!

Now coming back to the earliest verses in Krishna's teaching; we hear pure metaphysics. Krishna is counseling *Arjuna*



Bhagavatpada Sri Adi Sankara says that one must have unshakable faith in Sastras and the Guru's words. Acts performed with this firm conviction will definitely bear fruit.

– H.H. Jagadguru Bharati Teertha Mahaswamigal

With Humble Pranams

Mohan Patalolla, Shailaja and Suchritha

New Jersey

who, having been cheated by his cousins out of their kingdom, is ready for war only to face his preceptors, kith and kin on the opposite side in the arena. He loses his nerve and is unsure of the war. It is at this point that Krishna, using a number of metaphors, makes clear the inevitable mortality of the body but the eternality of the soul. He also takes this opportunity to instruct him on the duties pertaining to one's station in life. One has to execute the duties of one's office however unpalatable or mean it may be. Pity and kindness have their place; so does justice. A boss is required to discipline an employee who steals or otherwise engages in bad behavior. A judge has to sentence a criminal. This is what maintains the world order. Compassion has its place. The cousins were given numerous chances to mend their behavior and avoid war, but they rejected every grace accorded them. Now is not the time to flinch!

It is easy for Krishna to ask one to get rid of attachments towards sense objects, kith and kin but how does one steel one's mind away from all the allures and distractions? This forms the second part of the message in the *Gita*. The first is what and the second is how. The 'what' is called *Sankhya* and the 'how' is known as *Yoga*! The mind is fickle and is never steady; how to tame this beast? If the mind is being seduced by the senses, then it needs to be distracted from such allures and redirected towards something else. The mind cannot simply be tamed by shutting off the senses from the world by retreating to some remote dark corner of the earth. That only makes the mind even more active through curiosity, memories and longing. The mind cannot be controlled in

one fell swoop; it has to be gradually steered away from its natural tendencies. Also, there is no silver bullet to achieve this goal.

There are different paths for people of different temperaments and at different stages of their spiritual evolution. What the mind needs is active engagement but away from sense objects. So, *Gita* prescribes Karma yoga or the path of action as one way to get started. Karma Yoga means discharging one's duties with an altruistic attitude, without hankering for rewards. Krishna places emphasis on discharging one's own duties and not getting drawn into others' works. The danger in trying to do another's work is - it relieves one of personal responsibility as it is, after all, a kind of bonus or extra credit activity. In so doing, one may not feel the importance of completing the work undertaken or doing it proficiently. Krishna's warning is clear.

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मे विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात्।

स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः॥ (3-35)

Engaging in one's own work, even if that be defective, is preferable to doing the work of another even if the latter be well executed. Even failure in carrying out one's appointed tasks adds value, but the works of others are fraught with danger. This is Management-101. Krishna also offers many other paths to tame the senses away from sense objects and to focus the mind sharply. These may be applicable to different personalities or even the same person at different times as that person makes progress in his or her quest. These are the paths of renunciation, devotion and knowledge. In order to succeed in this path, one needs a guide who can



Once you begin to feel the presence of God, a joy unknown to you ever before will begin to be felt. The thought of his ever-living presence with you will be a great solace to you

- **H.H. Jagadguru Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamigal**

With Humble Pranams at the lotus feet of Sri
Mahasannidhanam and Sri Sannidhanam

Keshav and Madhav Subramaniam, New Jersey

monitor progress and constantly yank the aspirant back on track. One should have total faith in such a guide and not be second-guessing the guide. Krishna says the ignorant, the faithless, the doubting Thomas will have no happiness in this world or the next and is doomed to fail.

अज्ञश्चाश्रद्धधानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति।

नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परो न सुखं संशयात्मनः॥

(4-40)

This verse places emphasis on absolute faith in the guide, but it does not discourage discourse and debate in resolving doubts by questioning. Doubts arise naturally and they have to be cleared by repeated questioning. तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया। These

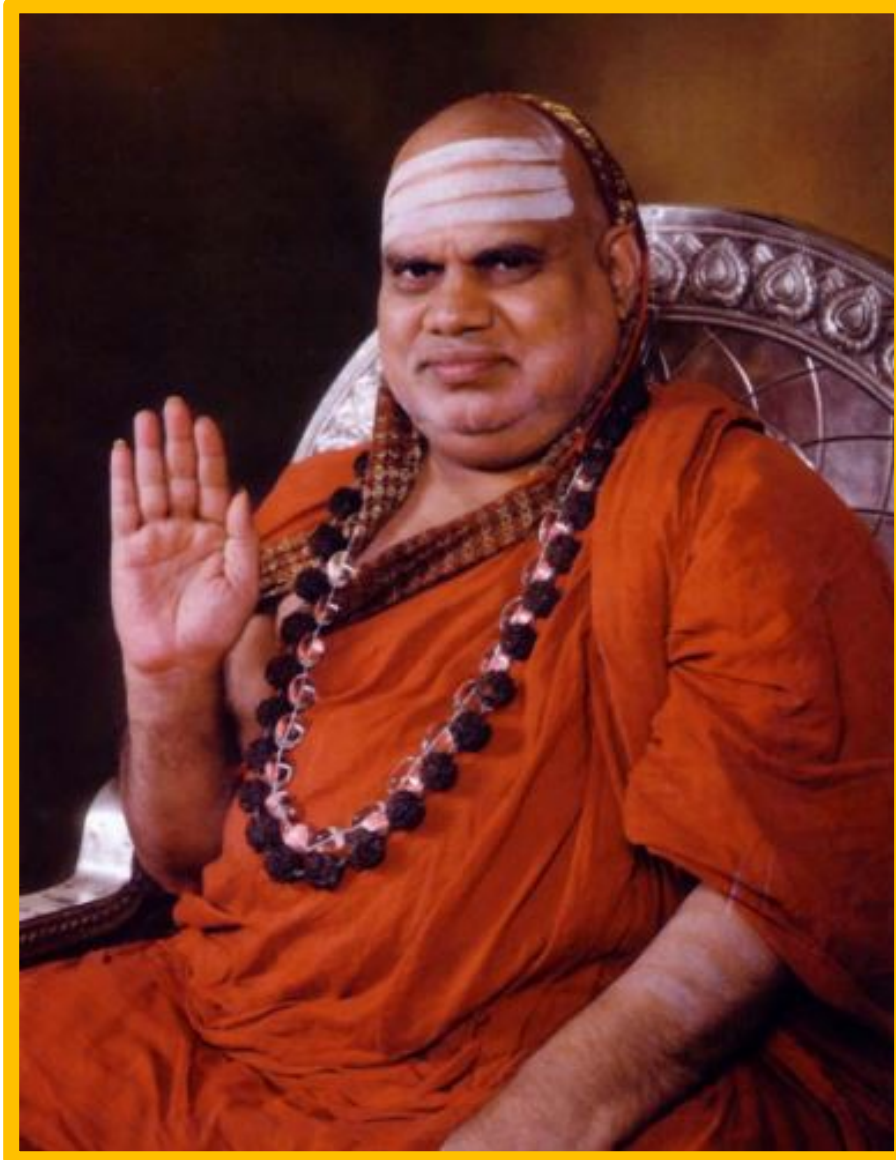
questions have to be basked with supplication, be genuine and not be challenging. One should choose a teacher carefully. Having chosen one, faith in the teacher is essential for learning. Similarly, one may not run from pillar to post seeking a guide to corroborate one's preset views. Krishna has taken *Arjuna* under his wing and tells him not to worry, to have total faith in him and in the belief that he will lead him to peace and tranquility. By engaging the mind in activities such as sacrifice, charity and reflection, the mind is gradually weaned away from its natural proclivities. Krishna says: यज्ञदानतपःकर्म न त्याज्यमिति चापरे॥ यज्ञ or sacrifice helps to focus the mind while actively doing works, दान or charity helps to overcome greed and

covetousness, तपः or reflection is a more advanced stage where the mind is brought into focus inward without actively engaging in work. These are not to be discarded. This is the essence of *Gita* on its practical side. It teaches the importance of discharging one's duties, how to accept the fruits of such work and achieve peace and tranquility in the process.

However, *Gita* covers many topics in addition to going into the details of the paths of action, renunciation, devotion and knowledge. Krishna speaks about his own nature, the tripartite nature of souls, the differences between divine and demonic qualities and reveals to *Arjuna* his cosmic form. This short article does not get into those topics.

॥सर्वं श्रीकृष्णार्पणमस्तु॥





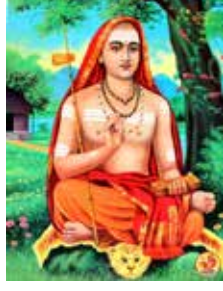
Sweetness cannot be described in words. It can be known only when you put some sweet thing on your tongue. Similarly, God cannot be explained in words. It is essentially something to be realized by oneself.

- H.H Jagadguru Bharati Teertha Mahaswamigal

With Humble Pranams at the lotus feet of their holinesses

Drs. Lakshmi & Prem Nandiwada, New Jersey

Jagadguru Speaks.....



Sankara, the Universal Benefactor

Sri Adi Sankara Bhagavadpada, who incarnated in this world to resuscitate *Sanatana Dharma*, had extraordinary accomplishments within a span of 32 years.

Foremost among them are his treatises, ranging from commentaries of the *Prasthan Traya* to *Stotras*, such as *Bhaja Govindam*, which have become world famous.

Prasthan Traya is the collective name for the *Upanishads*, *Brahma Sutras* and the *Bhagavad Gita*. They teach *Advaita* or non-dualism in aphorisms, but Sankara Bhagavadpada explained them elaborately in his *Bhashyas* and *Prakarana Granathas*.

Of course, many others had earlier written commentaries on the *Prasthan Traya*, but their interpretations were contrary to *Sastraic* norms. Sri Sankara repudiated them most effectively and expounded the correct meaning in his *Bhashyas*.

The *Madhaviya Sankara Vijayam* graphically describe this:

श्रीशङ्कराचार्यरवावुदेत्य प्रकाशमाने कुमतिप्रणीताः ।

व्याख्यानकाराः प्रलयं समीयुर्दुर्वादि चन्द्रप्रभयाऽवियुक्ताः ॥

As the Sun of Sri Sankara rose, the gloom and darkness of ill-informed interpretations was totally destroyed.

To help *upasakas*, Sri Sankara wrote the *Prapanchasara*, which is a highly authentic and famous text on *mantra sastra*. And to help devotees, he composed numerous *stotras*, whose recital helps to unite one's mind with God. It is, therefore, imperative that all of us should cherish the memory of the universal benefactor for all times to come.

INAUGURATION OF GOSHALA - 2012

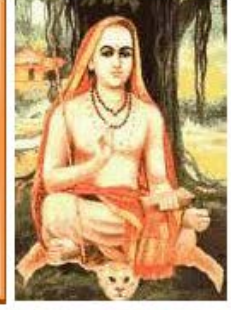


प्रश्नोत्तर-रत्न-मालिका

praSnOttaraatnamAlika

Sankara BhagavatpAda

(The Gem-Garland of Questions and Answers)



Q. कुत्र पदं विनसेच्च ?

kutra padam vinasecca ?

Where is the foot to be placed?

A. दृक्पूते । drikpUte |

Where purity is perceived.

Q. पात्रं किं अन्नदाने?

pAtram kim annadAne ?

Who is the fit recipient of the gift of food?

A. क्षुधितम् । kshudhitam |

The hungry.

Q. को अर्च्यो हि ?

ko arcyo hi ?

Indeed who is to be worshipped ?

A. भगवदवतारः ।

bhagavadavatAra: |

Incarnation of God..

Q. कश्च भगवान्?

kaSca bhagavAn ?

Who is the Lord?

A. महेशः शंकरनारायणात्मकः ।

maheSa: SankaranArAyaNAtmaka: |

The Supreme Lord who is both Narayana and Sankara |

Q. फलमपि च भगवद्भक्तेः किम् ?

phalamapi ca bhagavadbhakte: kim ?

And what is the result of devotion to the Lord ?

A. तल्लोक-स्वरूप-साक्षात्त्वम् ।

talloka-svarUpa-sAkshAtvam |

The immediate realization of His Abode and one's own Nature.

Q. मोक्षश्च कः? mokshaSca ka: ?

And what is release?

A. हि अविद्या अस्तमयः ।

hi avidyA astamaya: | Indeed, it is the disappearance of ignorance.

Q. कः सर्ववेदभूः? ka: sarvavedabhU: ? |

What is the origin of the Vedas?

A. अथ च ओम् । atha ca om |

And then, Om

इतिश्रीमत्परमहंस-परिव्राजकाचार्य-
श्रीमच्छंकर-भगवत्पूज्यपादकृता प्रश्नोत्तर-
रत्न-मालिका समाप्ता ।।

श्री ऋग्वेदमूर्तिः



ऋग्वेदः श्वेतवर्णः स्यात्
द्विभुजो रासभाननः ।
अक्षमालाधरः सौम्यः
प्रीतो व्याख्यापनोद्यतः ॥

श्रीसामवेदमूर्तिः



नीलोत्पलदलाभासः
सामवेदो हयाननः ।
अक्षमालान्वितो दक्षे
वामे कम्बुधरः स्मृतः ॥



भगवान् श्री सद्गुरुदत्तात्रेयः



मालाकमण्डलुरधः करपद्मयुग्मे
मध्यस्थपाणियुगले डमरुत्रिशूले ।
यस्यस्थ ऊर्ध्वकरयोः शुभशंखचक्रे
वन्दे तमत्रिवरदं भुजषट्कयुक्तम् ॥



श्रीयजुर्वेदमूर्तिः



अजास्यः पीतवर्णः स्यात्
यजुर्वेदोऽक्षसूत्रधृत् ।
वामे कुलिशपाणिस्तु
भूतिदो मङ्गलप्रदः ॥

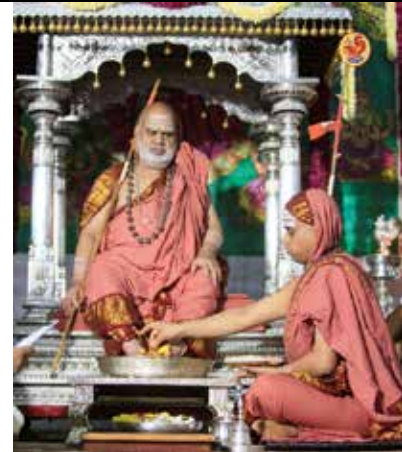
श्रीअथर्ववेदमूर्तिः



अथर्वणिऽभिधो वेदो
धवलो मर्कटाननः ।
अक्षमालान्वितो वामे
दक्षे कम्बुधरः स्मृतः ॥

Shishya Sweekara Ceremony - Sringeri Sharada Peetham

On January 23, 2015, continuing the unbroken Guru-Shisya lineage that stretches directly back to Sri Adi Shankaracharya, the 36th Jagadguru Shankaracharya of Sringeri Sharada Peetham, Sri Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji anointed His successor. In a traditional ceremony, the Jagadguru initiated Brahmachari Sri Kuppa Venkateshwara Prasada Sharma into Sannyasa and bestowed upon him the Yoga Patta (monastic name) of Sri Sri Vidhushekhara Bharati.





Sages like the Bhagavatpada, however erudite they were, were without the least trace of ego. That is why people have praised them as mahapurushas. It hence follows that man, under no pretext, should entertain ego, but lead a humble life.

H.H Jagadguru Bharati Teertha Mahaswamigal

With Humble Pranams at the lotus feet of Their Holinesses
Jagadguru Sri Sri Maha Sannidhanam
and Jagadguru Sri Sri Sannidhanam

Srinivasan and Family, GG Consulting Services Inc.

Sanātana Dharma or Vaidika Dharma

S. S. Iyer

It is difficult to talk about any religion especially in the modern days. Yet, I felt necessary to write some views of *Sanātana Dharma or Vaidika Dharma* from my personal perspective.

There is no clear picture of the role of religion in human life. Some in the name of religion conduct ritualistic practices without understanding its representation. Others indulge in prayers and worship to gain material wealth and some others try to use it to exploit and convert the weak people. *Sanātana Dharma* is beyond all this and it is necessary that we understand it properly.

Sanātana Dharma or Vaidika Dharma is the original name of what is now popularly called **Hinduism**. It is based on the Vedas and is the oldest religion and stands unrivalled in the depth and splendor of its philosophy, purity of its ethical teachings, flexibility in the application of its rites and ceremonies. Hinduism, one of the oldest in this world is known more as a way of life than as a religion. It is also the principal faith of the people of India. Hinduism differs from other religions in the fact that it does not have a single founder, a specific

theological system, a single system of morality, or a central religious organization. It consists of thousands of different religious groups that have evolved in India since 3000 BC.

Sanātana Dharma, is the eternal faith. *Hinduism* is not strictly a religion. It is based on the practice of *Dharma*, the code of life. Since *Hinduism* has no founder, anyone who practices *Dharma* can call himself a Hindu. He can question the authority of any scripture, or even the existence of the Divine.

While religion means to bind, *Dharma* means to hold. What man holds on to is the inner law, which leads from ignorance to Truth. Though reading of the scriptures (*śastras*) would not directly lead you to self-realization, the teachings of the seers provide a basis and a path for spirituality. It is a code of ethics, a way of living through which one may achieve **mokṣa** (enlightenment, liberation). It is the world's most ancient culture and the social, spiritual, and religious tradition of almost one billion of the earth's inhabitants. *Sanātana Dharma* represents much more than just a **religion**;



Religion does not fetter man's free-will. It leaves him quite free to act but tells him at the same time what is good for him and what is not. The responsibility is entirely and solely his. You are the master of your destiny. It is for you to make it, to better or to mar it. This is your privilege. This is your responsibility.

H.H Jagadguru Chandrsekhar Bharati Mahaswamigal

**With Humble Pranams at the lotus feet of
their holinesses**

**Madhavaram Gadepalli , Vijaya Gouri Gadepalli ,
Samir Gadepalli , Suzanne Gadepalli ,
Aditya Gadepalli**

rather, it provides its followers with an entire worldview, way of life and with it a coherent and rational view of reality.

"*Sanātana*" is a Sanskrit word that denotes that which is *Anādi* (beginningless), *Ananta* (endless) and does not cease to be, that which is eternal and everlasting. With its rich connotations, *Dharma* is not translatable to any other language or the translation to another language cannot convey the full meaning of the word. *Dharma* is from word *dhri*, meaning to hold together, to sustain. The best meaning would be "Nature's Law," or those elements of reality which are inherent in the very nature and design of the universe. Thus the terminology, *Sanātana Dharma* can mean "universal righteousness" based on experiences rather than beliefs.

Dharma is not merely a set of beliefs having no connections with our routine life, but it is the very principles of a healthy and beneficial life. Thus, the knowledge of these principles evolved from various scriptures/books will lead one to true happiness individually and collectively. The purpose of a religion is to bind together. Thus, one can state *Vaidika Dharma* is a religion of perfect knowledge. The *Sanātana Dharma* is laid out in a complete scheme of

knowledge and with its philosophy lead to the goal of true liberation or enlightenment.

The basis of *Sanātana Dharma* consists of six fold scriptures.

1. *Śruti* consisting of four Vedas is the final authority of the religion. The perfect knowledge revealed by Brahma to the rishis who with their penance and deep devotion absorbed it all and pass it on to the human being. Further, *Śruti* contains within itself the *Samhitas*, *Aranyakas*, *Upanishad* and the *Angas* to further clarify the contents for daily practices. For instance, the *Samhita* is a collection of *sūktas* that are hymns used for rituals sacrifices and explanation of rites. The *Upanishads* contain stories/dialogues that clarify our queries about life and bring clarity to the thought process.
2. *Smritis* explains and develop *Dharma* akin to a book on law. The common ones developed by great rishis known are Manu, Parasara, Yājñavalkya
3. *Itihasas* historical facts and *Puranas* form the next layer which is sometimes referred to the fifth Veda.



Exert yourself as much as you can, adopt the right course in every effort of yours. Your will must succeed in the end

H.H. Jagadguru Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal

With Humble Pranams

Kishore Ganji, Srilalitha, Karthik and Sanvi

New Jersey

These are developed to expound the contents of the Vedas.

4. *Āgamas* are basically the manuals for worship
5. *Darśanas* expound the philosophies - these are contained in *śadāngās* or six limbs or branches of Vedas designed to lead man to the wisdom that Self is real and all other things are unreal. The philosophy culminates into Vedanta. The goal is to rescue mankind for removal of the ignorance and lead him away from bondage and lead him for union with the Supreme. Vedanta has three main schools of philosophy, Advaita, or non duality (associated with Adi Śankara); *Viśiṣṭadvaita*, qualified duality (Ramanuja); *Dvaita*, duality propounded by Madhva. This is mentioned only for completeness and is not elaborated here.

Dharma is the force which maintains the universe leading to harmony and balance individually and socially. We need contentment and peace both inwardly and in our surroundings and thus the lack of *Dharma* can only lead to chaos and misery. A life led without *Dharma* would work against oneself. *Dharma* should be practiced not out of compulsion but with the

perception of the existence of the Supreme in all living beings.

Dharma is an instrument of unity and thus can be applied to any society that brings forth harmony and peace. Therefore, *Sanātana Dharma* does not refer to any sectarian process of religion. It is the eternal function of the eternal living entities in relationship with the eternal Supreme Lord. Thus, *Sanātana Dharma* needs proper understanding that every human being is an expansion of God's energies - an exhibition of Absolute existence or *Para Brahman*. Thus *Dharma* is not only the path to God but is God. The follower of *Dharma* who sees God everywhere is a liberated person.

Thus *Sanātana Dharma* is the basis for universal truth and it can be applied anytime and anywhere in the universe.

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Just as we need a doctor to cure us of our illness, a guru is necessary to know what the sastras prescribe and to teach us the particular course of action suited to our qualification.

– **H.H. Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamigal**

With Humble Pranams

An Anonymous devotee

Vedasāraśiva Stotram Ādi Śaṅkarācārya

पशूनां पतिं पापनाशं परेशं
गजेन्द्रस्य कृत्तिं वसानं वरेण्यम् ।
जटाजूटमध्ये स्फुरद्गाङ्गवारिं
महादेवमेकं स्मरामि स्मरामि ॥ १ ॥

paśūnām patiṃ pāpanāśaṃ pareśaṃ
gajendrasya kṛttiṃ vasānaṃ vareṇyam |
jaṭājūṭamadhya sphuradgāṅgavāriṃ
mahādevamekaṃ smarāmi smarāmi || 1 ||

I dwell in my mind on the Overload of Gods, the lord of all souls, the destroyer of sins, the supreme Lord, the weaver of elephant's hide, one who is sought after, one in whose thicket of matted hair the stream of Ganges shines and one who is the enemy of Cupid.

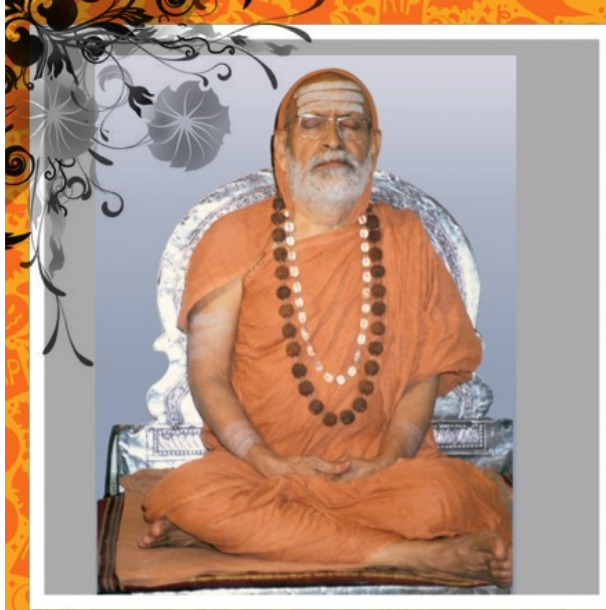
महेशं सुरेशं सुरारातिनाशं
विभुं विश्वनाथं विभूत्यङ्गभूषम् ।
विरूपाक्षमिन्द्रकवह्नित्रिनेत्रं
सदानन्दमीडे प्रभुं पञ्चवक्रम् ॥ २ ॥

maheśaṃ sureśaṃ surārātinaśaṃ
vibhuṃ viśvanāthaṃ vibhūtyaṅgabhūṣam |
virūpākṣamindrakavahnitriṇetraṃ
sadānandamīḍe prabhuṃ pañcavaktram || 2 ||

I adore the great Lord, the lord of gods, the destroyer of the foes of gods, the all pervasive god of Universe whose body is adorned with the holy ash, and who has an odd number of eyes, viz., the three eyes represented by moon, sun and fire. (I adore) the Lord of five faces who is ever blissful.

गिरीशं गणेशं गले नीलवर्णं
गवेन्द्राधिरूढं गुणातीतरूपम् ।
भवं भास्वरं भस्मना भूषिताङ्गं
भवानीकलत्रं भजे पञ्चवक्रम् ॥ ३ ॥

girīśaṃ gaṇeśaṃ gale nīlavarṇaṃ
gavendrādhirūḍhaṃ guṇātītarūpaṃ |
bhavaṃ bhāsvaraṃ bhasmanā bhūṣitāṅgaṃ
bhavānīkalatraṃ bhaje pañcavaktram || 3 ||



SRI ABHINAVA VIDYA TIRTHA MAHASWAMIGAL (35th Pontiff)

One whose wisdom is awakened by the instruction of the Realized sage will start reveling in God and God alone. He will start seeing God in every activity and even in non-activity.

- H.H Jagadguru Bharati Teertha Mahaswamigal

With Humble Pranams at the lotus feet of their holinesses

An Anonymous Devotee

I worship the Lord of mountains, the leader of the pramathaganas in Kailasa, whose neck is dark in color. He is mounted on a lordly bull and his form is beyond the pale of the three gunas (sattva, rajas and tamas). (I worship) that source of all, the lustrous one whose limbs are decked with holy ash and who has 'Bhavāni' as his consort, and is possessed of five faces.

शिवाकान्त शम्भो शशाङ्कार्धमौले

महेशान शूलिञ्जटाजूटधारिन् ।

त्वमेको जगद्व्यापको विश्वरूपः

प्रसीद प्रसीद प्रभो पूर्णरूप ॥ ४ ॥

śivākānta śambho śaśāṅkārdhamaule
maheśāna śūliñjaṭājūṭadhārin |
tvameko jagadvyāpako viśvarūpaḥ
prasīda prasīda prabho pūrṇarūpa ॥ 4 ॥

Please, be pleased, O Lord of Parvati, O Shambhu, with the crescent moon on his head, O the great Ishana, the trident bearer with matter hair, Thou alone art omnipresent and Thou art seen in manifold forms in all plenitude.

परात्मानमेकं जगद्वीजमाद्यं

निरीहं निराकारमोङ्कारवेद्यम् ।

यतो जायते पाल्यते येन विश्वं

तमीशं भजे लीयते यत्र विश्वम् ॥ ५ ॥

parātmānamekaṃ jagadbījamādyam
nirīhaṃ nirākāramoṅkāravedyam |
yato jāyate pālyate yena viśvam
tamīśaṃ bhaje liyate yatra viśvam ॥ 5 ॥

I worship the One Supreme Spirit, the Isa the first source of the Universe who is free from desire, void of form and is knowable by meditating on Omkara (pranava). He is the One whence the Universe comes into being, by whom it is protected and in whom it gets back.

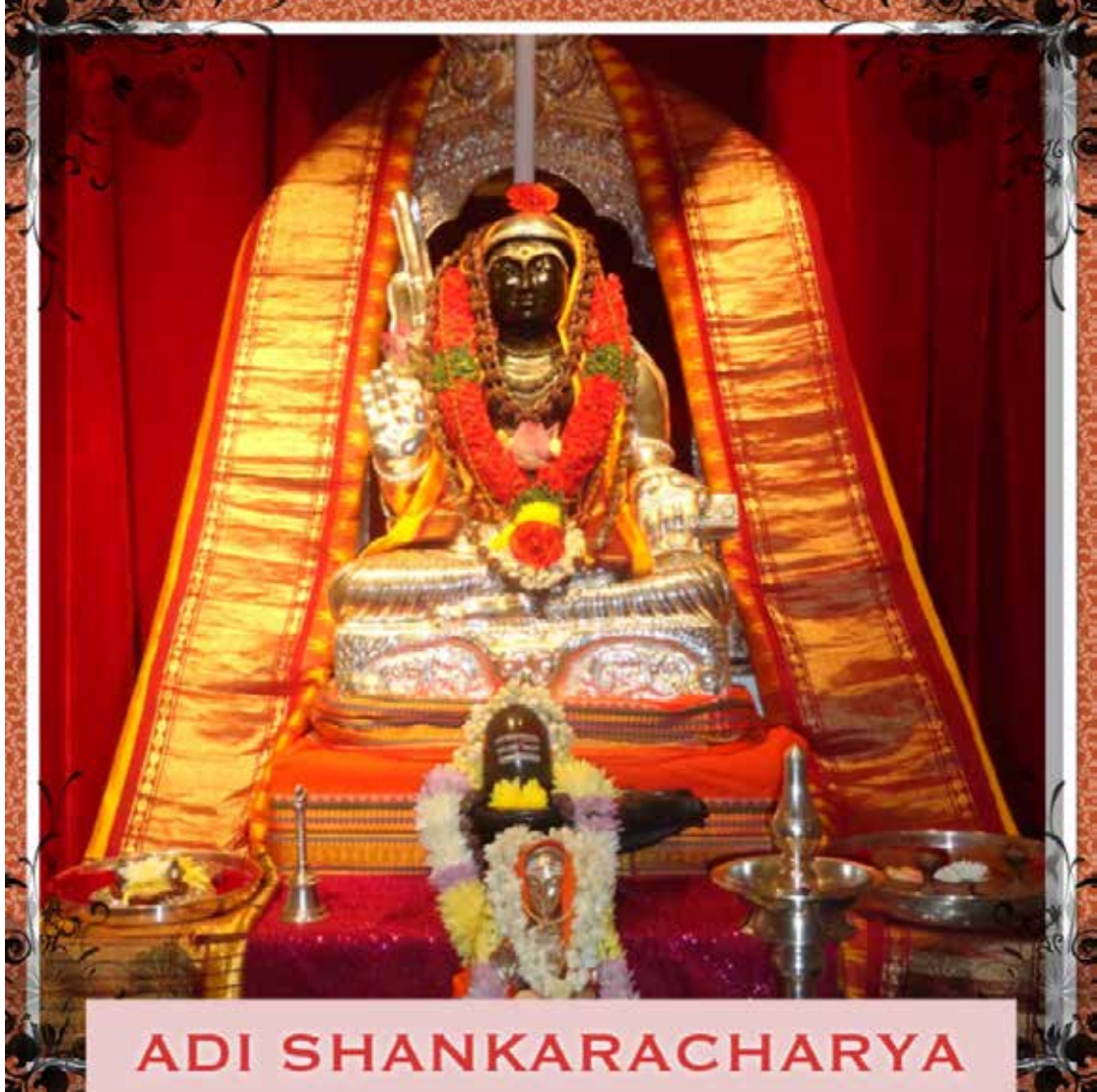
न भूमिर्न चापो न वह्निर्न वायु-

र्न चाकाशमास्ते न तन्द्रा न निद्रा ।

न चोष्णं न शीतं न देशो न वेषो

न यस्यास्ति मूर्तिस्त्रिमूर्तिं तमीडे ॥ ६ ॥

na bhūmirna cāpo na vahnirna vāyu-



ADI SHANKARACHARYA

Do not be proud of wealth, people, relations and youth. All these are snatched away by time in the blink of an eye. Giving up this illusory world, know and attain the Supreme.

Jagadguru Adi Shankaracharya

With Humble Pranams

T. Sundaresan and Damayanti

rna cākāśamāste na tandrā na nidrā |
na coṣṇaṃ na śītaṃ na deśo na veśo
na yasyāsti mūrtistrimūrtiṃ tamīde || 6 ||

I adore that Triad (in the form of Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra) but who in fact has no form, who is not the earth or water or fire or wind or space, who is neither indolence nor sleep, neither heat nor cold nor any place or make-believe.

अजं शाश्वतं कारणं कारणानां
शिवं केवलं भासकं भासकानाम् ।
तुरीयं तमःपारमाद्यन्तहीनं
प्रपद्ये परं पावनं द्वैतहीनम् ॥ ७ ॥
ajam śāśvataṃ kāraṇaṃ kāraṇānām
śivaṃ kevalaṃ bhāsakaṃ bhāsakānām |
turīyaṃ tamaḥpāramādyantahīnaṃ
prapadye paraṃ pāvanaṃ dvaitahīnam || 7 ||

I seek refuge under the Supreme Siva, who was not caused by anything else, eternal, the primal cause of all causes, the matchless, illuminator of all luminaries, one who is beyond the three states of existence (the wakeful, dream and deep sleep), who is beyond the pale of ignorance, who has no beginning or end and who is the pure one without a second.

नमस्ते नमस्ते विभो विश्वमूर्ते
नमस्ते नमस्ते चिदानन्दमूर्ते ।
नमस्ते नमस्ते तपोयोगगम्य
नमस्ते नमस्ते श्रुतिज्ञानगम्य ॥ ८ ॥

namaste namaste vibho viśvamūrte
namaste namaste cidānandamūrte |
namaste namaste tapoyogagamya
namaste namaste śrutijñānagamya || 8 ||

Obeisance to Thee, obeisance to Thee, O Lord whose form is the whole universe; obeisance to Thee, obeisance to Thee, the very embodiment of Consciousness-bliss; obeisance to Thee, obeisance to Thee, who is knowable by means of penance and meditation; obeisance to Thee, obeisance to Thee, who is knowable by the path of knowledge outlined in the Vedic scripture.

प्रभो शूलपाणे विभो विश्वनाथ
महादेव शम्भो महेश त्रिनेत्र ।
शिवाकान्त शान्त स्मरारे पुरारे
त्वदन्यो वरेण्यो न मान्यो न गण्यः ॥ ९ ॥



Though Sri Sankara Bhagavadpada was the embodiment of wisdom, he composed numerous works, propagated *dharma* and bestowed knowledge on real seekers. We all must clearly remember this and follow the same path. We bless all those pursuing truth to realize this well and perform their duties with dedication to the Lord.

H.H. Jagadguru Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal

With Humble Pranams at the lotus feet of
Their Holinesses Jagadguru Sri Sri Maha
Sannidhanam and Jagadguru Sri Sri
Sannidhanam

Sri Sadguru Seva Samajam, New Jersey

prabho śūlapāṇe vibho viśvanātha
mahādeva śambho maheśa trinetra |
śivākānta śānta smarāre purāre
tvadanyo vareṇyo na mānyo na gaṇyaḥ || 9 ||

O Lord, the Trident bearer, lord of the universe, God of all gods, source of auspiciousness, supreme Lord with three eyes, Consort of Goddess Parvati, One who is tranquil, enemy of Cupid and of the three demons, there is none equal to Thee to be sought, to be honored or to be counted as support.

शम्भो महेश करुणामय शूलपाणे
गौरीपते पशुपते पशुपाशनाशिन् ।
काशीपते करुणया जगदेतदेक-
स्त्वंहंसि पासि विदधासि महेश्वरोऽसि ॥ १० ॥

śambho maheśa karuṇāmaya śūlapāṇe
gaurīpate paśupate paśupāśanāśin |
kāśīpate karuṇayā jagadetadeka-
stvamhaṃsi pāsi vidadhāsi maheśvaro'si || 10 ||

O God of auspiciousness, great lord, Compassionate though wielder of the trident, lord of Gauri, lord of all souls, destroyer of the bonds of souls, lord of Benares, Thou art the one Maheshvara, the Supreme God who out of abundant grace destroys, protect and creates this entire universe.

त्वत्तो जगद्भवति देव भव स्मरारे
त्वय्येव तिष्ठति जगन्मृड विश्वनाथ ।
त्वय्येव गच्छति लयं जगदेतदीश
लिङ्गात्मके हर चराचरविश्वरूपिन् ॥ ११ ॥

tvatto jagadbhavati deva bhava smarāre
tvayyeva tiṣṭhati jaganmṛḍa viśvanātha |
tvayyeva gacchati layaṃ jagadetadīśa
liṅgātmake hara carācaraviśvarūpin || 11 ||

O Lord, source of all, enemy of Cupid, Lord of Universe, O Compassionate one, O destroyer of sins, this world springs from Thee, gets its sustenance from Thee and gets back to Thee, in the form of Linga, Thou art in the form of this universe of movables and immovables.

इति श्रीमत्परमहंसपरिव्राजकाचार्यस्य श्रीगोविन्दभगवत्पूज्यपादशिष्यस्य
श्रीमच्छङ्करभगवतः कृतौ वेदसारशिवस्तोत्रं सम्पूर्णम् ।



Man must always have good thoughts and utter only good words. His heart must ever be full of compassion. He must always be helpful to others. Only such a person is known as a satpurusha.

- H.H Jagadguru Bharati Teertha Mahaswamigal

**Our Humble Namaskaras at the lotus feet of Their Holinesses
Jagadguru Sri Sri Maha Sannidhanam
and Jagadguru Sri Sri Sannidhanam**

Sri Inguva Subrahmanya Sastry and Smt. Parvati
Sitaram & Suneeta Inguva - San Diego, CA USA

Devī Māhātmyam

Jyotsna Kalavar

Devī Māhātmyam, also popularly known as Durgā Saptasatī or Chaṇḍī, comprises thirteen chapters taken from Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa, containing 700 powerful mantrās that extol the Divine Mother. Chanting (called *pārāyaṇam*) of Devī Māhātmyam or listening to the chanting of this scripture with undivided attention is considered very auspicious during the festival of *Navarātrī* (spring and autumn) as well as the eighth, ninth and fourteenth day of the lunar fortnight (अष्टम्यां च चतुर्दश्यां नवम्यां चैकचेतसः).

The name ‘Devī Māhātmyam’ itself means ‘Glory of the Goddess’ which is a narration rendered by sage Mārkaṇḍeya to Kroṣṭuki. The Divine Mother as Śakti is the unifying force of existence, the power behind the forces of creation, sustenance, and dissolution.

The inevitable triumph of good over evil is the symbolic meaning of this venerated scripture whose book itself is an object of worship. Who are these demonic forces whose destruction this text elaborates on? Where is this battle occurring? How are they rooted out? In life’s voyage, as individuals, we are plagued with a ceaseless stream of never ending thoughts, often in response to the people, environment, objects, moods, and circumstances around us. Some thoughts are positive, kind, generous, altruistic, marked with love and joy for the world around us; however, we also harbor thoughts of greed, desire, passion, self-conceit, pride, self-deprecation, and the giant ego. While the former set of thoughts move us towards Self-realization, the latter are forces that hurl us far away from realizing our own Divinity. The battlefield is the psychological plane of the mind, the battle between the divine and demoniac forces occurring repeatedly within the human psyche.

In Devī Māhātmyam, Chaṇḍikā Devī is the Supreme Goddess whose exploits and prowess triumph over the *asurās* (demonic forces) is beautifully chronicled in three *charitrams*. Each *charitram* describes the Divine Mother in Her

aspects as Mahākālī (*tamas*), Mahālakṣmī (*rajas*), and Mahāsarasvatī (*sattva*), each associated with a specific *guṇa*. Though represented as a trinity, the Divine Mother is only one Śakti, the supreme, primordial Mother. In Chapter 10 of Devī Māhātmyam, the following was asserted by Devī: I alone am in this world here. Who else is there besides me? (एकैवाहं जगत्पत्र द्वितीया का ममापरा । (१०, ५)

In the first *charitram* (chapter 1), the stage for the revelation of the Divine Mother’s glory by sage Medhas to the deposed king Suratha and the financially ruined merchant by the name of Samādhi is set. Both these men have been cheated and deceived yet they are unable to overcome their respective attachments, whether to kingdom (by the king) or to family members (by the merchant). They seek the counsel of sage Medhas (representing wisdom) as follows:

दृष्टदोषेऽपि विषये ममत्वाकृष्टमानसौ ।

तत्किमेतन्महाभाग यन्मोहो ज्ञानिनोरपि ॥

(१, ४४)

Despite seeing the defects in our sense objects, nevertheless, our minds are drawn into attachment. O learned one, what causes this delusion even for the two of us who are wise?

Subsequently, sage Medhas, a respected seer responded to their query by conveying the veiling power of Devī which afflicts even those with a mighty intellect.

ज्ञानिनामपि चेतांसि देवी भगवती हि सा ।

बलादाकृष्य मोहाय महामाया प्रयच्छति ॥ (१, ५५)

Verily, the Divine Bhagavatī Mahāmāyā forcibly draws the minds of even the wise, and flings them into delusion.

It is during this narration by sage Medhas to the merchant and the king that Mahākālī’s encounter with Madhu and Kaiṭabha is described. In this first *charitram* Ādiśakti awakens Mahā Viṣṇu from the state of *yoganidrā*, so he may destroy the demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha, who are said



Man must always lead a happy life and be kind to all. Giving room to desire and hatred leads to all sorts of difficulties. We can understand this from the Itihasas and Puranas and also from day-to-day life. Let us all understand this well, avoid insult to others and lead a peaceful life.

H.H. Jagadguru Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal

**With Humble Pranams at the
lotus feet of their holinesses
Anjana & Ganesan Iyer**

to have emerged from the dirt of the ears of Lord Viṣṇu.

योगनिद्रां यदा विष्णुर्जगत्येकार्णवीकृते ।
आस्तीर्य शेषमभजत्कल्पान्ते भगवान् प्रभुः ॥
(१, ६६)

तदा द्वावसुरौ घोरो विख्यातौ मधुकैटभौ ।

विष्णुकर्णमलोद्भूतौ हन्तुं ब्रह्माणमुद्यतौ ॥ (१, ६७)

At the end of a kalpa, when the universe was one ocean, Lord Viṣṇu stretched out on Śeṣa in a state of yoganidrā (mystic slumber), two terrible demons, the well-known Madhu and Kaiṭabha, who sprang from the dirt of Viṣṇu's ears sought to slay Brahmā (seated on the lotus emerging from Viṣṇu's navel).

As Madhu and Kaiṭabha sought to slay Brahmā, He is said to have extolled yoganidrā (dwelling in Lord Viṣṇu's eyes) so that Lord Viṣṇu would arise in a timely manner to kill them both.

Continuing with this laud in praise of the Divine Mother, sage Medhas continues with his narration about Lord Brahma's prayer to the Divine Mother.

महाविद्या महामाया महामेधा महास्मृतिः ।

महामोहा च भवती महादेवी महासुरी ॥ (१, ७७)

You (O Mother) are the supreme knowledge, the great nescience, the great intellect, the great recollection, the great delusion, the great Goddess, and the power of good and evil (In an ultimate sense, the dichotomy between pure and evil are false and irrelevant as there is only one single, unqualified reality).

The demons who emerged from this dirt are said to represent base emotions such as desire and anger. And, they take much longer to overcome as they are a repository accumulated from countless lives that must be scrubbed off. As we transcend these forces within us, we move into the clutches of another set of inner foes!

In the second *charitram* (chapters 2-4), Mahālakṣmī vanquishes Mahiṣāsura and his retinue of egotistical followers. Mahiṣāsura is said to represent insolence, stubbornness,

foolishness, and egoism. The thought processes that flow in our psyche are a seemingly endless stream that keep changing form, intensity, duration, and frequency. However hard you may try to oppose the *Vikṣepaśakti* (tossing of the mind), it will manifest in another way. This stormy force is portrayed by Mahiṣāsura, a formidable foe with the power to change form. The following verses capture these turbulent tendencies within our psyche.

सा क्षिप्तवा तस्य वै पाशं तं बबन्ध महासुरम् ।

तत्याज माहिषं रूपं सोऽपि बद्धो महामृधे ॥
(३, २९)

She flung her noose over him, and bound the great demon. Thus bound in the great battle, he too, discarded his buffalo form.

ततः सिंहोऽभवत्सद्यो यावत्तस्याम्बिका शिरः ।

छिनत्ति तावत्पुरुषः खड्गपाणिरदृश्यत ॥ (३, ३०)

Suddenly, he became a lion. Just as Ambikā cut off his lion-head, he took the appearance of a man with a sword in hand.

तत एवाशु पुरुषं देवी चिच्छेद सायकैः ।

तं खड्गचर्मणा सार्धं ततः सोऽभूमहागजः ॥ (३, ३१)

Then, Devī with her arrows instantly chopped off the man together with his sword and shield. Then, he became a huge elephant.

करेण च महासिंहं तं चकर्ष जगर्ज च ।

कर्षतस्तु करं देवी खड्गेन निरकृन्तत ॥

(३, ३२)

The elephant tugged at Devī's great lion with his trunk and roared loudly. But as he was dragging, Devī cut off his trunk with her sword.

ततो महासुरो भूयो माहिषं वपुरास्थितः ।

तथैव क्षोभयामास त्रैलोक्यं सचराचरम् ॥ (३, ३३)

The great demon then again assumed his buffalo form, and shook the three worlds with their movable and immovable objects.



By whom Bhagavad Gita is studied even a little, Ganges water has been drunk even by drop, and Krishna, the killer of the demon Mura, is worshipped at least once, for him, there is no quarrel with Yama, the lord of death.

– **H.H. Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamigal**

With Humble Pranams

Anantapadmanabhan and Jayashree

Enraged, the Divine Mother challenged him, scoffed at him, overpowered him, struck him with her spear, and eventually eradicated him.

अर्धनिष्क्रान्त एवासौ युध्यमानो महासुरः ।

तया महासिना देव्या शिरश्छित्त्वा निपातितः ॥ (३, ४२)

Thus, fighting with his half-revealed form (buffalo), the great asura (Mahiṣāsura) was felled by the Devi who struck off his head with Her great sword.

This *charitram* concludes with the fourth chapter that constitutes an eloquent praise of the Divine Mother by Indra and the other celestial beings. One of the many acclaimed hymns from this chapter reads as follows:

केनोपमा भवतु तेऽस्य पराक्रमस्य

रूपं च शत्रुभयकार्यतिहारि कुत्र ।

चित्ते कृपा समरनिष्ठुरता च दृष्टा

त्वय्येव देवि वरदे भुवनत्रयेऽपि ॥ (४, २२)

What could compare to this valor of yours? Where can one find such a captivating form that strikes fear in enemies? O Devi, O bestower of boons, even in the three worlds, only in you is seen, compassion at heart and (at the same time) harshness in battle.

In the third *charitram* (chapters 5-13), the prowess of Mahāsarasvatī and her divine emanations (Brahmānī, Māheśvarī, Kaumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Nārasimhī, and Aindrī) deftly and systematically vanquish Dūmralochana, Caṇḍa, Muṇḍa, Raktabīja, Niśumbha, Śumbha and their associates. Raktabīja was a demon whose every drop of blood resulted in a clone of himself, similar in size and valor. When Devī severed the head of Raktabīja, the blood flowed profusely, resulting in an army of Raktabīja look-alikes.

यावन्तः पतितास्तस्य शरीराद्रक्तविन्दवः ।

तावन्तः पुरुषा जातास्तद्वीर्यबलविक्रमाः ॥ (८, ४४)

As many drops of blood fell from his body, that many beings came into existence with heroism, strength, and valor equal to his.

Raktabīja represents desires. As we cut asunder one desire, another crops up. What is the use of cutting the branches of a tree? A tree will sprout new branches sooner or later. If the tree of desire has to be cut, strike at the root, dig it out of the ground, and destroy it. This is what Devī asked Kālī to do, to spread out her tongue wide (चामुण्डे विस्तीर्णं वदनं कुरु) all over the earth so the demons walked on it with their chariots, weapons, and retinue of followers. In turn, Kālī sucked them all in (मुखेन काली जगृहे रक्तबीजस्य शोणितम्). By doing so, the very essence of desire was destroyed at the roots, not merely at the level of the branches where it can sprout again.

After addressing the distractions of the mind found in the second *charitram*, emerging now is a new inner enemy, ignorance (*ajñāna*) of one's true Self. This oblivion of Truth is the root cause that has led to ego, desires, anger and related thought processes. Why do we develop an ego? Why do we desire things? Why do we get angry when our desires are not met? Simply put, we do not know the nature of Truth or *Ātma*. While dirt represents *tamas*, *vikṣepa* represents *rajas*, and *sattvaguna* (though valued over the other *guṇās*) represents the subtle barrier to achieving the Truth. Unlike dirt and tossing of the mind, *sattva* is a subtle obstruction which has two aspects, self-conceit and self-deprecation that are represented by Śumbha and Niśumbha, respectively. They had dispossessed the Gods and appropriated all their wealth and privileges by their pride and strength. A retinue of Mother-Goddesses provided combat support. The *asurās* had to be dispelled by the power of wisdom alone, and that is why this final *charitram* is linked with Mahāsarasvatī. In our interactions with the world, we must understand the finite role of our petty tensions, turmoils, vexations, anxieties, fears, obstacles, joys, successes, achievements, etc. By submitting to the Divine Mother, knowledge dawns, and the realization of Truth occurs. Devī Māhātmyam captures the transformation from *tamas* to *rajas*, from *rajas* to *sattva*, and from *sattva* to victory, Self-realization.



Dharma is the cause of happiness. If today we do not have the mental peace and happiness of our ancestors, it is due to our gross neglect of dharma. When the practice of dharma declined, suffering began.

- H.H Jagadguru Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamigal

With Humble Pranams at the lotus feet of their holinesses

Nandini and Bapu Raghunandan

In chapter 11, the eulogy of the Divine mother is called *Nārāyaṇī Stuti* and includes the popularly chanted prayer:

सर्वमङ्गलमाङ्गल्ये शिवे सर्वार्थसाधिके ।
शरण्ये त्र्यम्बके गौरि नारायणि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥
(११,१०)

Salutations to you O Nārāyaṇī, O you who are Auspiciousness in everything auspicious, O Auspicious One, O fulfiller of all the objectives purifying ourselves with the vibrations of Her *mantrās*, and with Her infinite grace, this celebrated text becomes our tool for spiritual transformation to realize our inherent divinity.

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(of devotees), O giver of refuge, O three-eyed one with a shining face.

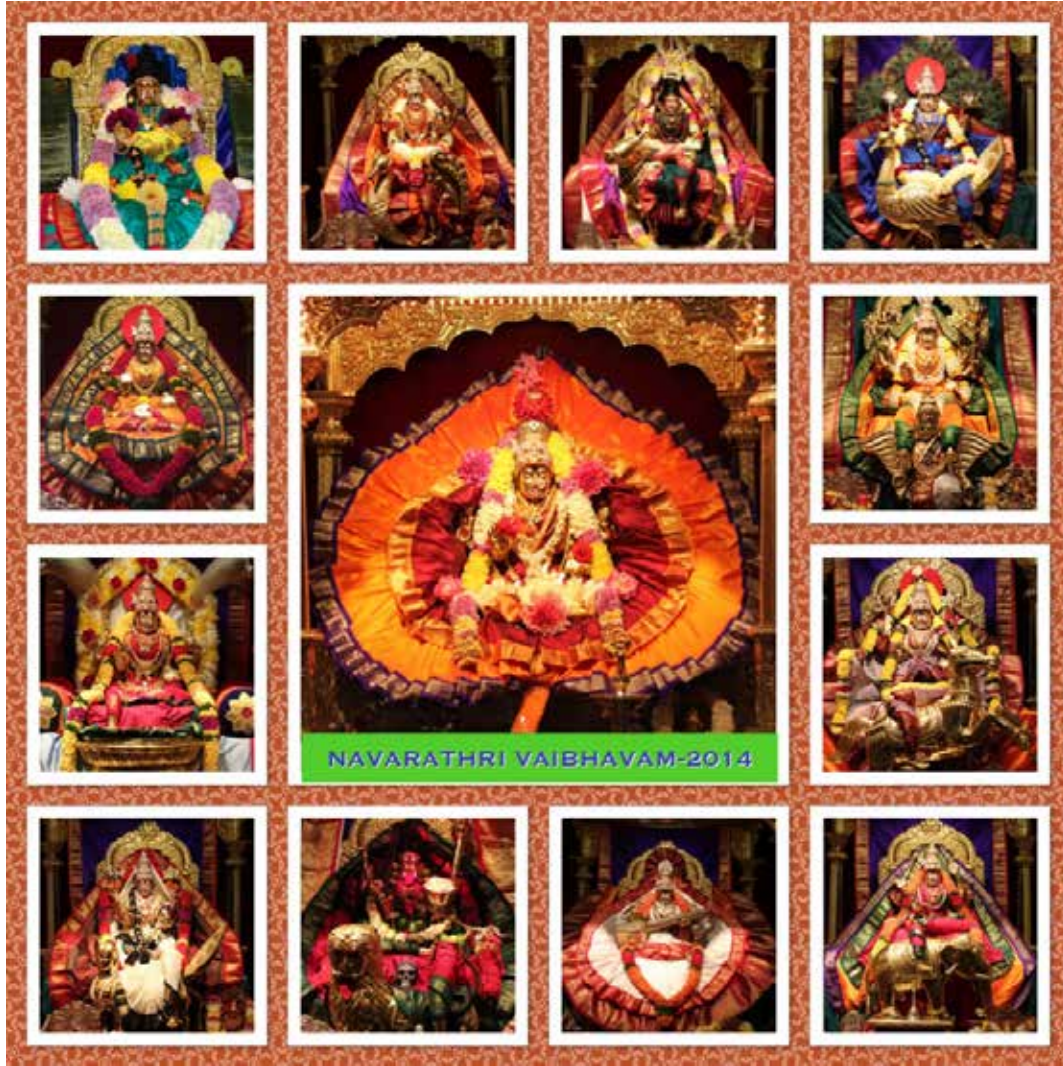
What benefits accrue from reading this text? The only way to root out the anti-divine forces is total surrender to the Divine Mother. Offer our tormenting struggles and exhilarating accomplishments of daily life, troubles, anxieties, worries, wealth, possessions, relationships; in short, everything, including the sense of doership. By reading *Devī Māhātmyam*, we are Geeta Press (n.d.). *Sri Durga Saptashati*. Published by Geeta Press, Gorakhpur, India.

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Golden words of H.H. Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati

- You are responsible for what you are today. You are responsible for your pain and suffering and misery. You cannot escape your responsibility by blaming fate, for fate is your own making, or by blaming God, for he is but the divine dispenser of fruits in accordance with the merits of your actions. You have none to blame but yourself for your present state of affairs
- Fate is invisible. The past is past and is beyond our vision and unseen. Do not worry about fate or the past. The present is before you and by the exercise of your free will, you can shape the future and this is what you should do, instead of wasting your time and energy bothering about your past and fate.
- Start with boundless hope with the presumption that nothing is impossible for you. If you work with earnestness and persist in your efforts, you can accomplish anything.
- Worldly comforts and pleasures are not the means of happiness. Today we have in abundance all the requisites of comfort and happiness, far more than our ancestors had. Yet we are not better off than before. Even though the means of happiness (worldly possessions) have increased manifold over the last century, our happiness has not increased.
- In spite of the knowledge that telling a lie is sinful, many people persist in it. When people sin, knowing that what they do is sinful, what is the point of teaching them that many other acts of theirs are also sinful? Such a teaching is not going to make any difference to their conduct. Now they err in ignorance; after being taught they will err deliberately. That will be all the difference perhaps. The fault lies with us. What can any *guru* do when we have no desire to reform ourselves?



The world is an excellent training ground for performing selfless service (or nishkama karma) and by the performance of such pure and unselfish action you become free from all impurities and fit for God-realization

– **H.H. Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamigal**

With Humble Pranams

K.S. Ramakrishnan and family

Sādhana Pañchakam By Ādi Śaṅkarācārya

वेदो नित्यमधीयतां तदुदितं कर्म स्वनुष्ठीयतां
तेनेशस्य विधीयतामपचितिः काम्ये मतिस्त्यज्यताम् ।
पापौघः परिधूयतां भवसुखे दोषोऽनुसन्धीयता-
मात्मेच्छा व्यवसीयतां निजगृहानूर्णं विनिर्गम्यताम् ॥ १ ॥

vedo nityamadhīya tāṃ taduditaṃ karma svanuṣṭhīyatāṃ
teneśasya vidhīyatāmapacitiḥ kāmye matistyaajyatām |
pāpaughāḥ paridhūyatāṃ bhavasukhe doṣo'nusandhīyatā-
mātmecchā vyavasīyatāṃ nijagrhāttūrṇaṃ vinirgamyatām || 1 ||

Study the scriptures (Vedas and Upanishads) always. Perform well the duties enjoined in them. By that let God be worshipped. Take your mind off the actions for material prosperity. Strive against the call of sins. Consider worldly happiness as leading to sorrow. Develop love for your own Self. Get out of (attachment to) your home as quickly as possible.

सङ्गः सत्सु विधीयतां भगवतो भक्तिर्दृढाऽऽधीयतां
शान्त्यादिः परिचीयतां दृढतरं कर्माशु सन्त्यज्यताम् ।
सद्विद्वानुपसृप्यतां प्रतिदिनं तत्पादुका सेव्यतां
ब्रह्मैकाक्षरमर्थ्यतां श्रुतिशिरोवाक्यं समाकर्ण्यताम् ॥ २ ॥

saṅgaḥ satsu vidhīyatāṃ bhagavato bhaktirdṛḍhā"dhīyatāṃ
śāntyādiḥ paricīyatāṃ dṛḍhataraṃ karmāśu santyaajyatām |
sadvidvānupasrpyatāṃ pratidinaṃ tatpādukā sevyatāṃ
brahmaikākṣaramarthyatāṃ śrutiśirovākyaṃ samākarnyatām || 2 ||

Seek the company of the pious. Develop strong faith in God. Acquire with determination, peace and such other divine qualities. Give up (selfish) actions as early as possible. Approach the pious who is learned in the scriptures. Worship his pādukās daily. Pray for the knowledge of Brahman, which is the one-letter 'AUM'. Listen to the philosophic declarations of the Upanishads.

वाक्यार्थश्च विचार्यतां श्रुतिशिरःपक्षः समाश्रीयतां
दुस्तर्कात्सुविरम्यतां श्रुतिमतस्तर्कोऽनुसन्धीयताम् ।
ब्रह्मास्मीति विभाव्यतामहरहर्गर्वः परित्यज्यतां
देहेऽहम्मतिरुज्झ्यतां बुधजनैर्वादः परित्यज्यताम् ॥ ३ ॥
vākya'rthaśca vicāryatāṃ śrutiśiraḥpakṣaḥ samāśrīyatāṃ



Happiness is a state of mind and does not depend on the quality or quantity of external possessions. A person may be the lord of all the three worlds and yet be unhappy. Another may be the poorest of beggars and yet be the happiest man in the world.

H.H Jagadguru Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamigal

With Humble Pranams at the lotus feet of their holinesses

Venkataraman Muralidharan & Radha,
Ashok Muralidharan & Akila,
Nagarajan & Jaya,
Aadhitya, Achintya, Gayathri

dustarkātsuviramyatām śrutimatastarko'nusandhīyatām |
brahmāsmīti vibhāvyatāmaharahargarvaḥ parityajyatām
dehe'hammatirujjhyatām budhajanairvādaḥ parityajyatām || 3 ||

Explore the meanings of Vedanta mantras. Take refuge yourself in the views of life extolled by the Vedas. Keep yourself clear of useless discussions. Think over the logical conclusion accepted by the Vedas. Often assume the attitude: 'I am Brahman!' Give up pride totally. Abandon thinking of the body as the Self. Do not argue with the learned.

क्षुद्ध्याधिश्च चिकित्स्यतां प्रतिदिनं भिक्षौषधं भुज्यतां
स्वादन्नं न तु याच्यतां विधिवशात् प्राप्तेन सन्तुष्यताम् ।
शीतोष्णादि विषह्यतां न तु वृथा वाक्यं समुच्चर्यता-
मौदासीन्यमभीप्स्यतां जनकृपानैष्ठुर्यमुत्सृज्यताम् ॥ ४ ॥

kṣudvyādhiśca cikitsyatām pratidinaṃ bhikṣauśadhaṃ bhujyatām
svādvannaṃ na tu yācyatām vidhivaśāt prāptena santuṣyatām |
śītoṣṇādi viśahyatām na tu vṛthā vākyaṃ samuccāryatā-
maudāsīnyamabhīpsyatām janakṛpānaiṣṭhuryamutsṛjyatām || 4 ||

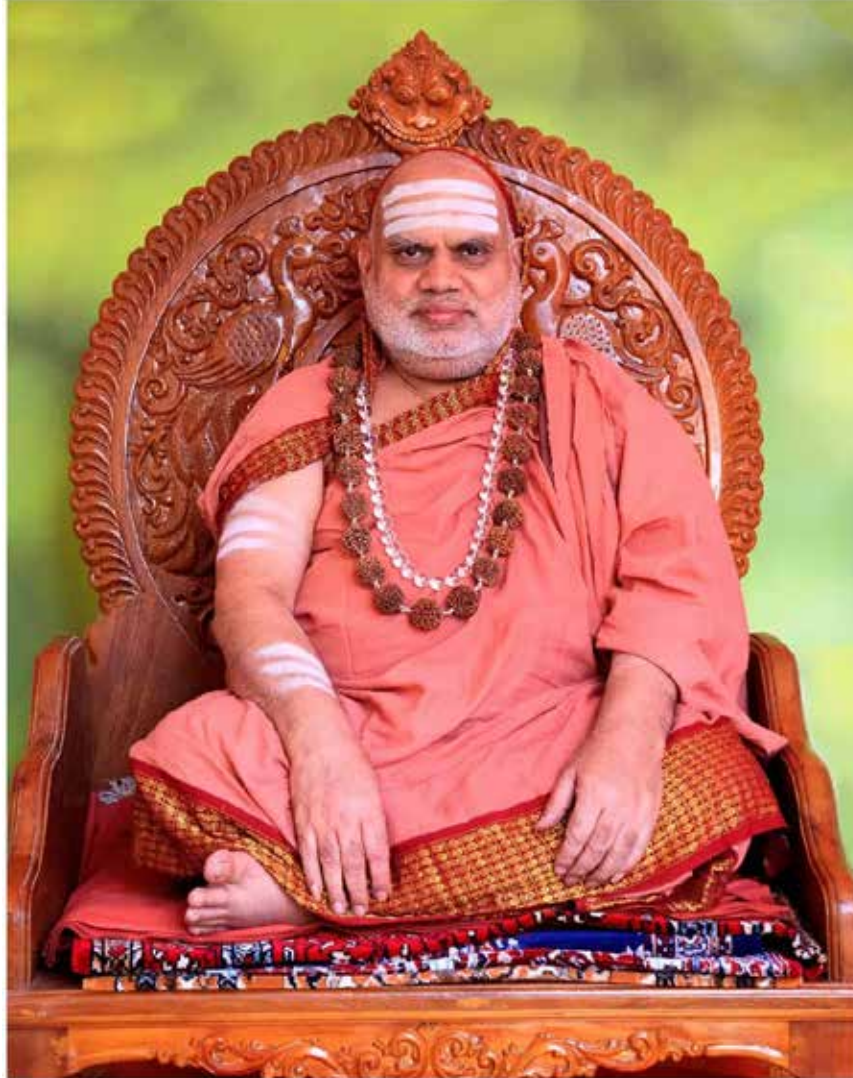
Cure the disease of hunger; swallow daily the medicine which is in the form of alms. Do not beg for tasty food. Be satisfied with what you get by destiny. Endue cold and heat and such other pairs of opposites. Do not indulge in useless talk. Develop indifference. Overlook the kindness as well as the cruelty meted out to you by the public.

एकान्ते सुखमास्यतां परतरे चेतः समाधीयतां
पूर्णात्मा सुसमीक्ष्यतां जगदिदं तद्वाधितं दृश्यताम् ।
प्राक्कर्म प्रविलाप्यतां चित्तिबलान्नाप्युत्तरेः श्लिष्यतां
प्रारब्धं त्विह भुज्यतामथ परब्रह्मात्मना स्थीयताम् ॥ ५ ॥

ekānte sukhamāsyatām paratare cetaḥ samādhīyatām
pūrṇātmā susamīkṣyatām jagadidaṃ tadbādhitaṃ dṛśyatām |
prākarma pravilāpyatām citibalānnāpyuttaraiḥ śliṣyatām
prārabdhaṃ tviha bhujyatāmatha parabrahmātmanā sthīyatām || 5 ||

Stay happily in solitude. Concentrate your mind upon the Highest Brahman. Perceive everywhere the all-pervading Self. See this world as falsified by it. Let your past actions be done away with. On the strength of knowledge, don't be associated with the actions being done. Experience here itself the fruits of the prārabdha karmas (karmas that have started to yield their fruits). Afterwards, identify the Self in you with the parabrahman and stay in that state.

॥ इति परमहंसपरिव्राजकाचार्यश्रीमच्छङ्कराचार्यविरचित
साधनपञ्चकं सम्पूर्णम् ॥



Dharma makes man richer than the richest, stronger than the strongest, happier than the happiest. Realise the depth of your fall from the true ideal of life and make an honest endeavor to recover it.

H.H Jagadguru Bharati Teertha Mahaswamigal

With Humble Pranams at the lotus feet of
their holinesses

Students of Dharmatma
Dr. Yegnasubramanian

Children's Corner

(Reflections by young *Brahmacharis* on *Karmanushtanas*)

Doing *Anushtanam* is a brahmin's duty. Being born in a family upholding the Vedic tradition is a great blessing. Typically a brahmin's only job is his *Anushtanams* and *Veda*. In today's world, being a true brahmin has become a rare thing. Though we could come up with many reasons for it, if we think deeply, we would realize most of the reasons we state are mere excuses. Just because some things aren't practical doesn't mean it is impossible. I read "A day in a life of True Brahmin" from Voice of God which drew me towards *Anushtanam* more. I want to be a True Brahmin as much as I could.

I do *Tri-kala Sandhyavandanam*, *Brahma yagnam* every day. Almost every day I do *Samitadhanam* in the morning and evening. I do my *Panchayatana Pooja* and *Veda parayanam* as well. The days when I do all of my *Anushtanam*, I feel like I'm the happiest person in the whole wide world!

- *Aarya Suriyanarayanan* (age: 10 years)

Sandhyavandanam, *Samitadhanam* (for *Brahmacharis*), and *Brahmayajnam* are all *Nityakarmas*. *Nityakarmas* are daily obligatory duties. Typically, a person worships three times a day at particular times called *Pratha Sandhya*, *Madhyanikam* (Noon), *Sayam Sandhya*. *Sandhya* means Sandhi, or the time when there is a joining or transition in the hours of the day or night.

Such times are considered to be auspicious for prayers. *Sandhyavandanam* consists of making certain offerings, prayers, and chanting the *Gayatri-mantra*. A human being is born with three kinds of debts; the concept of *Nityakarma* comes from a sense of obligation. These debts are *pitṛ-ṛna*, debts towards one's parents and ancestors, *ṛṣi-ṛna*, towards the sages, and *deva-ṛna*, towards the *devatas* or gods.

Nityakarma is meant to fulfill these three kinds of obligations. By doing *Sandhyavandanam*, only we are the beneficiaries. By doing *Japam*, we are cleansing our mind. Likewise, doing *Pranayama* is a breathing exercise. After doing a *Nityakarma* like *Sandhyavandanam*, we become more fresh and energetic than we previously were. Krishna says in the *Bhagavad Gita*,

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।

स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥ (18-47)

This means that better is one's own *Dharma*, though imperfect than the *Dharma* of another well performed. He who does the duty ordained by his own nature incurs no sin. Doing *Nityakarmas* is our duty and *Dharma*, which is why we do them every day.

- *Pranav Swaminathan* (age: 13 years)



- Do not neglect your duties, for only by doing them can you serve the Lord.
Performance of duties selflessly amounts to service to God.
- **H.H Jagadguru Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamigal**

**With Humble Pranams at the Lotus Feet of
their Holinesses**

Somasundaram Venkatasubramanian
Chandrasekar Somasundaram
Rajeswari Balasubramanian
Aisvarya Chandrasekar
Gouttham Chandrasekar

One might ask, now that we are in the *Kali yuga*, the following question: What are the uses and benefits of performing *Sandhyavandanam*? As a 16-year old who has been doing *Sandhyavandanam* since my *Upanayanam* 8 years ago, I can relate to this question when I first learned the practices and mantras of *Sandhyavandanam*. *Sandhyavandanam* itself contains 4 components: *Gayatri Japa*, when one meditates on the very sacred *Gayathri mantra*, *Pranayama*, when one practices breath control, *Achamanam* and *Tarpanam*, when one ritually cleanses oneself, and *Upasthana Mantra*, when one prays to Vedic gods for family and social peace.

Sandhyavandanam is not only a ritual but also a discipline. Since both my father and I perform *Sandhyavandanam* 3 times every day, it builds within us a mental rhythm and a bond. After a long day at school and other activities, sitting down and completing my *Sandhyavandanam* provides a sense of relaxation and a manner through which I can improve my concentration. Finally, as my elders have always told me, *Sandhyavandanam* is the foremost religious practice we can perform; as a result, I consider it to be the most important part of our culture and something I will pass down to future generations.

-Sriram Srinivasan (age: 16 years)

Golden Quotes

- No religion can possibly live, much less thrive, if its adherents are handicapped in its practice.
- Never let go your birthright of peace, contentment and happiness and never neglect to do your duty.
- Advice is of no use unless there is some likelihood of its being followed.
- Every moment of our life is very, very precious. Time passes very quickly, do not waste even a single second of your life.
- It is our duty to learn. It is foolish to say that we are ignorant because somebody else did not teach us.
- Truth peace and happiness is within you. Search within.
- Take money and worldly success when it comes and use it. Do not anticipate or hanker after wealth and worldly success. This is the right attitude.



As gold purified in a furnace loses its impurities and achieves its own true nature, the mind gets rid of the impurities of the attributes of delusion, attachment and purity through meditation and attains Reality.

Jagadguru Adi Shankara Bhagavatpada

With Humble Pranams
at the Lotus feet of their Holinesses
Satya Bhamidipati and Family



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Whatever karma one does, one will have to experience its fruits – happiness as a result of satkarma (good deeds) and suffering as a result of dushkarma (bad deeds). We bless all to understand this well and attain sadbhava (good nature) through help to others, devotion to god and inclination towards good deeds.

– **H.H. Jagadguru Bharati Teertha Mahaswamigal**

With Humble Pranams

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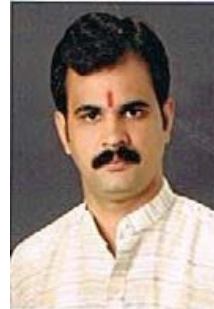
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If we have absolute faith in him, the guru will provide each of us an endowment for all of the devotion that we give to God. In fact, God is needed only when we cannot find a guru.

– H.H. Jagadguru Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamigal

**With Humble Pranams at the Lotus
feet of the Acharyas**

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It is true that if one does not practice love and compassion himself and thinks that Bhagavan should show him compassion, whatever puja, yagna etc. he may perform, it will be of no use.

H.H. Jagadguru Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamikal

With Humble Pranams at the lotus feet of
Their Holinesses
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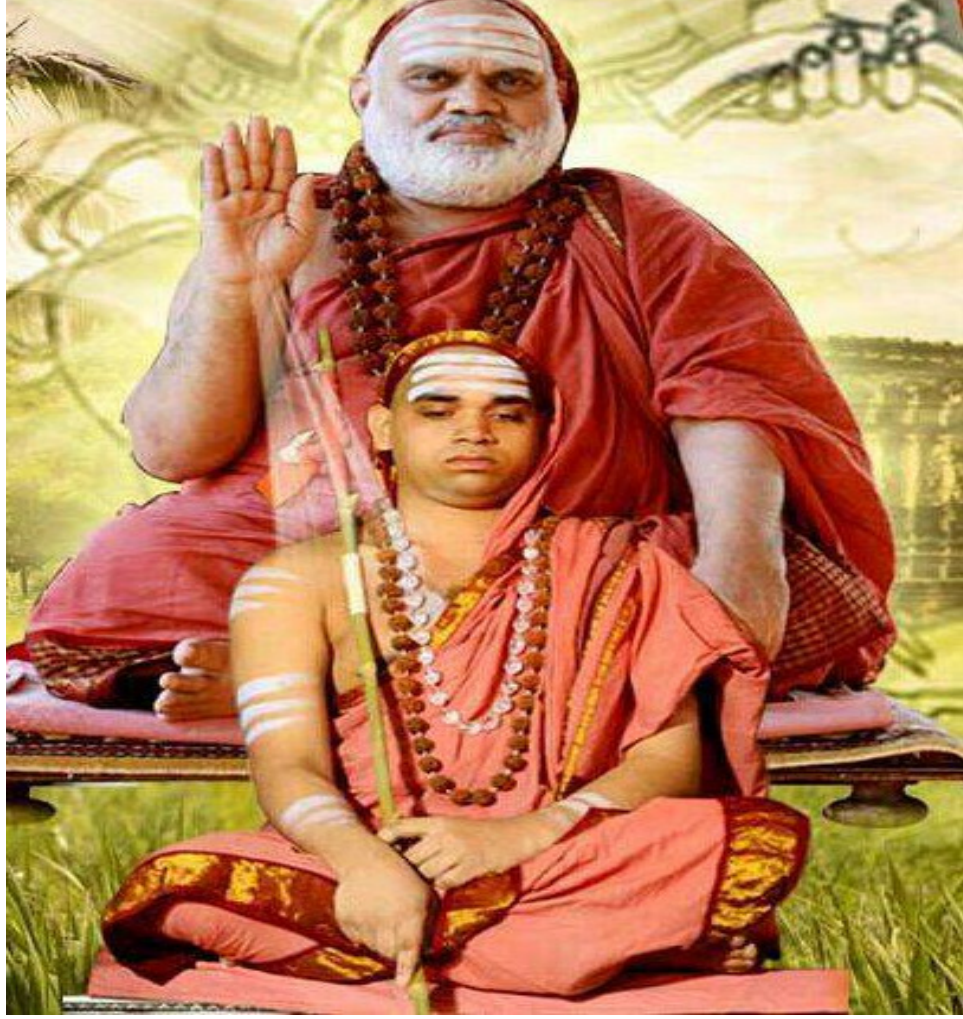
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Without Self Knowledge, no emancipation can be had. Compared with all other forms of discipline, Knowledge of the Self is the one direct means for liberation.

Jagadguru Adi Shankara Bhagavatpada

**With Humble Pranams at the Lotus Feet of their
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“He who sees Me (the Universal Self) present in all beings,
and all beings existing within Me, he is never lost to Me,
nor am I ever lost to him”

– **Lord Sri Krishna**

With Humble Pranams at the lotus feet of their holinesses

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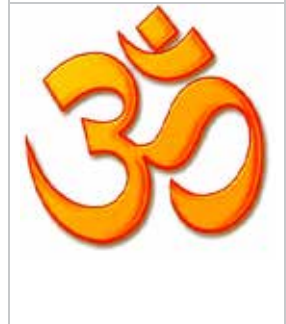
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The Guru guides in accordance to the needs and competence of the people who come to Him for guidance. That is why the Guru gives different pieces of advice to different seekers, just as a doctor prescribes different medicines for different patients.

- **H.H. Jagadguru Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal**

With Humble Pranams at the lotus feet of Sri
Mahasannidhanam and Sri Sannidhanam

Paresh and Nimisha Pandit

Harsh, Umang Pandit



Good deeds like worshipping Ishwara, chanting of divine names, meditating on Lord's form, dwelling in the company of holy ones, helping others, abstaining from harming others, etc. go a long way in enabling us to earn Ishwara's grace..

- H.H Jagadguru Bharati Teertha Mahaswamigal

With Humble Pranams

Sayyaparaju Madhusudana Raju & Radha
Sayyaparaju Pramod & Divya
Sayyaparaju Suneeta, Anya & Samara



With Humble Pranams
Swaminathan, Sarada,
Murali, Soundari,
Prashant, Ami and Sruti