

Chinmaya Smrithi



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

Volume 28, Number 6, November 2018



Keynote Speaker at CMWRC Fundraiser 2018, Pujya Swami Sarveshananda

Foreword: Swamiji's Message



Editor's Note: [Our beloved resident Swamiji, Swami Dheerananda is continuing his weekly classes on Vivekachoodamani. Please find below an excerpt from his class on verse 5].

इतः को न्वस्ति मूढात्मा यस्तु स्वार्थे प्रमाद्यति ।

दुर्लभं मानुषं देहं प्राप्य तत्रापि पौरुषम् ॥ 5 ॥

*itah ko nvashti mūḍhātmā yastu swārthe pramādyati |
durlabham mānuṣam deham prāpya tatrāpi pauruṣam || 5 ||*

Meaning: Is there a greater fool than the man who, having got the rare chance of a human birth and there too, the masculine* qualities of the head and heart, falls short in his efforts to rediscover himself?

Adi Shankara continues his effort to inspire the student with the verses at the beginning of the Vivekachoodamani. After describing the rare opportunity of the human birth and the good fortune of being blessed with an **adventurous spirit**, the Acharya rhetorically questions the wisdom of the people who do not take advantage of it.

The question itself indicates that there cannot be a greater fool than the person who is not interested in their own welfare. Even in the constantly changing material world, we are all familiar with the question of "What's In It for Me". The vast majority of people perform actions only after carefully considering the benefits that they could get from those actions. The knowledge of the real Self is the greatest welfare that a person could aspire for.

In everyday life, we refer to the "BMI" as the self and consider our self-interest from that limited viewpoint. We end up objectifying the subjective Self. But this is possible

only so long as one is playing a role. When one is all alone, then one can identify with the true Self and be a witness.

Swamiji indicated beautifully quoting the verses from the Kenopanishad that the Self is the Subject that cannot be experienced by the senses. The Upanishad indicates that the eyes cannot see the Self, the ears cannot hear the Self, the nose cannot smell the Self, the tongue cannot taste the Self and the skin cannot touch the Self. The mind cannot feel the Self; the intellect cannot think of the Self. The Self is something other than the known; it is something other than the unknown. These verses are a great resource to contemplate upon when the seeker is alone and trying to identify with the Self.

*Note: The word "masculine" in this verse is not a reference to the male gender but rather to a specific type of mental temperament. Pujya Gurudev, in his commentary on the Vivekachoodamani (Verse 2), elaborates on this theme where he says that "man seems to be the only living creature in the universe who is independent for his rational conquests and is the sacred being, which, through intellectual conviction, can gain a firm control over the emotions of the mind and apply this regulated and controlled energy for purposes of transcending psychological existence and thereby peep into the boundless realms of bliss and beauty, love and perfection." It is in this context that possessing the necessary mental and intellectual capacity and adventurous spirit in addition to a human birth is considered important for a spiritual seeker.

Calendar and Upcoming Events

Upcoming Events

- Dec 27th – 30th – Gita Jnana Yagna on Chapter 12 Bhakti Yoga by Pujya Swami Dheerananda at Chinmaya Somnath.
- January 1st : Vishnu Sahasranamavali and New Year Pooja at Chinmayam, Silver Spring, MD and Chinmaya Somnath, Chantilly, VA.
- Dec 9th : Multi-cultural dialogue – Third of a three part series exploring racism and bias at Imaam Center Silver Spring MD. Earlier sessions held in Nov and December.
- March 23rd – 24th: Annual Gita Chanting competition will be held at all the local chapters. Please visit the Gita chanting webpage for further details.

Study Groups

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

Bookstore/Library

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

Next Edition of Chinmaya Smrithi

- Articles for the next regular bi-monthly edition – January 2019, are due by December 31, 2018
- Email submissions to smrithi-editor@chinmayadc.org.
- Browse Past editions at www.chinmayadc.org/Smrithi/Smrithi.htm

Useful Links:

Central Chinmaya Mission Trust www.chinmayamission.com
Chinmaya Mission West www.chinmayamission.org
Chinmaya International Foundation, E-Vedanta Courses www.chinfo.org
Chinmayam Chapter – Silver Spring MD website <http://chinmayam.chinmayadc.org/chinmayam-chapter/>
Chinmaya Somnath Chapter – Chantilly VA website www.chinmayasomnath.org
Chinmaya Frederick Chapter – Urbana MD website <http://www.frederick.cmwrc.org/>
Chinmaya Richmond Chapter – Richmond VA website www.chinmayarichmond.org
CMWRC – Washington Regional Center www.chinmayadc.org

Please Note

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

Editorial Staff: (smrithi-editor@chinmayadc.org)

Editor: K.A. Lakshmanan

Advisers: Sri Raju Chidambaram, Acharya Vilasiniji, Pujya Swami Dheeranandaji. Sitaram Kowtha

BV students – Bhuvan Devarsu, Vishnu Lakshmanan

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

News & Tidbits

Annual Fund Raiser 2018

CMWRC family held their annual fund raiser on November 10, 2018. An inspiring keynote address “Serve to Deserve” was delivered by Swami Sarveshananda who leads the Chinmaya Mission at Dallas Fort Worth, Texas. In his lucid talk, Swamiji brought home to the audience the importance of service and how true service helps to purify the seeker on his or her spiritual path. A collage of pictures can be viewed in this edition. A more extensive collection of pictures can be viewed at <https://photos.app.goo.gl/uUKJ1PwxrxzBJ1D7>

Learning Centers

With the blessings and guidance of our Swamiji, a new initiative has been launched at Chinmaya Somnath to help attract newer members from the local community to the Chinmaya facility. The classrooms and other facilities are planned to be rented out to local teachers offering classes in traditional Indian arts such as music and dance as well as academic subjects such as Maths and Science.

A similar initiative to rent out the facilities to interested local teachers is also being actively pursued at the Chinmayam Silver Spring chapter and further details are expected to be announced shortly.

Table of Contents

	Foreword, Calendar and Events, Editorial Team, Contact Us	
NEWS	News & Tidbits	
	Announcement & Flyers	
	Sannyasa Deeksha Message from Swami Swaroopananda	
	AFR Collage Photographer: Rajaram & Collage by Maanini L	
	I AM AS I AM Dr Anoop Kumar	
	Reflections on “Advaita & Science” Isha Darbari – CHYK student at UMD	
	THE AM WAY YOGA Raju Chidambaram	
	Messages from an autobiography of a Mahatma – 9 (Iswara Darshana) Sitaram Kowtha	
	Vedanta Series: Ishwara Darshan: Part 12 Acharya Sadananda	
	Homage: Swamini Apoorvananda and Smt. Lalitha Nambiar	
	Gurudev Uvacha – a collection of quotes from Swami Chinmayananda	

Bala Vihar

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

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

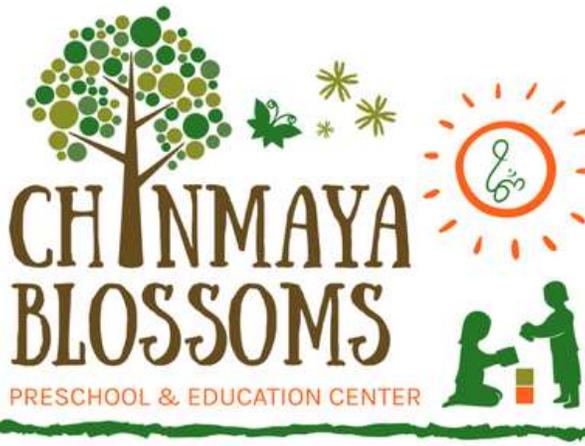
Registration for 2017-18 Now Open!



Pre-School!

- Accepting ages 3 to Pre-K
- Loving and Caring Staff
- Value Education Classes
- Yoga & Mindfulness

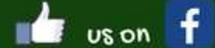
Location:
4350 Blue Spring Drive
Chantilly, VA 20151



Now Enrolling!

- Vegetarian premises
- State of the art facility with playground
- Integrated learning methods

Call Us @ 703.378.2899



www.chinmayablossomsua.org

CHINMAYA SOMNATH LEARNING CENTER

Bringing back joy of learning



CULTURAL CLASSES



BRAIN BUILDERS



TUTORING



PERFORMING & VISUAL ARTS



YOGA & MEDITATION



LANGUAGES



Classes starts from September 2018

VISIONARY ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT & VALUE EDUCATION

Classes are offered for children and adults. We provide an ideal environment for integrated physical, intellectual and spiritual development.



Chinmaya Mission® Washington Regional Center



Activities for kids
ages 4+
are planned during
the discourses

warmly welcomes you to

Bhagavad Geeta

Jnana Yajna

(Continuing Series of Free Discourses)

GEETA CHAPTER 12

Bhakti Yoga | The Art of Devotion

Swami Dheerananda

Spiritual Head, CMWRC

December 27 - 30, 2018

7:00 PM - 8:30 PM

CHINMAYA SOMNATH

4350 Blue Spring Drive, Chantilly, VA 20151



Vishnu Sahasra NamaVali | Lakshmi Puja | Guru Paduka Puja

will be celebrated at the same location



Tuesday, January 1 2019

10:00 AM - 12:00 Noon

WE INVITE YOU TO SPONSOR THE
YAJNA AND SUPPORT THE
CAPITAL PROJECTS

FOR INFORMATION OR TO SPONSOR
THE YAJNA PLEASE EMAIL
YAJNA@CHINMAYASOMNATH.ORG



SWAMI DHEERANANDA HAS BEEN SERVING THE WASHINGTON DC METRO AREA SINCE 1989 WHEN PUJYA GURUDEV SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA PLACED HIM AS THE RESIDENT TEACHER FOR THE REGION. SWAMIJI IS THE ARCHITECT BEHIND CHINMAYA MISSION'S VERY POPULAR BALA VIHAR AND SUMMER CAMPS FOR CHILDREN.



CHINMAYA MISSION WASHINGTON REGIONAL CENTER



Arpanam

An Offering of Gratitude | Annual Fundraising Initiative

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

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

Pledge Today Generously

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

**Grow Spiritually and Help Our Center
Expand to Serve More**

Follow us on Facebook!

Exciting news! We now have a Chinmayam Facebook page for our Silver Spring center where we can showcase our vibrant community, events and activities. **We request all members to "follow us" and "like us"** to receive important updates, information on events and special guests, photos of your children in Bala Vihar, quotes from our Gurudev, and more. Updates will be sent to your phone or email accounts. **Don't be left out - join now !**

Step 1: Login at Facebook.com (or join Facebook by creating your profile - it's free and easy)

Step 2: Search Chinmaya Mission DC

Step 3: Click on "Like" and "Follow"

Step 4: Click on "Invite Friends" and send the page to your friends, members and non-members.

**Publicity team needs volunteers who are active on social media! Please contact
Amita Jain, amitajain815@gmail.com**

Chinmayam Learning Center

Chinmayam is now available for rental services!

We are delighted to announce your single destination for enrichment programs!! Presenting the Chinmayam Learning Center, weekdays and weekends!

For more information, please contact: Raja Kirkire, rkkirkire@gmail.com,
Meena Sankar, meena17.sankar@gmail.com



Sri Siva Vishnu Temple

6905 Cipriano Road, Lanham MD 20706

Tel: (301)552-3335 Fax: (301)552-1204

E-Mail: ssvt@ssvt.org Web Site: <http://www.ssvt.org>



Curtain Raiser Event for 21st Anniversary Celebration of Yoga at SSVT

MICHELANGELO'S MEDICINE

How Redefining the Human Body Will Transform Health
and Healthcare

Speaker : Dr. Anoop Kumar, MD



Anoop Kumar, MD is the author of "Michelangelo's Medicine", as well as the upcoming book "Is This a Dream?" He enjoys exploring the intersection of consciousness, science, and philosophy. He has recently collaborated with Deepak Chopra on presenting non-duality to worldwide audiences.

Sunday December 9th, 2018, 4:00 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Venue : SSVT Auditorium



THE FAITH COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP
INVITES MONTGOMERY COUNTY RESIDENTS OF ALL FAITH TRADITIONS AND ETHNIC
BACKGROUNDS TO THE THIRD ANNUAL

MULTICULTURAL DIALOGUE 3 PART SERIES

"EXPLORING RACISM & BIAS,
MEETING THE DIVINE IN THE OTHER"



*Each dialogue will begin with reflections on our sacred texts, our common humanity, and through
small group exercises, learn to see the divine in each other.*

*Attend one or all three. Register for each dialogue a week prior to the date of the dialogue. Use the
link below.*

PART 1:
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7
UPCOUNTY REGIONAL
SERVICES CENTER
12900 MIDDLEBROOK RD
GERMANTOWN, MD 20874

PART 2:
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11
ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF
WASHINGTON AREA
2701 BRIGGS CHANEY RD,
SILVER SPRING, MD 20905

PART 3:
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9
IMAAM CENTER
9100 GEORGIA AVE
SILVER SPRING, MD 20910

6:30 PM

REFRESHMENTS AND OPTIONAL POTLUCK SUPPER,
FORMATION OF SMALL, DIVERSE GROUPS WITH A TRAINED FACILITATOR

7:00 PM

PROGRAM STARTS PROMPTLY
LATECOMERS WILL BE PLACED IN A SMALL GROUP

MUST REGISTER HERE

WWW.TINYURL.COM/FALLMCD2018

\$5 DONATION ACCEPTED AT THE DOOR





Chinmaya International Foundation



Master Gita Master Life

Listen. Reflect. Apply.

with

Swami Advayananda

assisted by

Br. Ved Chaitanya

📍 Adi Sankara Nilayam, Veliyanad, Ernakulam - 682313, Kerala

A unique programme
for an in-depth study
of the Bhagavad Gita

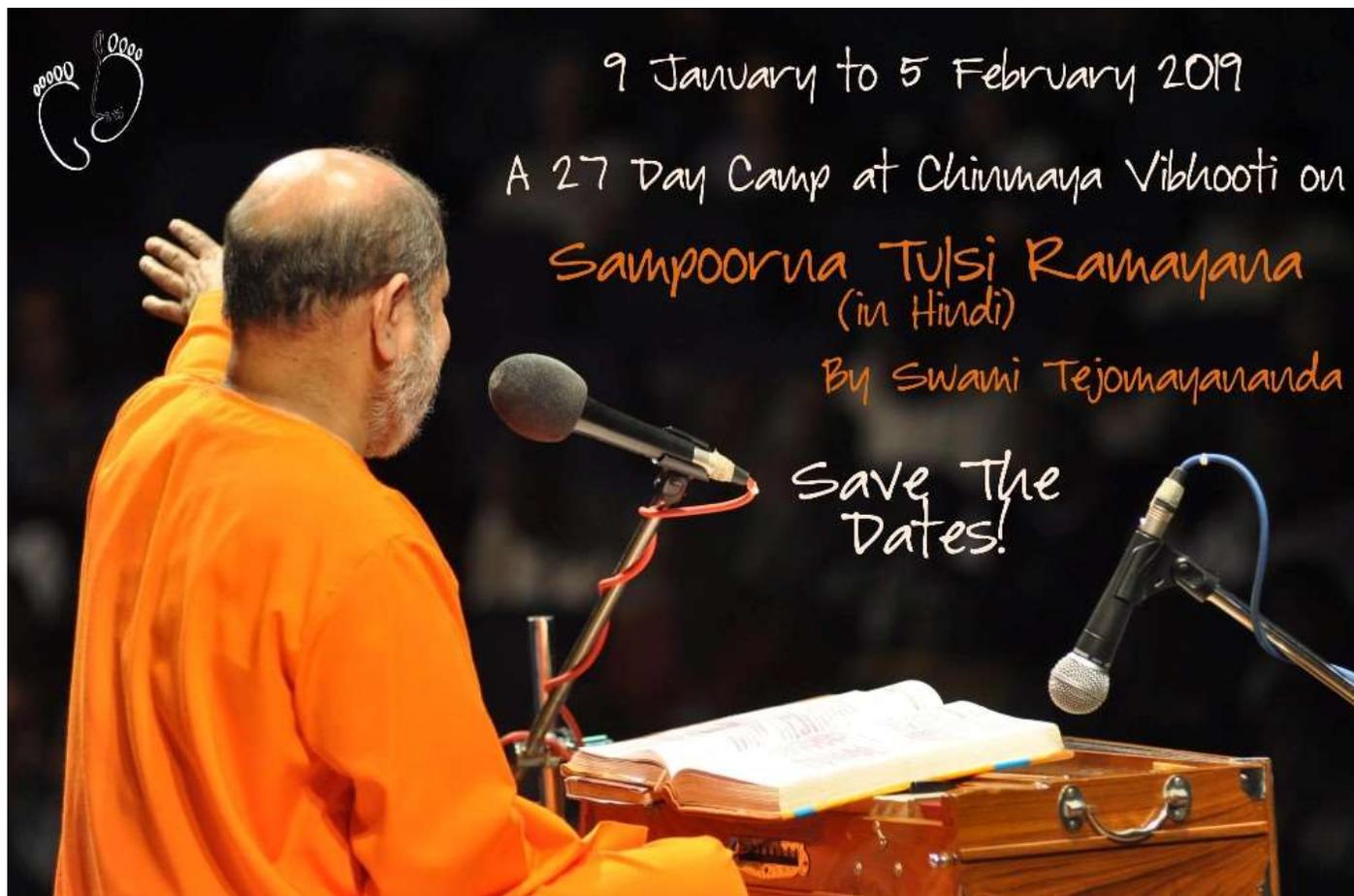
All 700 verses of 18 chapters
unveiled in 20 months
(7 sessions in 2 days, every month)

Begins January 2019
Second Saturday & Sunday every month
Online Camp Option Available

✉ welcometocif@chinfo.org

☎ +91 97468 24142 | +91 92077 11148

🌐 mastergitamasterlife.chinfo.org



9 January to 5 February 2019

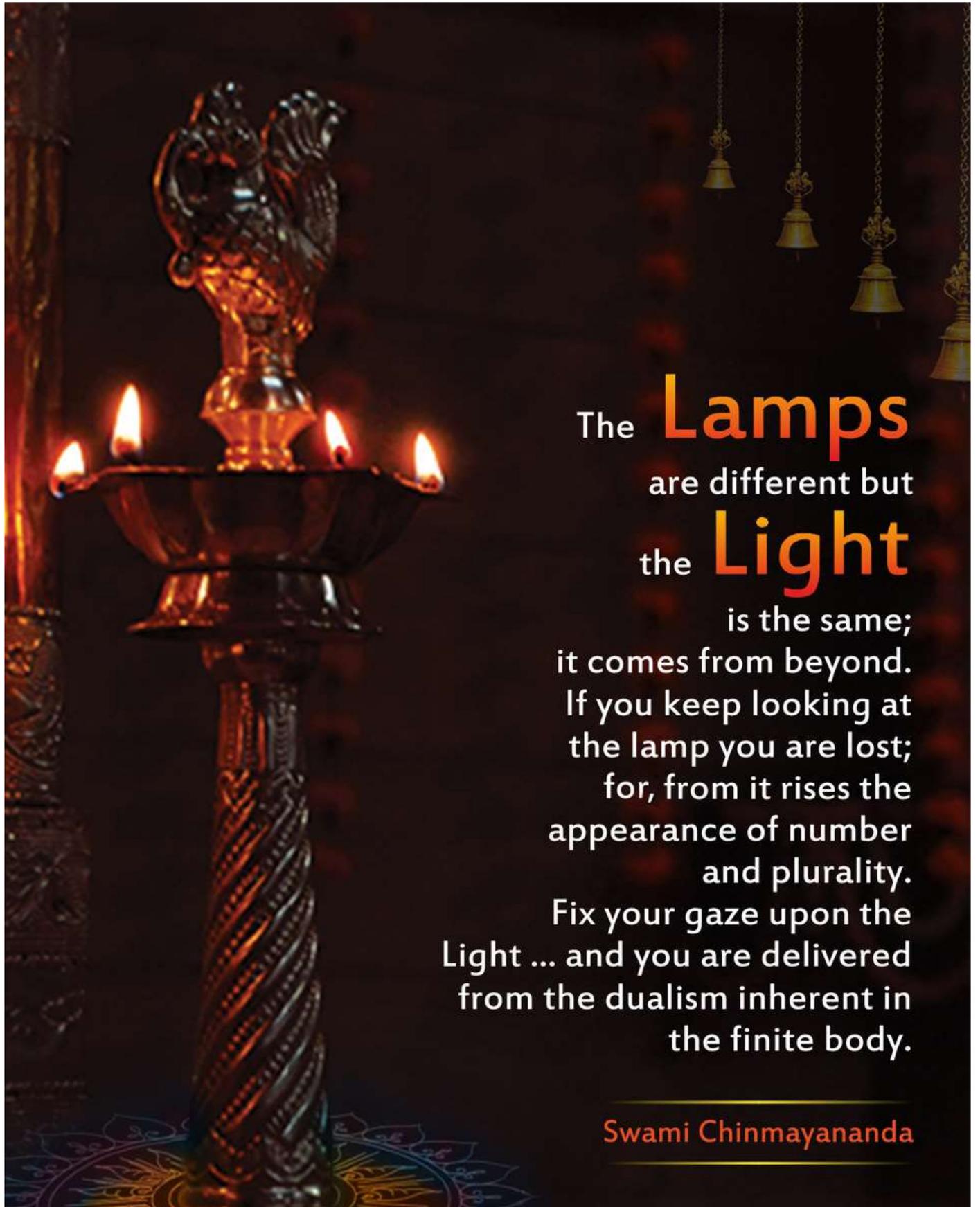
A 27 Day Camp at Chinmaya Vibhooti on

Sampoorna Tulsi Ramayana
(in Hindi)

By Swami Tejomayananda

Save The
Dates!





The **Lamps**
are different but
the **Light**
is the same;
it comes from beyond.
If you keep looking at
the lamp you are lost;
for, from it rises the
appearance of number
and plurality.
Fix your gaze upon the
Light ... and you are delivered
from the dualism inherent in
the finite body.

Swami Chinmayananda

Pujya Swami Swaroopananda invokes the blessings of the Goddess of wealth and wants us to fill our hearts with single pointed love and devotion for the Lord in his video message: <https://youtu.be/ihb8W7hCeRw>.

Subscribe to Inspiring Chinmaya Mission Magazines

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

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

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

Tapovan Prasad Subscription Instructions:

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

Please consider Other Chinmaya Magazines for your subscriptions:

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

Sannyasa Deeksha

October 2018

ॐ

Swamins, Brahmacharins and Members of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide

Dear All,

Hari Om! Greetings from Adi Sankara Nilayam, Veliyanad!

Today, on this auspicious morning – 2nd October, 2018 – at Chinmaya International Foundation, Veliyanad, 5 more precious lives dedicated themselves to Chinmaya Mission and the vision of Pujya Gurudev. I am happy to announce the initiation of yellow-clothed Brahmacharins into the flaming orange Sannyasa ashram as Swamis and Swaminis. Their new names, preceded by their earlier names are:

Br Vamsi – Swami Vijayananda (CM Vijaynagaram)
Brni Vidya – Swamini Shreyananda (Chinmayaranyam)
Br Hrishikesh – Swami Sarvatmananda (CM Kothapatnam)
Brni Bhavana – Swamini Pavitrananda (CM Renigunta)
Brni Vibha – Swamini Supremananda (CM Kurnool)

Attached is a photograph of the new initiates.



Sannyasa Deeksha

at Chinmaya International Foundation - 2nd October 2018

Swami Vijayananda (Br. Vamsi Chaitanya) - CM Vijaynagaram
Swami Sarvatmananda (Br. Hrishikesh Chaitanya) - CM Kothapatnam
Swamini Supremananda (Brni. Vibha Chaitanya) - CM Kurnool
Swamini Pavitrananda (Brni. Bhavana Chaitanya) - CM Renigunta
Swamini Shreyananda (Brni. Vidya Chaitanya) - Chinmayaranyam

May the grace of God and the blessings of our entire Guru Parampara lead them to the ultimate goal of Self-realisation.

A small video of the announcement of their new names can be viewed on the YouTube channel of Chinmaya Mission. The link is:

<https://youtu.be/NBHgFJyJRnU>

Today we have inaugurated the third Malayalam Vedanta course at Sandeepany Kerala, Adi Sankara Nilayam, Veliyanad. I invoke Bhagwan Sankaracharya and Gurudev's Blessings on Swami Sharadananda and the students.

Love,

At His Feet,

Swaroopananda



Collage of Pictures from CMWRC Fundraiser 2018

Created by Maanini Lakshmanan (pictures by Rajaram)

I Am As I Am

Dr. Anoop Kumar

I am the well of the universe, the abode of the mind.
I am as I am, home sweet home.

In me it all sinks. In me it all surges.
I am as I am, at once here and beyond.

No dream can shake me. No vision can contain me.
I am as I am, beyond all perception.

What world do you speak of? What flutterings catch your eye?
I am as I am, beyond time, space, and motion.

Some chase after me. Some run away from me.
I am as I am, enveloping them all.

Some search for me in experiments. Some search for me in prayer.
I am as I am, prior to the search.

Some look for me in books. Some look for me within.
I am as I am, waiting behind everywhere.

Some say I am real. Some say I am imaginary.
I am as I am, not as words say.

All that is said of me is true, and all that is said of me is false.
I am as I am, incomprehensible, descriptionless.

I am my Self, in my Self, by my Self, as my Self.
I am as I am, never another.

When calculation falls away, and the world comes to a hush,
my intimacy approaches, without motion, without direction.

As the veil disappears, and footholds collapse,
the world sings in unison, I am as I am.

Reflections on “Advaita & Science”

Isha Darbari – CHYK student at UMD

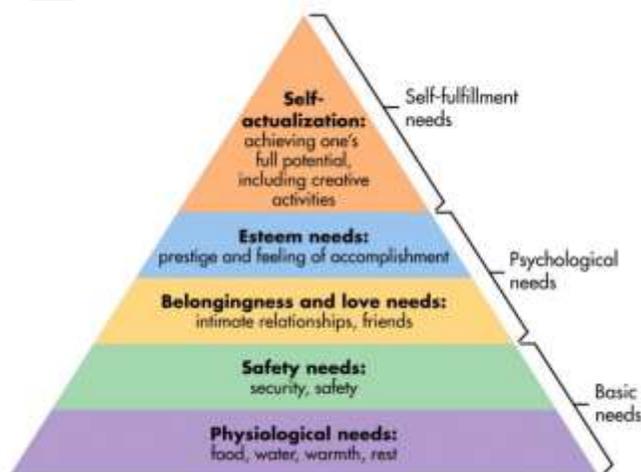
Some of the biggest questions in science today are regarding consciousness: What is consciousness? Are those in a coma conscious? What is consciousness made of? Can consciousness even be studied? Even today, some think the answer to the latter is no. Though consciousness is such an integral part of our lives, the basis of our awareness and experiences, little is actually known about consciousness and how it works. During his talk, “Advaita & Science,” Dr. Anoop Kumar led the audience through an examination and analysis of our sensory perception system, perspectives of the world, and how this relates to Advaita and self-realization.

The mind is the lens through which we view the entire world, so it is tempting to identify with the mind and believe that what we think and perceive is the truth. We might look at a red shirt, and say with certainty that it’s red. But if a cat were looking at it, it would seem gray because of differences in our sensory perception systems-- who is right? Is the object really red? Or does the color depend on the observer? This is why what we experience is a subjective interpretation of the world.

Thus, there are two main philosophies to approach consciousness: In materialism, the world and body are physical, and the mind is created by the brain. In idealism, everything- including the brain- is mental. As Dr. Kumar pointed out, this is very similar to the idea of maya: “that which appears to be real but is not real independently.” In this sense, we see that all objects we interpret are not in fact independent since they are based on our perceptions. The one thing remaining then is the stable “I” of existence and awareness.

My initial thought was honestly, is this at all relevant? After all, it’s not like one can say to a distressed patient, “Your pain is all mental. Your innate state is at peace.” However, understanding the temporary and subjective nature of experience can help in managing difficult thoughts and emotions. In the moment, when you feel angry or think something shameful, you might say “I am angry” or “I am a terrible person.” And then you might be angry at yourself for being angry. The truth is, *you* are not angry, you are just experiencing a moment of anger. Deep down, your natural state is still the stable, peaceful “I.” However, by identifying with that anger, you’re holding on to it longer than necessary. Our innate state remains

peaceful, like the constant sky behind the changing weather of thoughts and emotions. The weather can be nice, or it can be stormy, and just like all things in nature, there’s a limit to how much we can control it. Regardless, the blue sky is always there behind all of the clouds. We just have to remember the blue sky and let the rough thoughts and emotions pass like clouds, instead of getting caught up in the storm.



I later asked Dr Kumar about the relevance of finding out what consciousness is, and he explained that for many, this pursuit may indeed seem irrelevant. It’s only once one has the “itch” to understand, the feeling that one cannot go on in life without pursuing this meaning, then one has to pursue it! This reminded me of the concept of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, where only once basic needs (physiological, safety) and psychological needs (belonging, love, esteem) are achieved can one truly pursue self-actualization. If someone is struggling to feed their family or unconfident in their relationships or self-abilities, this likely isn’t of utmost importance to them. However, once these external basic needs are satisfied, we must look inwards to understand who the “I” looking to discover the meaning of consciousness is in the first place.

THE AM WAY YOGA

Raju Chidambaram

Is Brahman a Thing?

It seems we are so totally helplessly into “things”: we see things and think of things. I see you as something, I think myself as something. Everything, as the very word suggests, is a thing. If something is not a thing, it is “nothing” and “nothing”, we are sure, is something that does not exist.

Ergo, only things exist!

Whether one is a scientist or a layman, one’s vision of the world and of oneself is rooted in this reasoning. That logic is deeply embedded in our language and we get entrapped in that language. We find it difficult to express views contrary to it. Thus, I assume God, if it exists, must be thing or a person.... That I, since I exist, must be a thing or person... That Brahman, the Reality, must be a thing....

But is Reality a thing? Is Brahman a *thing* that exists in all periods of time? Is Life a thing? Is existence a thing that exists? Vedanta, more than any other philosophy or science, has grappled with such questions and answered them logically. Gurudev, Guruji, and other teachers in the Chinmaya Mission, are constantly helping to bring those answers within our limited understanding.

What is my personal understanding?

Brahman is not a thing, but is more correctly understood as the creative potential. A potential is never seen as a thing nor does it exist as a thing. It is seen to exist only when the creative potential results in creation. Our individual creative potential, for example, is not a seen thing, but out of which our actions appear. Vedanta says that everything manifested in creation must be out of that one unmanifested potential called Brahman, which itself is not a thing. We may say that “no-thing” called Brahman is the womb of everything. Infinity manifests out of zero.

A parallel situation may obtain in the manifested world itself at a fundamental level. Vacuous space is devoid of all matter and thus is a “no-thing”. But laws of quantum physics suggest that matter and antimatter particles are spontaneously created (and usually immediately annihilated) out of this nothing space. It is no secret that our Upanishadic teachers often saw in Space a close analogy to Brahman. A quantum chemist has argued, based on physical observations of chemical reactions,

that all matter in their native state must be existing as a mind like potential rather than as material things.

Thus understood, Reality is not a thing, but the potential out of which (apparently real things) manifest. Life is not a thing but a potential out of which lively things appear. Extending this to myself, I must understand the truth that I, even while living as a jiva, am not really a thing, but the same universal creative potential. I am asked by my Guru to stay established at all times in the awareness of this potential that I am.

But I find it hard to remain in this awareness as long as I keep referring to myself as “I” while entertaining the false notion that “I” is a thing or person. A possible solution to this dilemma, as presented in the composition below, is the “AM” way.

Hari Om!

THE AM WAY

The Question:

Am I a noun? OR..... Am I a verb?

I am..... I exist I know.....

I know I am. But.....

Which am I?.....

Am I “I”?..... Or... Am I “AM”?

Am I a noun?..... Or... Am I a verb?

The Musings:

I is a name I call myself..... But am I just a name?

No..... Am not a name.....Am a being, alive

I is a thought.... Am I just a thought?

No..... Am not a thought....Am sentient

with the *I* thought

I is the seat of ego and ego the root of good and evil.... Am I ego?

No..... **AM** is existence... Am pure awareness

I is a word; not a meaningful sentence.... Am I meaningless?

No. **AM** is not just a word. **AM** is a full statement with profound meaning.

The Revelation:

So.... Am I? No! Am not anything *I* is.....

Am not I No!..... Am **AM!** ...Yes, Am

AM

Am the life that supports I

Am self-existent.....self-
dependent..... Am the seer

Am seeing one world now Now
another..... Now again no world is seen

The world seen winks in and out of
existence.... It has no life of its own

Am the life and support of everything
seen, felt and thought

The Meditation:

AM is the support of the world and of I

Am Brahman, Am Aum

Am the pulsating, vibrant life

Am the pulse of life... Am the lull between
the pulses...

Life pulses eternally as

AM.....AM.....AM.....AM.....

There is no Life, no world, no I without **AM**

The Absorption:

AM.....AM EVER AM.....NEVER AM NOT

AM the Way

AM AUM.....AUM AM....

AM AUM.....AUM AM.....AM AM....AM AM....

AM PEACE.....AUM PEACE.....

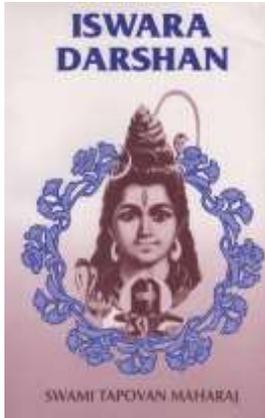
AM PEACE....OM SHANTI

OM SHANTI.....OM SHANTI

Messages from an autobiography of a Mahatma -9 (Iswara Darshan)

Sitaram Kowtha

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



9. Spirituality and North India Yatra

Action and Samsara

In this visible limitless universe, what is the state that affords everlasting joy, untainted by sorrow? Discontent and disquietude are the characteristics of worldly existence. It is just another name for sorrow. Because man immerses himself incessantly in all types of actions and clings to worldly objects. Thus, by means of the cord of action, the Lord keeps the wheel of the universe in perpetual motion. It is action with desire that produces 'samsara'. Desire, even without action also causes samsara. But action without desire for fruits of the action, leads to emancipation. So long as one entertains desires in his imagination, he does not escape the sphere of karma. If a man resolutely uses his sense of discrimination, restrains his senses and engages himself in appropriate action, without caring for its fruit and without attachment, he is the ideal man. If good actions are performed as a mode of worship, they lead the doers to peace and tranquility.

Action is the very life-breath of worldliness. If a man abandons action out of the unwillingness to exert or take pains, his inaction is bound to produce evil results. Renunciation of action upends world order. It jeopardizes the world's welfare. The man who shuns actions, also

suffers. Everyone should therefore engage in appropriate action for the purification of Self and the welfare of the world. It is not the action, but the attachment to the results of the action that produces misery.

Spirituality and Yoga

A seed smaller than a mustard seed, grows up to be a mammoth banyan tree with branches spreading far and wide. If this is not the work of Supreme power, then what else is it? The supreme Self is formless like the sky, subtle, pervasive and beyond the perception of the senses. Besides, it is not subject to birth or change, it is eternal, permanent, uniform and indestructible.

The son cannot beget his father, similarly, time and space issuing out of Supreme Self cannot produce Supreme Self.

Like oil in the sesame seed, butter in milk and foam and waves in the water, the Supreme Self pervades everything movable (sentient) and immovable (insentient).

By devoutly worshipping Him, who is at once formless and in form, who is ocean of mercy, with desireless action, man can attain the Supreme God. When one clings on to God with inexhaustible love, that love is called Bhakti. Such love wells up in one's mind as he remembers God, listens to the accounts of his glory and repeats his holy name with sincerity and regularity.

A man who has not conquered his senses, cannot follow any of the yogas (karma, bhakti, dhyana and jnana).

See God inside and outside and everywhere. Know all creatures, big and small, to be forms of God, and therefore treat them all with respect and love. Never deviate, even a hair's breadth, from truth, duty and good conduct. This is true spiritual life. When a snake charmer plays upon his pipe, even the deadly cobra sits spell-bound for a time. Is there any spirituality in it?

No one can make progress in spiritual life without developing noble qualities. Get rid of haughtiness, pride, covetousness and anger. Cultivate the spirit of renunciation, dispassion, physical and mental control, truthfulness, cheerfulness, friendship, mercy, liberality, straightforwardness, non-violence. These go the foundation of spiritual life. These take deep root only as a result of daily and constant practice.

Sweet, loving, balanced life always and everywhere – that is the true spiritual life. In it, there is no room for sorrow, bewilderment, pleasure or pain. It will be peaceful and majestic, like the wave-less mighty ocean.

To attain God is the end and aim of human life. Therefore, everything that helps man to reach his goal is 'dharma'; whatever hinders him from reaching it is 'adharm'.

Young, Wise Speaker

At large gatherings, Subramania, as a speaker, young in age, but old in wisdom, attracted the attention of audience with the very quintessence of the sastras in the form of counsel couched in humble words. In the company of friends and followers too, he gave valuable advice regarding spiritual life. At times, at the request of his friends, he held discourses on Geeta and the Upanishads.

One day a wandering sanyasi from North India arrived at his home unexpectedly. Observing Subramania and after returning from deep thought, the sanyasi predicted that Subramania will lead a life of religious mendicant in forests and mountain sides. The sanyasi was on his way to Rameshwar. Subramania gave him money and bade him goodbye.

Another day he received a letter from Swami Satyananda Saraswathi inviting him to come to Calcutta, where Subramania can be in contact with wise and virtuous people.

Visit to Calcutta

Subramania's journey went through Madras and Puri Jagannath temple in Orissa. Swami Satyananda Saraswati received him in Calcutta. Swami Satyananda had been elevated to be Sankaracharya of Dwaraka. Swamiji had immense wealth and stature but never failed to conduct satsangs and hold discussion on sastras. He would spend hours day and night steeped in meditation. Swamiji would take great pleasure in discussing difficult subjects and finding solutions for difficult problems. All discussions were held in Sanskrit. In the audience there would some who were irksome as snakes, argumentative as rams and those who would carry knowledge as camels carried heavy load. In spite of them, Subramania drank deep at the fountain of spirituality and felt supremely happy.

Chidvilasa

Swamiji conferred the name of "Chidvilasa" to Subramania. He accepted it as an indication of future sannyasin stage. From then on, he lived as if he was a sannyasin. He met many learned men in Calcutta, among them was Mahamahopadhyaya Lakshmana Sastri. Chidvilasa enjoyed the talks of this wise man and Chidvilasa himself won the appreciation of many learned men.

North India

After spending several days in Calcutta, Chidvilasa made his way to Gaya, Buddha Gaya and Varanasi. At Buddha Gaya, he recollected the teaching of Sri Buddha. At Varanasi, he meditated upon Vishwanatha and took bath in Ganga. He had hoped to engage wise meditative men in Kashi but was disappointed. He then made his way to Prayag and took a dip in Triveni Sangam. He then made his way to Haridwar. Here he took a bath in Brahmakunda and visited nearby temples and journeyed to Hrishikesh.

Chidvilasa spent many days in Hrishikesh visiting temples, meeting mahatmas including Dandi Swami, participating in satsangs, bathing in Ganga, spending hours in meditation, and enjoying views of the forests and peaks of Himalayas. He longed to return here. Since he had difficulty communicating in Hindi, he used Sanskrit. His fluency in Sanskrit and his melodious voice enthralled many. News of arrival of a young, erudite brahmachari from South India attracted many and he discussed spirituality with them.

He then started his return journey to Kerala, that took him through Delhi, Mathura, Dwaraka, Somanth, Bombay and Poona. He received a warm welcome from his family and friends upon his return, but it became clear to them that they will part with him again soon.

To Be Continued

Iswara Darshanam - XII

Discussion of the 11th Chapter of Gita – Acharya Sadanandaji

After Krishna and Sanjaya described, Arjuna sees the vision of the Iswara in the form of totality and then he describes. In the description, he goes through three kinds of emotions, as he sees the vishwaruupa-Iswara or Lord in the form of Universe of names and forms. First emotion is wonderment, second emotion is fear and third emotion is bhakti or devotion. We wonder at things when our intellect cannot comprehend logically what we see or experience. Krishna says even a Jnaani also goes through wonderment when he recognizes the reality, since the truth cannot be logically comprehended. Wonder is also due the fact that it is so daringly present all the time, but yet was not recognized due to ignorance and it is not different from one's own self.

Ascharyavat pasyati kaschidena,

Aschayravat vadati tathaiva chAnyah,

AschairvaschianamanyaH shRiNoti,

sRitvApyenam veda na chiava kaschit.

Whoever gains the vision of the totality gets wonderstruck. Others who describe this vision to others with wonder. Those who are tuned to this alone can hear with wonderment. It is pity that even after hearing; many do not even pursue to gain that vision. A jnaani sees the world with wonder or as vibhuti or glory of the Lord or as vibhUti of one's own self.

The difficulty or obstacles in seeing this vision of viswarUpa Iswara, as outlined before, is due to lack of purity of the mind or Chitta Suddhi. Without the purity of the mind one does not see the world as is, but sees only as distorted by one's rAga-dweshas or likes and dislikes. The temporary clearing of the obstacles for the vision, by the grace of the Lord or Guru, can help in appreciating the true vision of the world with wonder. However, this vision is very soon will be replaced by fear and associated bhakti, as is evident in the Arjuna's vision. Fear normally comes from the unknown or from ignorance. Fear also comes when one sees something other than oneself or in the vision of duality. In essence, any duality or dvaita taken as reality causes fear, says the scripture; dvitilyAdyou bhayam bhavati or udaramantaram kurutE athatasya bhayam bhavati; even a spec of difference causes fear, says Tai. Up. Hence moksha or absolute freedom cannot involve any duality or dvaita. In deep sleep state, where

there is no observed duality, everybody enjoys the state which is free from fear, and it is called anandamaya kosha. The same state is also reached temporarily when one gains happiness by fulfilling a desire. In those happy moments, one is back to oneself with no objectification or with no more longing mind or desiring mind, until another desire props up due to the pressure of vaasanas. In essence, our experiences indicate that advaita is the happy state that one longs for either by fulfilling the desires or by renouncing the desires. Tai. Upanishad, in ananda valli, describes each level of happiness and at each level it says that one can have the same happiness by sublimating the desires at that level- shrotriyasya akaamaya tasya. Sublimation is not suppression of desires but renunciation of them based on clear understanding that happiness comes from within, reflected in the contended mind or a mind free from desires.

Advaita is in spite of dvaita, where it is understood that the dvaita that one sees is only apparent and not real. That is the knowledge. Arjuna might have gained that knowledge but has not retained that knowledge when he sees the viswaruupa Iswara. Retaining or abiding in the knowledge that I am that totality is what is involved in Jnaana nishTa. From Arjuna's initial statements, slokas 1 and 2 of Ch. 11, we understand that he understood the teaching to some extent, since he says his delusion is gone. Yet, that knowledge of oneness is not firmly abiding since he considers the duality that he perceives as Iswara as reality, all though it includes everything but excludes the seer, Arjuna.

The exalted vision that Arjuna sees, a jnaani also sees, while the extended vision that he sees may be only the Siddha purushas can see. The later includes the vision of the past and future and lokas or fields that are beyond human perception.

Arjuna says:

anAdimadhyantamanataVryam

anatabAhum shashisUryanetram |

pasyAmi tvAm dlptahutAshavaktram

svatejasA vishmidam tapantam | |

Oh! Lord! I am seeing the infinite form of yours. I cannot see what is beginning, end or the middle. It is with infinite incredible power with endless shoulders and hands, with the Sun and the moon as your eyes. I see you with effulgent fiery faces illuminating and even scorching the whole universe by your brilliance.

Sun is essential as life giving force on the earth as well as the illuminator of the world. Moon stands as a reflector of the sun also stands for the mind (as per Vedanta moon is the presiding deity of the mind) or that reflects the light of consciousness at both collective level as total mind and at individual level as local mind. Without the reflection of the consciousness by the mind (chidAbhAsa) the life is inexpressible. In essence, the all-pervading pure existence-consciousness brilliantly expresses itself both in the form of living and non-living entities in the universe. Hence the scriptures say – tasya bhAsA sarvam idam vibhAti – By that power and light of illumination the whole universe shines or become visible manifestation, while it is self-illuminating. Lord in the form of Sun is invoked as the illuminator of this whole universe during sandhyaa vandanam. At this stage of description, Arjuna is going through wonderment.

To be continued.

Homage

Samadhi of Swamini Apoorvananda



Swamins, Brahmacharins and Members of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide

Dear All

Hari Om!

Swamini Apoorvananda of Chinmaya Mission Kannur took final refuge at the feet of Pujya Gurudev this afternoon, November 23rd, 2018, at Trivandrum.

Gayathri as she was known, was brought up as a Bala Vihar child. She met Pujya Gurudev, while still at school and joined the Vedanta training course immediately after her graduation. She studied at Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Powai under the tutelage of Pujya Guruji, Swami Tejomayananda and received Sannyasa Diksha from him in 1997.

From 1991, first as Brahmacharni Maitri and later a Sannyasi, Swamini Apoorvananda served the Kannur centre in Kerala, where she spearheaded Mission activities and programmes. Geeta Jnana Yagnas, Study groups and Bala Vihar classes were a regular feature.

In connection with the centenary celebrations of Chinmaya Mission, Swamini Apoorvananda conducted mass Geeta Chanting in the Police Maidan, which inspired over 10,000 people to attend. Of special note are the classes she conducted for the inmates of the Central Jail in Kannur. Her deep commitment to this cause, helped transform several hearts.

Swamini Apoorvananda's deep compassion for humanity and her unswerving devotion to the Guru Parampara will continue to inspire the thousands of lives she impacted.

Our respectful homage to Swamini Apoorvananda.

At His Feet

Swami Swaroopananda

Homage

Smt. Leela Nambiar



Swamins, Brahmacharins and Members of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide

Hari Om!

With regret, we inform you about the passing away of our beloved Nambiar Amma, at age 97, early this morning, Friday November 3rd, 2018. Smt. Leela Nambiar, a pillar of the Mission, was a founder Trustee of Central Chinmaya Mission Trust.

A key figure in all Mission activities, Nambiar Amma helped establish the education movement of Chinmaya Mission, that initially put down roots in Chennai. She was Honorary Treasurer for the Chinmaya Vidyalayas, Chennai for many decades.

Nambiar Amma was the publisher of *Tapovan Prasad*, the international magazine of Chinmaya Mission, for the last fifty years. Periodically she also took on the responsibility of the editor and nurtured the magazine through the years.

Sarveshwara Dhyana Nilayam in Thamaraiykkam, near Chennai, took shape under her careful guidance. Her house was the hub of many mission activities in the seventies and eighties.

Most importantly, she was one of the most dedicated devotees of Pujya Gurudev, Swami Chinmayananda. She served and hosted him in Guru Niketan, her family home, Chennai, from 1963-1993.

Her unwavering faith and surrender to God and Guru, with a Serve All Attitude, has made her unforgettable. She will be greatly missed. With her passing away, a whole era of Chinmaya Mission seems to have receded into the past.

We offer prayers for her peaceful passing to the Lord and for granting strength to the family, in this hour of loss. May she ever remain in His loving grace and care.

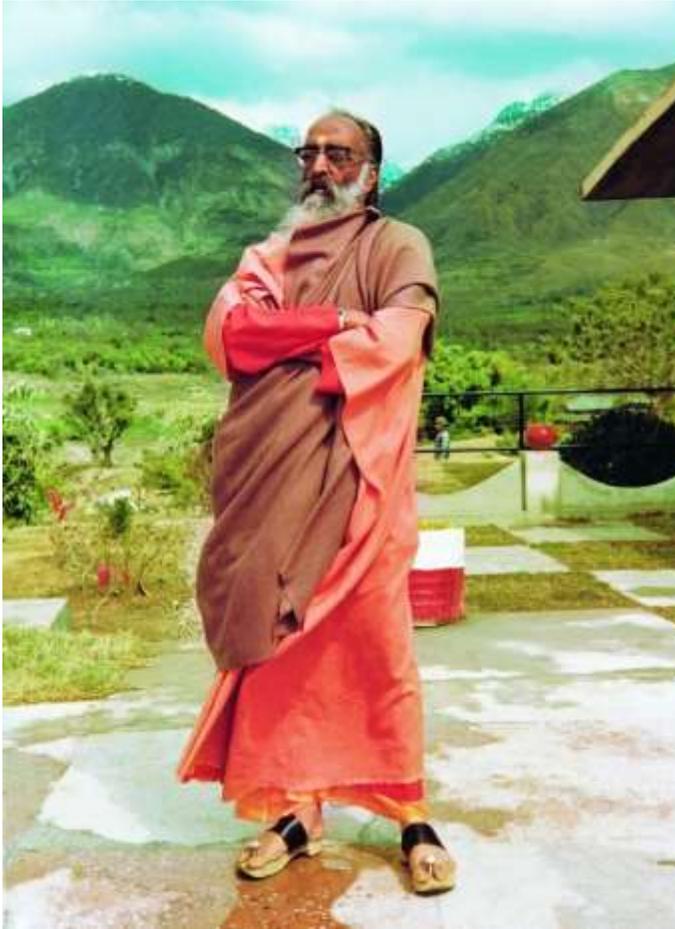
Our respectful shraddhanjali to Amma.

At His Feet

Swami Swaroopananda

Gurudev Uvacha

Inspiring Quotes from Pujya Gurudev Chinmayananda



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

..train your mind! Watch the mind. Try slowly and steadily to arrest, to apprehend, to laugh at, to cajole, to threaten, to plead with, to sooth and comfort - the Mind. This is not possible so long as you are identifying yourself with your mind. A non - co-operation movement practiced against the Mind-tyrant is the only hope of the individual Jiva.

Vitalised by Life, the inert Prakriti becomes dynamised, grows and explodes to express as the spectacular universe..

The lights and beauty of the Altar, the fragrance of the incense, the enchanting music in the hymns and organs employed, the clean cool atmosphere, and the lingering taste of the theertham..... they compel the attention of all sense-organs and arrest them at the sacred Altar.

The words of the chants and hymns, the prayers, the attitude of surrender and faith bring into the mind of the worshipper a world of Love for the Lord----BHAKTI.

Let the light of knowledge kindle the fire of your actions.