

₹ 25/-

Inner Flame

Volume IX

Issue 5

JUNE - JULY 2018



Fowai Publications

8/53, Verma Nagar, Andheri (E), Mumbai - 400 069

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Hari Om.

Here, we are bringing you another bouquet of uplifting thoughts and insights to motivate you during the arduous climb that is the pilgrim's progress. The journey is rendered all the more difficult because the struggle is often against our own ego. All the known methods fail in this uncharted territory and you may need to be ready to take the leap of faith into the valley of limitless depth.

The featured article is about the life of a celebrated master, in fact, the author of that most celebrated classic on these mysterious beings of the East - "The Autobiography of a Yogi". Paramahansa Yogānanda had a profound impact on some of the modern achievers from the Western World. It is said that the famous entrepreneur Steve Jobs arranged a 'final gift' to all those who attended his Memorial Service following his death – a copy of this life-changing book. You will find a detailed treatment of what constitutes 'Kriyā Yoga', the supreme path propagated by Paramahansa Yogānanda here.

In the series 'Perceiving Phoenix', Swāmi Chidānandaji advocates a 'Two-pronged approach' of *swādhyāya* and *tapah* for achieving progress on the spiritual path. One without the other leads to imbalance leading to a life that goes astray.

Our series on Dwādasha Jyotirlingas covers two famous temples – Bhimā Shankara and Vaidyanātha. Bhimā Shankara is one of those unique centers of pilgrimage that are located in a spot of great natural beauty.

In our series on the great Rishis of India, that temperamental sage Maharshi Durvāsā whose every 'angry curse' literally gives an earthshaking twist to the proverbial 'tale' is the centre of attention. What is remarkable is that all these acts finally bring about happy tidings to the affairs of the world and this indicates that the mind of a great sage becomes truly the instrument for the divine play.

There is a short report on the Shrirampur retreat conducted by FOWAI FORUM recently in the serenely picturesque surroundings.

We have also included an inspirational poem penned by the much-loved poet-politician, former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajapayee who passed away recently after a glorious life dedicated to the service of the motherland. We could not find a worthy translation of this immortal garland written as an ode to the ideal of 'Sanātan Dharma'.

We regret the delay in the publishing of this June-July issue.

For Swāmi Chidānanda
Cdr HC Guruprasad (IN, Retd)
25 August 2018



Volume IX Issue 5 June - July 18

Editor

Swāmi Chidānanda

Published and Printed by:

Brni.Vibha Chaitanya

on behalf of

Fowai Forum® (Trust)

From: 8/53, Verma Nagar,

Azad Road, Andheri (E),

Mumbai - 400 069. India

Owned By:

Swāmi Chidānanda

Printing Press:

Color Print,

Byculla Service Industry,

Byculla (E), Mumbai - 400 027.

SUBSCRIPTION

Annual Rs. 130 (for a year, 6 issues)

Two Years Rs. 250 (for 2 years, 12 issues)

Three Years Rs. 360 (for 3 years, 18 issues)

Life Rs. 1100 (for 10 years, 60 issues)

(cheque in favor of FOWAI FORUM-1)

WE ARE LISTENING

Help us improve Inner Flame. We welcome your feedback, suggestions and ideas on layout, coverpage, content and more.

Please email us at :
innerflame@fowai.org

Cover design of this issue: Retreat Shrirampur

FEATURED

Parmahamsa Yogānanda

- Compiled by Dakshu Mansukhani 1

PERCEIVING PHOENIX

Tapah And Swādhyāya

The Two Tips Of The Anchor Of Spiritual Learning

- Swāmi Chidānanda 8

STORY TEACHES

A Live Story

..... 11

PLACES THAT BECKON

Dvādasha Jyotirlinga

- Compiled by Ratna Vishwanath 13

RISHIS OF INDIA

Maharshi Durvāsā

The Sage Known for His Anger

- Compiled by Vijayalakshmi Menon 17

GUEST CORNER

Why are you so worried?

- Dr Brian L Weiss M.D. 23

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM UPANISHADS?

Do You Want To Be More Effective?

- Swāmi Chidānanda 24

RETREAT

Retreat at Shrirampur 06-12 July 2018:

- Padma Rallabhandy 25

Our Visit To The Health Centre At Shrirampur

- Parvathy Jeevan 26

RHYTHMS FOR THE SOUL

My Introduction (Merā Parichaya)

हिन्दू तन-मन, हिन्दू जीवन, रग-रग हिन्दू मेरा परिचय!

- Late Shri A B Vajpayee 27

ETERNAL VIBRATIONS

Four Tips On Success

- Compiled by Dakshu Mansukhani

“**Kriyā Yoga** is the jet airplane route to God.”

- Paramhansa Yogānanda,
Autobiography of a Yogi

Lineage of the Masters

From time immemorial, this beautiful, familiar part of creation called Earth has been blessed with the birth of great spiritual masters; many, if not most, of these teachers have taken birth in this ancient land of Bhārata called India, where the very elements seem to vibrate with spiritual truths. However, bearing in mind the all-pervading, limitless source of this essential knowledge, the nature of the teachings of the Masters is universally applicable; inevitably, it had to cover the earth and as it did, it reached the newer Western world.

The first acknowledged and well-known Master to carry the wealth of spiritual teachings across the seas was Swāmi Vivekānanda, the direct and perhaps most favoured disciple of Parmahansa Rāmakrishna (1836-1886). Vivekānanda (1863-1902), who later set up the Rāmakrishna Mission, was just 30 years old when he reached Chicago in 1893. He astounded his western audiences by addressing them as “Brothers and Sisters of America”, urging them to “Arise, Awake and stop not till the goal is reached” as his discourses went on to deepen western metaphysical thought with the truths



declared in the Vedānta. That same year, 1893, saw the birth, in India, of yet another Master who was destined to introduce the high meditative techniques through which man could attain the goal that Vivekānanda had set before those ready and hungry for the enduring answers.

But, long, long before all this, the master ordained to carry further the spread of the essential knowledge was born, there was a saint named Bābāji who lived in the Himalayas. One day, Jesus appeared to him, and told him that although Jesus' followers still did good works, they had forgotten how to commune with him inwardly in meditation. He told Bābāji to send someone to the West to remind his people that the goal of life is to become one with God through inner communion. Having been sown in the mind of Mahāvītar Bābāji way back in the mist of time, the seed matured further in the mind of his disciple Lahiri Mahāsaya (1828-1895), a family man and accountant by day, a great guru to his disciples by night. Lahiri Mahāsaya openly revived the secret, ancient meditative technique of Kriyā Yoga, revealed to him by Mahāvītar Bābāji. One of his sincere and outstanding disciples, Sri Yuktेशwara went further, making it available to any of those who showed a sincere commitment. One

such ardent devotee was Parmahansa Yogānanda, famous in the twentieth century as the great proponent, practitioner and celebrated Master Teacher of Kriyā Yoga in the United States of America where the first “temple” of the Self Realization Foundation (SRF) was formally opened on Sunset Blvd., in Hollywood in 1942. In India he founded the Yogoda Society in 1917 which has its headquarters in Ranchi.

Meeting the Guru

Parmahansa Yogānanda was born in 1893 in Gorakhpur, India. Named Mukunda Lāl Ghosh, he was the fourth of eight children. His mother passed away when he was about 11 years old, and soon after he had a vision of Divine Mother, who said, “It is I who has watched over thee, life after life, in the tenderness of many mothers!” (Divine Mother remained the center of Yogānanda’s devotion for the remainder of his life). As he was growing up, Yogānanda sometimes attempted to run away to the Himalayas to devote himself completely to God. He finally compromised with his family and moved into an ashram. On one trip to the market with another monk from the ashram, Yogānanda saw a man with a powerful aura around him. He turned to walk away, but found that his feet couldn’t move. He turned back to look at the man, and suddenly realized that the man was his guru. He fell at his feet and expressed his love and gratitude. Mukunda Lāl Ghosh had come to the most important milestone in his life when he met Swāmi Sri Yukteshwara Giri.

Moving to the West

After living with his guru for a while, and being given the name Swāmi Yogānanda, he

decided to start a school where young boys could receive a well-rounded education. Yogānanda’s educational system would include a spiritual and moral education, as well as a secular one. It grew quickly and soon moved to a nice location in Ranchi given to him by a Mahārāja. One day, while Yogānanda was at the school, he had a vision of a large crowd of Americans. His guru had previously hinted that he was destined to go to America, and now he knew



he had reached yet another milestone: it was time to fulfill the command of the divine voice heard by Mahāvatār Bābāji. He decided to leave the very next day.

When he arrived in Boston in 1920, he spoke at the International Congress for Religious Liberals, and soon had many followers. He chose those who would become his disciples by praying to Divine Mother and only picking those who She told him to. In 1924, he began a tour of lectures across the country, which he called his “spiritual campaigns”. In 1925, he founded a spiritual organization called Self-Realization Fellowship (SRF) and bought a property in Los Angeles to be his first center. In later years, he also started several other centers. Today, there are many around the world.

Return to India

In 1935, Yogānanda went back to India for a visit, bringing a few disciples with him. While he was there, Sri Yukteshwara gave him the title of Parmahansa, meaning that he has attained full self-realization. Seeing that Yogānanda had become a great master, Sri Yukteshwara said that his work was complete, and he left his body. Soon after Sri Yukteshwara's passing, he appeared to Yogānanda and described to him the nature of the astral universe, which is where souls go when bodies die (This enlightening conversation can be found in the Yogānanda's *Autobiography of a Yogi*, in a chapter called "The Resurrection of Sri Yukteswara").

Leaving the mortal coil

In the later years of his life, Yogānanda spent more time in seclusion, rather than in traveling and giving lectures. During this time, he wrote many books and articles. In 1946, Paramhansa Yogānanda wrote his best-selling spiritual classic, *Autobiography of a Yogi*. Yogānanda left his body on March 7, 1952, while giving a lecture at the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles, California. He had just finished reciting a poem he had written, called "My India" which can be found in the book, 'Whispers from Eternity'. The Self-Realization Fellowship received a letter from the funeral home where Yogānanda's body was being kept. They said that, although a month had passed, Yogānanda's body was still in perfect condition. They had never seen anything like it before and were amazed. Perhaps some of the divine nature that Yogānanda had possessed still lingered in his body.

The Royal Path

Paramahansa Yogānanda considered

Kriyā Yoga as being the "Royal Path", the "jet airplane to God". Though a new feature in the dominant Christian thought in the United States of America, the science of Kriyā Yoga had been preserved for mankind in the ancient yet ever-new Bhagavad Geetā. Yogānanda told his listeners that this Kriyā Yoga had been given by God to Manu, the original Adam, and through him to Janaka and other royal sages. The science became lost in the materialistic ages and was revived again in the nineteenth century by Mahāvtar Bābāji, guru of Lahiri Mahāsaya. In contradiction to other teachings, Kriyā Yoga not only points out a universal highway of ascending the soul to the Spirit, but gives mankind a daily usable technique through whose practice the devotee, with the help of a guru, may re-enter the kingdom of God. He downplayed theoretical teaching, saying that it led only to endless teaching. Emphasizing the royal path, he said that any true practitioner of Kriyā Yoga finds it to be the shortest way and quickest conveyance to the kingdom of Spirit by retraining the life force to remember that it lives only by the cosmic source.

Controlling the life force

"*Prānāyāma*, or Kriyā Yoga, signifies one thing-controlling the life force in the body by conscious will so that it does not depend on oxygen, sunshine, solids, and liquids but on the inner source of cosmic life. Kriyā Yoga *prānāyāma* withdraws life force from the activities of the heart and the body cells-by rendering those activities unnecessary-and unites that bodily *prāna* with the cosmic life force; man's slavish dependence on breath is thus realized to be delusory. When the yogi-expert in *prānāyāma* can thus disengage at will the life force from its

bondage to oxygen and so on, he can immortalize it by uniting it with the Cosmic Life.”

“...Methods of spiritual freedom are various, but the actual attainment of liberation by ascent through the spine is universal. Whether through the intense devotion and prayer of the *bhakta*, or the pure discrimination of the *jnāni*, or the non-attached selfless actions of the *karma yogi*, the consciousness purified and concentrated thereby still makes its final ascent to God through the subtle spinal channels through which it descended into flesh. The principles of Kriyā Yoga, therefore, are not the formula of a sectarian rite, but a science through the application of which the individual may realize how his soul descended into the body and became identified with the senses, and how that soul



may be withdrawn from the senses and reunited with Spirit by a scientific method of meditation. This route of descent and ascension is the one universal path that every soul must travel.

“Kriyā Yoga teaches first to withdraw the mind from sensory objects by self-control, and then scientifically to disconnect the mind and intelligence (*manas and buddhi*) from

the senses by switching off the life force from the five sense channels, and then to take the ego, mind, and intellect through the five astral centers in the spine, through the sixth center (the medulla, which is magnetically connected with the spiritual eye in the middle of the forehead), and finally into the seventh center of omniscience in the middle of the cerebrum. The Kriyā Yogi there attains perception of his self as soul, and finds his ego, intellect, and mind to be dissolved in soul ecstasy. He then learns how to take his soul from the prisons of the physical, astral, and causal bodies, and to reunite the soul with Spirit.” “It requires intricate scientific explanation to interpret Kriyā Yoga, but the art itself is very simple.”

For the practice of Kriyā Yoga, Parmahansa Yogānanda relies not only on the precise guidelines given by Sage Patanjali in the *Yoga Sutras* but also on “India’s greatest prophet”, Sri Krishna, who also spoke about *prānāyāma* in certain verses of the Bhagavad Geetā. For example:

अपाने जुहति प्राणं प्राणेऽपानं तथापरे ।
प्राणापानगती रुद्ध्वा प्राणायामपरायणाः॥ ४:२९ ॥

“Offering the inhaling breath into the exhaling breath and offering the exhaling breath into the inhaling breath, the yogi neutralizes both breaths; thus he releases *prāna* from the heart and brings life force under his control.”

(Yogānanda’s interpretation is:) “The yogi arrests decay in the body by securing an additional supply of *prāna* (life force) through quieting the action of the lungs and heart; he also arrests mutations of growth in the body by control of *apāna* (eliminating current). Thus neutralizing decay and growth, the yogi learns life-force control.”

Another Geetā shloka which he quotes is:
स्पर्शान्कृत्वा बहिर्बाह्यांश्चक्षुश्चैवान्तरे भ्रुवोः।
प्राणापानौ समौ कृत्वा नासाभ्यन्तरचारिणौ ॥५:२७॥
यतेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिर्मुनिर्मोक्षपरायणः।
विगतेच्छाभयक्रोधो यः सदा मुक्त एव सः ॥५:२८॥

"That meditation-expert (muni) becomes eternally free who, seeking the Supreme Goal, is able to withdraw from external phenomena by fixing his gaze within the mid-spot of the eyebrows and by neutralizing the even currents of prāna and apāna [that flow] within the nostrils and lungs; and to control his sensory mind and intellect; and to banish desire, fear, and anger."

Explaining *prānāyāma* further, Yogānanda says: "Kriyā Yoga is a simple, psychophysiological method by which human blood is de-carbonated and recharged with oxygen. The atoms of this extra oxygen are transmuted into life current to rejuvenate the brain and spinal centers. By stopping the accumulation of venous blood, the yogi is able to lessen or prevent the decay of tissues. The advanced yogi transmutes his cells into energy. Elijah, Jesus, Kabir, and other prophets were past masters in the use of Kriyā or a similar technique, by which they caused their bodies to materialize and dematerialize at will."

Referring to Patanjali in the *Yoga Sutra*, Yogānanda writes: "Patanjali speaks of God as the actual Cosmic Sound of *aum* that is heard in meditation. *aum* is the Creative Word, the whirl of the Vibratory Motor, the witness of Divine Presence. Even the beginner in yoga may soon hear the wondrous sound of *aum*. Through this blissful spiritual encouragement, he becomes convinced that he is in communion

with supernal realms. Patanjali refers a second time to the Kriyā technique or life-force control thus: "*Liberation can be attained by that prānāyāma which is accomplished by disjoining the course of inspiration and expiration.*" (*Yoga Sutras* II: 49)

Echoing his Guru Sri Yuktेश्वara, Yogānanda encourages his students: "Kriyā Yoga is an instrument through which human evolution can be quickened," "The ancient yogis discovered that the secret of cosmic consciousness is intimately linked with breath mastery. This is India's unique and deathless contribution to the world's treasury of knowledge. The life force, which is ordinarily absorbed in maintaining heart action, must be freed for higher activities by a method of calming and stilling the ceaseless demands of the breath." The Kriyā Yogi mentally directs his life energy to revolve, upward and downward, around the six spinal centers (medullary, cervical, dorsal, lumbar, sacral, and coccygeal plexuses), which correspond to the twelve astral signs of the zodiac, the symbolic Cosmic Man. One-half minute of revolution of energy around the sensitive spinal cord of man effects subtle progress in his evolution; that half-minute of Kriyā equals one year of natural spiritual unfoldment. One thousand Kriyā-s practiced in eight and a half hours gives the yogi, in one day, the equivalent of one thousand years of natural evolution: 365,000 years of evolution in one year. In three years, a Kriyā Yogi can thus accomplish by intelligent self-effort the same result that Nature brings to pass in a million years. The Kriyā shortcut, of course, can be taken only by deeply developed yogis. With the guidance of a guru, such yogis have carefully prepared their body and

brain to withstand the power generated by intensive practice. The body of the average man is like a fifty-watt lamp, which cannot accommodate the billion watts of power roused by an excessive practice of Kriyā. Through gradual and regular increase of the simple and fool-proof methods of Kriyā, man's body becomes astrally transformed day by day, and is finally fitted to express the infinite potentials of cosmic energy, which constitutes the first materially active expression of Spirit. Referring to the sure and methodical efficacy of yoga, Krishna praises the technological yogi in the following words:

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि

मतोऽधिकः।

कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन॥६:४६।

"The yogi is greater than body-disciplining ascetics, greater even than the followers of the path of wisdom (*Jnāna Yoga*), or of the path of action (*Karma Yoga*); be thou, O disciple Arjuna, a *yogi*!"

Precautions to be observed by beginners

He warns the beginner-practitioner: "...the beginner should not expect to jump [to being] weightless tomorrow! Modern man is accustomed to getting results quickly; his industry and technology manufactures products so rapidly that he thinks there should be a convenience package of concise spiritual progress as well. A presumption of instant spiritual achievement is perhaps more than a bit audacious considering the innumerable lifetimes already spent in making oneself an unspiritual being. Nevertheless, the Kriyā Yoga science and art of meditation are not drudgery, because gradual transforming results are felt from the

very beginning.

Warning the devotees against becoming overly fond of theoretical knowledge, which often produces a conviction that one knows the truth when he actually does not know it, he says, "Only by communing with God, the 'Library of All Knowledge,' may one know all truths in their exactitude, without wasting time in the theoretical understanding and misunderstanding of scriptures. That is why a wide gulf may exist between scripture readers and men of realization who are themselves embodiments of scriptural truths". Yoga through Karma too does not play a significant role in his scheme of the ascension to God-Communion. "The yogi is also deemed greater than the man of action. The missionary, the social worker, the man of goodwill who practices the "golden rule" toward others, the teacher who tries to instruct others in the technique of God-communion [they] all, no doubt, perform good actions. But unless they also devote themselves to the inner science by which they can know God through their own direct experience, they will remain without divine realization. That is why the *yogi* meditates and concentrates on the attainment of ecstasy. Until he achieves that state of inner attunement with God, he performs his duties but does not divert himself with many outward activities at the cost of forgetting the Lord. The yogi teaches and serves others in the highest way-by his inspiring life; example ever speaks louder than words. Reform thyself and thou wilt reform thousands."

A Mission to unite East & West

Yogānanda's mission continues even now, both at home in India and in his adopted country USA through the Yogodā Society of India founded in 1917 and the Self-

Realization Fellowship in the USA in 1920. It is now legally incorporated world-wide, as a non-profit religious organization to serve as Yogānanda's instrument for the preservation and worldwide dissemination of his writings and teachings, including Kriyā Yoga.

The aims and ideals of the Yogodā Satsanga Society (YSS) centers are, "to disseminate among the nations a knowledge of definite scientific techniques for attaining direct personal experience of God"; "to reveal the complete harmony and basic oneness of original Yoga as taught by Bhagavān Krishna and original Christianity as taught by Jesus Christ; and to show that these principles of truth are the common scientific foundation of all true religions"; "to liberate man from his threefold suffering: physical disease, mental disharmonies, and spiritual ignorance" and "to unite science and religion through realization of the unity of their underlying principles", to name but a few.

However, to get an accurate overall view of Parmahansa Yogānanda's teachings, one must take into account his views on the underlying unity of all religions. In his remarkable book "*The Yoga of Jesus: Understanding the hidden teachings of the Gospels*", Yogānanda confirms that Jesus, like the ancient sages and masters of the East, not only knew Yoga but taught this universal science of God-realization to his closest disciples. In *The Second Coming of Christ: The Resurrection of the Christ Within*

You, transcending centuries of dogma and misunderstanding that have obscured the original teachings of Jesus, Yogānanda shows that he, Jesus, in fact taught a unifying path by which seekers of all faiths can enter the kingdom of God.

But no account of Parmahansa Yogānanda would be complete without a specific mention of his book entitled "*Autobiography of a Yogi*". It is the first-hand account of the life experiences of Paramhansa Yogānanda; known as one of the best-selling spiritual classics of all time, it has been and is still read by millions of people all over the world, and recognized universally by varying religious traditions as a beautiful depiction of the spiritual path. It is a treasured collection of stories, humor, and practical and scientific explanations of the great yoga wisdom of the East. Among other books that he authored are "The Divine Romance" and "Journey to Self-Realization".

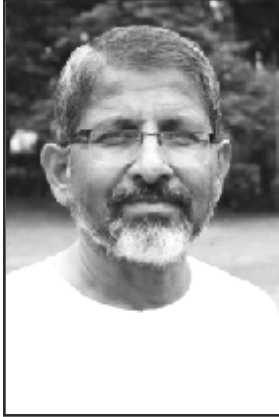
Yet Parmahansa Yogānanda himself sums up his mission very simply with a prayer:

"May Thy Love shine forever on the sanctuary of my devotion. And may I be able to awaken Thy love in all hearts."

<http://yogananda.com.au/gita/gita0527k2.html>
yogananda.com.au/yogananda_life1.html#early



- Swāmi Chidānanda



Order in daily life (*tapah*) and an exploring intellect that constantly plumbs new depths of scriptural understanding (*swādhyāya*) are the two tips of the anchor, which mark both the teachers and the learners, especially in the

spiritual field. The former without the latter can lead us to dogmatism characterized by rigidity, narrow-mindedness and judgmentalism. The latter without the former can make us sink in hypocrisy or immoral life.

Learning is a fascinating journey



“These qualities can be seen in those born with divine qualities,” says¹ Lord Shri Krishna, “Fearlessness, pure-heartedness, being ever engaged in *study and application...*” The divine charioteer mentions 26 qualities in the context, of which *study and application* are of special

relevance here. Study (*jnāna*, *swādhyāya*) is where we must incessantly explore knowledge, gain insights and get clearer about the nuances of right living. All of us must study. Those who know little and those who know a lot - everyone should keep studying, enquiring. It is not to be looked upon as a burden; it is not! It is, on the contrary, a fascinating journey of endless discoveries. “Allowing no chance for any worldly desire, we must engage in contemplation on the Vedānta - till falling asleep (every night), and till falling dead (at the end of this life),” goes² an exhortation in one of the *smritis*.

Lest this (acquisition of knowledge) be used for lecturing only, there comes the emphasis on application (*yoga*, *tapah*). On the one hand, we are advised to keep sharing our knowledge through holding discussions, classes or any form of exchange of views. Calling it symbolically a discourse (*pravachana*), an Upanishad mantra³ asks us never to give up sharing. On the other hand, living our cherished values is emphasized everywhere. The much-quoted (second half of the) *shloka*⁴ in Mahā-Bhārata says *dharma* stands on right conduct / living (*āchāra*), and our life (well-being) reaches great heights with (increase of) *dharma* only!

The 7th among the *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen Covey happens to be *Sharpen the Saw*⁵. Under this, the famed author writes about the Upward Spiral, which consists of - Learn, Commit and Do. He writes:

Once we are self-aware, we must choose purposes and principles to live by. Moving along the upward spiral requires us to learn, commit and do on increasingly higher planes. We deceive ourselves if we think that anyone of these is sufficient.

When *swādhyāya* and *tapah* go hand in hand, we move along the upward spiral. If one of them breaks down, we either become stagnant or, what is worse, we move along the downward spiral!

Start small, grow big

I am never tired of quoting Eknāth Easwaran⁶ who said, "Small victories lead to big victories." All wise teachers tell us not to worry about our yesterdays but to start a new page (of the book of our life) today. There are things we need to learn in the domain of professional skills, and then there are things we need to learn in the context of our inner life. The latter again is in two areas: private and public. "Private victory leads to public victory," Covey used to say. Both the areas are important.

By private life is meant those hours every day when nobody is watching us. Our conscience, of course, never sleeps. So it is all about *being true to oneself*. If we do things in such a way that it is alright if people come to know it too, then there is private integrity. If we do things in ways that, God forbid, people would not come to know, there is a big problem in *āchāra*, *tapah* or application. Various kinds of hypocrisy then arise. People of such double standards are called *mithyāchāras* by Lord Shri Krishna in the Geetā (3.6).

By public life is meant those hours where we are interacting with people. We must treat people in just and fair ways. We should not



be harsh with them as far as possible. We must improve our *soft skills* continually. A husband was known for impulsive anger. One evening when he came home, his wife gave him a cup of tea. One sip, and he burst out, "Again you did not put sugar!" His wife, though embarrassed, said softly, "Oh, you just need to stir the tea; there is sugar; use the spoon please." He could have, instead of impulsively reacting, asked her with a smile, "So... did you again forget sugar?" or could have gently asked for sugar, "Ah, can I get some sugar?" All of us can *change*, and we must *change for better*.

Let our study make us broadminded

We must study not only the holy books of our religion in great detail but also - briefly - scriptures of world religions. There are various schools of thought, for that matter, within our own religion too. Some of us are much inspired by and are much exposed to the *advaita* school of Vedānta, which is fine. We would do well however to study an outline of the *visistha-advaita* and the *dvaita* schools too, which are also great *darshanas* (visions or systems of revelations). Similarly, it is of value to be aware of the best of Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Jainism etc. In today's world of increased plurality, especially in big cities and during travel, the more people are aware of the good aspects

of others' beliefs and ways of living, greater will be peace and harmony in the world.

We may adopt a system that appeals to us the most but avoid being opinionated about (or against) other systems in the society. Many a time, it is a case of ignorance that makes us believe some other culture, religion or language is inferior or at fault. Good and bad people are in every community. We are likely to be prejudiced against a community if we have met (or read about) some of its bad members. If only we study a little more and travel to places where large numbers of that community live, we will surely come to know or meet gems of people there too. Weaknesses and shortcomings are everywhere; so are strengths and noble features. As our outlook broadens, we will realize the old saying⁷: *the earth (the world) is one family*.

=

Notes:

1. | *abhayam sattva-samshuddhih, jnāna-yoga-vyavasthitih..* | Geetā 16.1

2. | *dadyāt-nāvasaram kinchit-kāmādeenām manāg-api, āsupter-āmriteh kālam nayed vedānta-chintayā* |
3. *swādhyāya-pravachanābhyām na pramaditavyam* - Taittiriya Upanishad 1.19
4. | *āchāra-prabhavo dharmah, dharmād āyur-vivardhate* | Mahābhārata 13.107.147
5. Improving all other tools or getting better in all other good habits is implied by 'sharpen the saw,' based on the analogy of cutting a tree; if a man refuses to sharpen his saw, he will lose his efficiency. Thus the 7th habit requires that we move to higher planes with regard to the 6 other habits. Read Covey's book – *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. (First published in 1989, by Free Press)
6. See the website easwaran.org |
7. *vasudhā eva kutumbakam* |



SNIPPETS OF WISDOM

PRACTISE THE PAUSE

Pause before judging. Pause before assuming. Pause before accusing.
Pause whenever you are about to react harshly and you will avoid
doing and saying things you will later regret.

Lori Deschene



A student, having completed his studies and desirous of getting a job, attended an interview at a large company. He easily cleared the initial round of interviews. Now, the final interview was to be taken by a director of the company. The director was the final authority who would decide whether or not he would be getting the job.

The director perused the CV of the student and found that he had been outstanding in his studies as well as in extracurricular activities.

The director - "Did you get any scholarship during your studies?"

The student - "No, Sir."

The director - "That means your father was bearing all the expenses of your studies."

The student - "Yes, Sir."

The director - "What is your father's profession?"

The student - "Sir, he is a washerman...he washes other people's clothes for a living."

After hearing this, the director asked the student to show him his hands. The student's hands were delicate and soft, like silk.

The director - "Did you ever help your father in washing clothes?"

The student - "No, sir, my father always wanted me to study and read as many books as possible... and yes, my father washes clothes very efficiently..."

The director - "May I request you to do a task?"

The student - "Yes, Sir, please tell me what it is."

The director - "After going home today, wash your father's hands. Thereafter, please come back here tomorrow morning and meet me."

The student felt very happy on hearing this. He felt he was assured of getting the job as the director had called him again the next morning.

The student returned home and happily reported everything to his father. He then asked his father to show him his hands.

The father was a little puzzled. However, respecting his son's desire, he placed his own hands in his son's hands.

The son slowly started washing his father's hands. After a little while, he started crying profusely as he continued to wash his father's hands.

The father's hands were as hard as emery paper and the skin had cuts all over. Even as he poured water on the bruises, he could vividly see the pain on his father's face. For the first time in his life, he realised that these were the hands that washed other people's clothes daily, in order to provide him with good food and clothing and arrange for his school-fees. Every blister on his father's hand was, as though, a proof of his successive academic achievements.

After washing his father's hands, in the wave of emotion that swept him, he also washed all the remaining clothes for that day. His father did try to stop him but he kept on washing the clothes, one by one. The father and son then sat and talked late into the night.

The following morning, the student was back at the director's office. Sitting face-to-face with the director, the student had tears in his eyes.

The director- "So, how was it at home yesterday evening? Would you like to share your experience with me?"

The student- "Yes, Sir. Yesterday I truly experienced what life really is.

Firstly, I learnt what encouragement is all about. But for my father and his support, I could not have studied this much.

Secondly, as I helped my father, I learnt that any work is hard and difficult to do.

Thirdly, I deeply experienced the importance of human relationships."

The director- "This is all that I would want to see in my manager. I would like to offer this job only to such a person who appreciates the help received from others and understands the difficulties they face while carrying out the work....a person whose goal

in life is not just to make money at any cost. Congratulations, you deserve this job."

All of us give our children the best of everything...a big house, a huge television, the latest mobile phones and computers, etc. At the same time, we would do well to let them experience what it feels like to mow the lawn. Let them experience what it means to work with one's own hands.

From time to time, let them also help in doing the dishes. Not because you cannot afford a maid, but so as to give them a realistic perspective of life.

You try to make them understand that no matter how rich their father is, his wealth cannot prevent the greying of his hair.

It is of the utmost importance that children should learn the value of hard work and the dignity of labour. Good teamwork should be inculcated in them so as to instil in them a sense of workmanship.

That is the highest learning.



Once you know with absolute certainty that nothing can trouble you but your own imagination, you come to disregard your desires and fears, concepts and ideas and live by Truth alone.

Sri Nisargadutta Maharaj



- Compiled by Ratna Vishwanath

(Continued From Last Issue)

5. Vaidyanātha Jyotirlinga

There are two temples, one in the state of Jharkhand and the other in the state of Maharashtra, each of which is considered to be the Vaidyanātha *jyotirlinga* temple.

Baidyanātha Dham, Deogarh, Jharkhand



Vaidyanāth Temple, also known as Vajināth or Baidyanāth is located at Deogarh (100 km South-East of Keeul, which falls on the rail route from Patna to Kolkata) in the Santal Parganas region of Jharkhand.

This is one of the highly revered Jyotirlinga-s and it is believed that sincere worship at this shrine relieves a person from all his worries and miseries. People believe that one attains *moksha* or salvation by worshipping this Jyotirlinga. There is also a popular belief that offering prayers in this temple ensures a healthy and prosperous life.

According to a famous legend, the demon-king Rāvana meditated on Lord



Shiva and asked him to come over to Sri Lankā and make it invincible. Rāvana tried to take Mount Kailāsh with him but Lord Shiva crushed it. But as a result of Rāvana's penance, he was given one of the *jyotirlinga*-s to take to Sri Lanka on the condition that if it was placed on the ground, it would remain rooted to that spot till eternity.

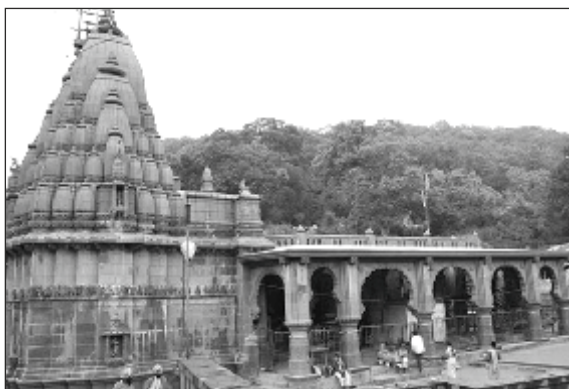
While transporting it to Sri Lankā, Lord Varuna entered Rāvana's body and Rāvana felt an urgent need to relieve himself. Lord Vishnu came down in the form of a lad and offered to hold the lingam in the meantime. However, Vishnu placed the lingam on the ground and it got rooted to the spot. As a form of penance, Rāvana cut off nine of his heads. Shiva revived him and joined the heads to the body, like a *vaidya*. As Lord Shiva acted as a doctor, he is referred to as *vaidya* (doctor). From this aspect of Shiva, the temple derives its name.

The temple is believed to have been built by Vishwakarma, the architect of the gods. Baidyanāth Dhām temple is lotus-shaped and is 72-feet-tall. Both the ancient and

modern styles of architecture are seen in the temple. The image of Lord Baidyanāth faces the East. The temple-complex also houses 12 other shrines of various gods and goddesses, including those of Pārvathi, Kāli, Jagatjanani, Kālabhairava and Lakshminārāyana. Huge red sacred threads are used to join the Pārvathi temple with the main temple, thus symbolizing the unity of Shiva and Shakti.

The main temple is said to be beyond historical dates and is believed to have been visited since the age of Lord Rāma. The *shikhara* contains three pitcher-shaped gold vessels that are compactly set; these were donated by Mahārājā Puraṇ Singh of Gidhaur. Also, there is a '*panchashula*' (five tridents), which is rare. In the inner top, there is an eight-petaled lotus jewel (*chandrakānta mani*).

The lingam is of a cylindrical form, about 5 inches in diameter and projects about 4 inches from the centre of a large slab of basalt. It is not possible to ascertain how much of the lingam is buried. The top of the lingam is broken and has an uneven surface.



There are different porches in the temple. One porch leads to the cell where the lingam is fixed. The second porch is in front with a row of pillars spanned by blocks of basalt and

on the right side, there is a sandstone image of a bull.

There are bells fixed in the ceiling and pilgrims are supposed to pull the bell-ropes to announce their approach. To the east of the northern verandah of the temple there is a large vat into which flows the water and milk offered as ablution. Every monsoon, in the sacred month of Shrāvanā, countless devotees undertake a rigorous 100 km-pilgrimage on foot from Ajgaibināth (Sultanganj) to offer holy water to Bābā Baidyanātha. The pilgrimage is deemed complete with homage paid at Basukinātha, almost 43 kms from Deoghar. As a tradition, devotees carry '*kanwars*' on their shoulders and complete their travel here.

Vaidyanātha Temple, Parli, Maharashtra



This temple is believed to have been rebuilt by Rāni Ahilyā Bai in 1776 on the slopes of the mountain range – Meru or Nāganārāyana. The village of Parli is very ancient and is also known by other names – Kantipur, Madhyarekha Vijayanti or Jayanti. Parli is not only a pilgrimage place for devotees of Lord Shiva, but also for devotees of Lord Vishnu due to the presence of Harihar Teerth from where water is brought every day to worship Lord Shiva in the Vaidyanātha Temple.



The sacred Shiva-linga existing here is decorated with precious gems. Legend has it that, when the gods and demons were churning the ocean for the Divine Nectar/*amrita*, fourteen gems emerged including *amrita* and *dhanavantari*. And just as the demons were about to grab the *amrita*, Lord Vishnu managed to hide both *dhanavantari* and *amrita* inside a Shivalinga. When the demons tried to break the *linga*, a bright light emanated from it which scared the demons, who then fled. Since then, this place came to be known as *Vaijyanthi*. and the temple as *Parli Vaidyanātha*.

The temple is built on a hill using stones and is at a height of 75-80 feet from ground-level. The main entrance is from the east through a magnificent brass-plated door and a wide staircase. Surrounded by four strong walls, the temple consists of corridors and a courtyard. The main gate of the temple is also called "*Mahādwāra*"; it has a minaret nearby called a *gawāksha* (window). There are doors in the southern and northern direction. At the entrance, one can see a huge pillarless hall, fully made from *Sāgwān* wood. The *sabhāmandapa* and the *garbhagriha* (sanctum-sanctorum) are on the same level.

Celebrations take place in *Parli* during

the festivals of *Mahāshivarātri*, *Vaikuntha Ekādashi* and *Vijayādashami*; pilgrims from across the country gather here in large numbers to take part in these celebrations. The famous tale of *Satyavān* and *Sāvitrī* is also believed to have happened here.

6. **Bhimāshankara Jyotirlinga**

The *Bhimāshankara jyotirlinga* temple is located in a small village called *Bhorgiri* amidst the *Sahyādri Hills*, 50 km North-West of *Khed*, near *Pune*, *Maharashtra*. It lies on the banks of the *Bhimā River* which has its source in this region. This temple can certainly be termed as a ***Pilgrim's Paradise***. The dense forests surrounding the high ranges also play an abode to some rare species of flora and fauna. Situated at the extreme end of the *Sahyādri Ranges*, this place gives a wonderful view of the forts, the rivers and the hill stations around.

The legend about the existence of this *Jyotirlinga* is related to *Kumbhakarna's* son *Bhimā*. When *Bhimā* learned that he was the son of *Kumbhakarana* who was annihilated by Lord Vishnu in his incarnation as Lord *Rāma*, he vowed to avenge his father's



death. He performed penance to please Lord *Brahmā* who granted him immense power.

On achieving this power, he started

creating havoc in the world. He defeated the staunch devotee of Lord Shiva-Kāmrupeshwara and put him in the dungeons. This angered the *deva*-s who requested Shiva to descend on the Earth and put an end to this tyranny. A war ensued between the two and Shiva ultimately turned the demon to ashes.

At the request from the *deva*-s, Lord Shiva stayed on these mountains in the form of a Jyotirlinga. After killing the demon, the Lord sat down on the Sahyādrī Mountains to take some rest. It is then that the sweat from his body started flowing and turned into the Bhīmā River, which flows Southeast and merges with the Krishnā River near Raichur.

Another belief is that Lord Shiva was pleased by the devotion of a king named Bhīmāk of the Sun Dynasty and hence, took his abode as the Jyotirlinga in this place.

The Bhīmāshankara temple is a composite of old and new structures in the Nagara style of architecture. It is a fine example of the architectural skills of the ancient Vishwakarmā sculptors; the Indo-Aryan style of architecture can be seen therein. It is a modest yet graceful temple, dating back to the 13th century. The *sabhāmandapa* was built in the 18th century by Nānā Phadnavis. The shikhara (*gopuram*) was also built by Nānā Phadnavis.

As with other Shiva temples in this area, the sanctum is at a lower level. The temple-gates are made of wood with beautifully carved depictions.

The shrine Bhīmāshankara (and the Bhīmārathi river) have been referred to in literature dating back to the 13th century CE.

Behind the temple, there is a way that leads to the river. Saint Jñāneshwara is said to have visited Tryambakeshwara and Bhīmāshankara.

The great Maratha ruler Shivāji is said to have made endowments to this temple. In 1739, Chimāji Appā, brother of Bājirao Peshwā I, collected five large bells after he won a war against the Portuguese from the Vasai Fort. He offered one of these bells here at Bhīmāshankara. This is a unique Roman-style bell; it adorns the front of the temple. This bell has an idol of Mother Mary with Jesus.

The temple attracts a footfall of thousands of devotees during the festival of Mahā Shivarātri. A huge crowd can also be seen on Mondays.

'*gupta* Bhīmāshankara', 'Hanuman Lake', 'Moksha-kund Teertha', 'Kamalaja Mātā Temple', shrines for Shiva-gana-s, Shākini and Dākini, are some of the other religious places around Bhīmāshankara.

According to Shivapurāna, the Bhīmāshankara Jyotirlinga is situated on the Mountain Brahmapur, district Kāmrup of Assam.

Sources:

www.wikipedia.org
www.holidify.com

www.jyotirlingatemple.com
www.indiavine.com
www.jharkhandtourism.gov.in

<https://incredibleindia.egoldentriangle.com>
<https://pilgrimage.com>
<https://indiatemple.net>



- Compiled by Vijayalakshmi Menon

Maharshi Durvāsā, also called Durvāsas, was the son of Maharshi Atri and his wife Sati Anasuyā. In the Purānas, it is said that Rishi Atri was one of the three Brahmarshis along with Rishi Gautama and Rishi Bharadwāja. They are known as the givers of 'aum' (the original sound of the universe) and that is the reason they are known as Brahmarshis. All creative process began with *aum* and is threefold, having 'a'



representing Brahmā or birth (Rishi Gautama), 'u' representing Vishnu or sustenance (Rishi Atri) and 'm' representing Shiva or destruction (Rishi Bharadwāja).

Birth

In the Bhāgavat Purāna it is said that Sage Atri had no children for a long time so to have children he did severe penance. At the same time Anasuyā also did severe *tapas* as she desired sons equal to Brahmā, Vishnu and Mahesh. The Gods were very happy and granted them the boon. Thus the *trimurti* were born as their children. Brahmā incarnated as Chandra (Soma), Vishnu as Dattātreya and Mahesh as Durvāsā (a Rudra form of Shiva). Rudra is fiery and angry towards those who fall off the path of *dharma*. Sage Durvāsā adopted a similar attitude and was quick to curse those he believed did not follow the path of *dharma*. Because of this he could control and

discipline thousands of his disciples. However, being afraid of his short temper, he was received with reverence by both *deva*-s and humans alike.

About the birth of Sage Durvāsā, Brahmānda Purāna relates this legend. According to this Purāna, Brahmā and Shiva got into a heated argument. Fearing the worst, the *devas* fled. Even Pārvati Devi got fed up and was heard complaining that it was now becoming very

difficult to live with Shiva. On hearing this Shiva realized that his anger was disturbing others so he decided to deposit all of it into Anasuyā, the wife of Rishi Atri. From this aspect of Siva, which was deposited into Anasuyā, a child was born. He was named Durvāsā (one who is difficult to live with). Due to the fact that he was born out of Shiva's anger, Durvāsā too displayed a fiery temper.

The word Durvāsā also means one who wears clothes full of dirt and also one who came to life after drinking the juice of '*dūrva* grass' (*panicum dactylon*). Rishi Durvāsā's stories appear in many ancient texts including Bhāgavat Purāna, Rāmāyana, Mahābhārata, Vishnu Purāna, Vāyu Purāna, Abhijnāna Shākuntalam etc. Somehow Durvāsā Rishi is present in or related to most of the popular stories and characters that we can find in the Indian mythology like *samudra manthana* (churning of the ocean), etc. Many

events are attributed to his curses that were a result of his famous temper.

Rishi Durvāsā's role in Samudra Manthana

In Vishnu Purāna, Vāyu Purāna, Padma Purāna, Agni Purāna and Srimad Bhāgavatam, Indra being cursed by Sage Durvāsā is given as an indirect reason for the famous *samudra manthan* episode. In Vishnu Purāna, the story goes that while wandering on the earth in a state of ecstasy due to a vow he was observing, he happened to meet a Vidyādhari (a nymph of the air) and asked her for the floral garland which she was wearing. She happily gave it to him, which he took and began wandering again. Then he came across Indra riding on his elephant Airāvata along with other *devas*. Sage Durvāsā still in ecstasy threw the garland at Indra who caught it and placed it on his elephant's head. The elephant irritated by the fragrance of the flowers took the garland with his trunk and flung it down to the ground. Before even Indra could get down from his elephant and ask for forgiveness, the sage, livid with anger, cursed Indra that he would be brought down from his position of dominion over the three worlds.

Because of this curse, Indra and the *devas* were shorn of their strength and lustre. Seeing this the *asuras* led by Bāli decided to fight the *devas*. The *devas* lost the war and ran to Brahmā to ask for help who in turn directed them to Vishnu. Vishnu on seeing the plight of the *devas* took pity on them and promised to help them. He told them that the only way they could get back their lost glory and power is to call a truce with the *asuras*, befriend them and ask for their help in churning the ocean and obtain the *amrita*

(nectar of immortality) on the pretext of sharing it with them. Vishnu assured the *devas* that he would make sure that only the *devas* got the *amrita*, by having which, they would get back their lost power and strength, and defeat the *asuras*.

Sage Durvāsā in Vālmiki Rāmāyana

In the Uttara kānda of Vālmiki Rāmāyana, after abandoning Sitāji, Sri Rāma performed the Ashwamedha Yāga. The time had come for Him to depart from this incarnation. Brahmā sent Kālapurusha (Yama) with a message for Sri Rāma that it was time for him to return to Vaikuntha. However, the condition was that when this message would be delivered to Him, nobody was to be present. When Yama arrived with the message, Sri Rāma accepted the condition and entrusted Lakshmana with the duty of the gatekeeper, to guard the doors and to let no one in until the discussions were over. The ever-obedient Lakshmana stood at the door while Sri Rāma and Yama were at the meeting. Lakshmana had never disobeyed his brother's orders. Unfortunately for him, just then, Sage Durvāsā came to meet Sri Rāma and demanded to meet Him immediately. Lakshmana received the sage with due courtesy and asked him to wait as Sri Rāma was in a meeting. The sage grew angry and threatened to curse all of Ayodhyā if Sri Rāma was not immediately informed of his arrival. Now Lakshmana was in a dilemma. He decided that it would be better if he alone dies and save Ayodhyā from the sage's curse. Without a moment of thought, he went in and informed Sri Rāma about the sage's arrival.

Sri Rāma was supremely happy that the

revered sage had come to meet Him. He quickly concluded his meeting with Yama and received the sage with due courtesy. Sage Durvāsā too was extremely happy and asked for some food to eat as he had been fasting as a part of a *vrata* which had just ended. Sri Rāma fed the Sage with reverence and sent him on his way.

Now Sri Rāma was overcome with sorrow for he did not want to kill his brother Lakshmana and yet, because He had given His word to Yama, could not go back on it. On Sage Vashishta's advice, He asked Lakshmana to leave Him for good as this kind of abandoning was equal to death.

Lakshmana went off to the banks of the Sarayu River and with the help of yoga, ascended to heaven, Vaikuntha. In Vaikuntha he assumed the form of Ādishesha and waited for Sri Rāma's arrival. It is said that it was Sage Durvāsā who was instrumental in helping Lakshmana reach Vaikuntha and assume the form of Ādishesha to provide a seat for Mahā Vishnu.

Sage Durvāsā in Mahābhārata



Once Sage Durvāsā visited the court of King Kuntibhoja and sought his hospitality. The great sage was greeted by the king in a

fitting way and the king agreed to fulfill all his wishes. He entrusted the sage to his daughter Kunti's care and made her responsible to meeting all the sage's needs. Princess Kunti served the sage with utmost devotion. She put up with the sage's temper and unreasonable demands like demanding food at odd hours, leaving the palace and returning whenever he felt like, etc. Eventually, the sage was gratified. He was so pleased with her devotion that he decided to bless her by teaching her the Atharvaveda mantras which enable a woman to invoke any God of her choice to beget children by them. Though Kunti did not desire any such thing, she was scared to refuse it for she did not want to upset the sage and make him angry and, in turn, curse her.

As she was still a child, thoughtlessly she thought of testing the efficacy of the mantra. Thus after invoking Surya, the Sun God, she bore a son Karna. Later, when she got married to Pāndu, the king of Hastināpur, she bore the three sons of Pāndu viz. Yudhisthira, Bheema and Arjuna. Nakula and Sahadeva were born to Mādri, the second queen of Pāndu with the help of the same mantras. Karna went on to become an accomplished warrior and an enemy of the Pāndavas, which eventually culminated in his death in the battle of Kurukshetra, at the hands of Arjuna, his younger brother, who was unaware of their bond.

Sage Durvāsā visits the Pāndavas at Hastināpur

When the Pāndavas lost to the Kauravas in the game of dice, they had to go to the forest for twelve years but they were not dejected. When Duryodhana heard this, he felt jealous. He discussed the ways and

means of putting them to shame with the help of his aides Duhshāsana, Shakuni and Karna. At that time, sage Durvāsā decided to visit Hastināpur with his eleven thousand disciples. Duryodhana managed to gratify the sage. The sage was pleased to grant him a boon. Duryodhana had already decided what to ask for. He could have got anything from the sage but he was secretly wanting Sage Durvāsā to curse the Pāndavas in anger, so asked the sage to visit his cousins in the forest after Draupadi had eaten her meal. He knew that the Pāndavas will have nothing to feed him with. As soon as the sage heard Duryodhana's strange request, he, along with his disciples, decided to visit the Pāndavas in their hermitage in the forest.

Yudhisthira, when he lost the game of dice, retired to the forest along with his brothers and wife Draupadi. Hundreds of scholarly Brahmins also followed him.



Yudhisthira found himself unable to feed all of them. So he prayed to Sage Dhaumya to help him and on the sage's advice, Yudhisthira prayed to the Sun-god who appeared before him and gave him a copper vessel called Akshaya Pātra. This vessel would produce enough food for all the people in the hermitage and their guests but as soon as Draupadi finishes eating, the

vessel would become empty and will fill itself up only the next day. Because Draupadi had already eaten by the time Sage Durvāsā arrived, there was no food to serve him. The Pāndavas were very worried lest the sage lose his cool and curse them. When the sage left the hermitage to have a bath, Draupadi began praying to Sri Krishna because she knew that only he could help her in solving this problem. Sage Durvāsā immediately appeared before her saying he was very hungry. Draupadi was exasperated and prayed to Krishna to save the day. Then Krishna asked her to get the Akshaya Pātra. She did as she was told. Krishna took the vessel from her, found a grain of rice and a piece of vegetable stuck to the pot. He ate it and said that He was satisfied with the meal. This satiated the hunger of Sage Durvāsā and his disciples as the satisfaction of Krishna (the supreme being who pervades



the whole universe) means the satiation of the hunger of all living beings. When Krishna is satisfied, everyone is satisfied. Later Sri Krishna revealed to the Pāndavas how they were saved from Sage Durvāsā's anger.

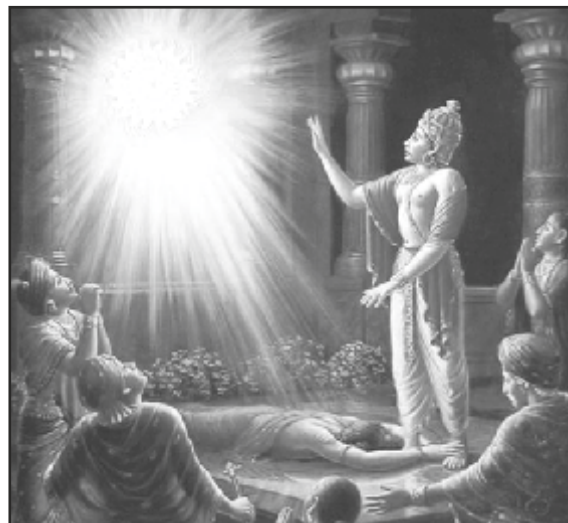
Sage Durvāsā and Ambareesha

As per Bhāgavat Purāna it was Sage Durvāsā who was responsible for bringing out the greatness of the greatest devotee of Vishnu, Ambareesha, by cursing him!

Ambareesha was the son of Nabhaga of the Manu clan. Besides being a great devotee of Nārāyana he was also a righteous ruler who firmly believed in *dharma*. He had performed a large number of Ashwamedha Yāgas. Sri Hari, greatly pleased with the King's unfailing devotion granted him His divine weapon, the Sudarshana Chakra ('Sudarshana' meaning good looking or beautiful), as a shield of protection over him.

Once the king decided to observe Ekdashi *vrata* for a full year to please Lord Nārāyana. Dwādashi, the next day, is very important as on this day the *vrata* gets completed. At this time Sage Durvāsā came to the king as a guest. The king welcomed him and asked him to stay for food to which the sage agreed and went out to have a bath after asking the king to wait until he finishes his bath in the river Yamunā. Now according to tradition, the king had to eat at the given auspicious time which was coming to an end and the sage was nowhere in sight. The king was in a fix. On one hand it was impolite to take food before serving the guest but on the other hand the auspicious time to end the fast was drawing near. He consulted Brahmins who were very well

versed in *shāstras*, after which he took a sip of water and waited for the sage to return to



have food.

When Sage Durvāsā returned after bath, the king made obeisance to him. But by then the sage knew that Ambareesha had already broken his fast by drinking water. He was livid. He was so furious that his body trembled with rage because the sage felt that the king had violated the respect due to a guest by breaking his fast before the guest had taken his meal. He pulled out a hair and created a demon out of it to kill Ambareesha. But Lord Nārāyana's Sudarshana Chakra saved the king by reducing the demon to ashes and started chasing the sage who ran to Brahmā and Shiva to ask for protection. Both pleaded their inability to save him. Thus, the sage went to Nārāyana himself who too pleaded helplessness as He only protected His devotees. He asked the sage to go and ask for pardon from King Ambareesha himself who then prayed to Nārāyana to recall the Sudarshana Chakra and save the Sage.

Sage Durvāsā is mentioned in the play *Abhijnāna-shākuntalam*, written by the great poet Kālidasa, wherein Sage Durvāsā curses Shakuntalā that her lover would forget her, all because she was daydreaming about her lover Dushyanta instead of greeting him. Then he softened his curse saying Dushyanta would remember her when he sees the ring which he had given her as a token of his love. Eventually the curse is lifted and they live happily ever after with their son Bharata.

According to Swāminārāyana sect of

Hinduism, Nārāyana took birth as Swāminārāyana because of a curse of Sage Durvāsā.

In Skanda-purāna there is a reference too. In its Kāshi-khanda, it says that Sage Durvāsā spent years in holy Kāshi performing *tapas* and got enlightenment.

Most people think that Sage Durvāsā always got angry for silly reasons and cursed people. One should not forget that many a time a curse by him brought about welfare to the people. It was never out of a selfish motive.



- Dr Brian L Weiss M.D.

We have so many worries. We worry about money, yet we know that money is only a tool, a means to an end. What we really want is happiness, a bit of security in our lives, some modicum of joy. Happiness, security, and joy are inner states. They are free; money cannot purchase them. Worry is merely a habit - and a negative, unpleasant habit at that. Worry will not change anything, nor will it bring you those things that you really need and desire. And money will not bring you happiness. I have treated many extremely wealthy people in my psychotherapy practice, and many of them have been miserable and unhappy. Money is a neutral thing, neither good nor bad. What you do with money creates its value.

We worry about success and failure, yet we cannot really define these concepts. Is a poor person who is happy and who has wonderful, loving relationships a failure? Is a rich person who has terrible relationships and no love in his life a success? Our cultures have defined success and failure for us, and the definitions have been deficient. So what is the point in worry about success?

We worry too much about what other people think of us-about their opinions, judgments, and criticisms. Yet their opinions are based on the same cultural values as those measuring money and defining success. Once again, we are worrying about nothing.

All other apprehensions fall into the same paradigm. Worrying cannot effect positive change or growth. It will not change the future. Planning for the future is useful,

but worrying is not. This is a useless habit, a conditioned response we have acquired from our parents, our teachers, and our communities. Intellectually we all know this, but old habits are difficult to break. If we could only stop worrying so much, how much happier we all would be! We would experience much less stress in our lives.

The irony is that, when observed from a more detached perspective, this type of stress is an illusion. It is not real. We create it ourselves. And we all know this. Events or perceptions that have the capacity to induce stress reactions in us are subjective and relative. An occurrence that traumatizes you may not affect me at all, or vice versa. An event that caused you considerable stress last year may hardly register this year, because your attitude or perspective may have changed in that period of time. You may even enjoy the experience this time around or perceive it as an exciting challenge rather than a threat, trauma, or stressor. It is quite simply all in the eye of the beholder. Our free will determines our reaction to these events. Will we react with fear, or with confidence and optimism? The choice is ours to make: stress or confidence, fear or love, anxiety or inner peace.

(Brian L Weiss, MD, is a psychiatrist who lives and practices in Miami, Florida. He's a graduate of Columbia University and Yale Medical School, and is the former Chairman of Psychiatry at the Mt. Sinai

Medical Center in Miami. Dr. Weiss is the author of Many Lives, Many Masters: Only Love is Real, Messages from the Master: Through Time into Healing: Mirrors of Time, and mediation. Dr. Weiss conducts seminars nationally and internationally.)

What do we learn from Upanishads?

Do You Want To Be More Effective?

- Swāmi Chidānanda

Three tips from Upanishads:

- 1 Know what you're doing (*vidyā*),
- 2 Have faith in the work (*shraddhā*), and
- 3 Bring your energies together (*yoga*).

| *yadeva vidyayā karoti, shraddhayā, upanishadā - tadeva veeryavattaram bhavati* |

Chāndogya Upanishad 1.1.10

यदेव विद्यया करोति, श्रद्धया, उपनिषदा -

तदेव वीर्यवतरं भवति।

{छान्दोग्य उपनिषत् 1.1.10}

[The word upanishad in the mantra above stands for yoga*, which we have translated as "bringing our energies together" or focus, single-pointed attention]

* Shankara's commentary



If I am in a dark room, no amount of protestation will make it any brighter-I must light a match. Just so, no amount of grumbling and wailing will make our imperfect body more perfect. But Vedanta teaches us -- call forth your soul, show your divinity. Teach your children that they are divine, that religion is a positive something and not a negative nonsense. Teach them that religion is not subjection to groans when under suppression, but expansion and manifestation.

- Swami Vivekananda



- Padma Rallabhandy



Birds chirping, peacocks screaming, serene green environs, fragrance from dew-soaked flowers and grass at dawn, the twilight sun rays at Arunodaya Institute of Culture, Shrirampur from 06-12 July 2018 set the tranquil tone to soak in Pujya Chidananda Swamiji's dulcet words on Chandogya Upanishad in which the mahavakya *tattvamasi* appears 9 times in 6th Chapter. Swamiji made it all sound uncomplicated as he delineated on the profound aspect of Sat as taught by Sage Uddalaka to his son, Shwetaketu. He elucidated the following aspects of 6th chapter:

- Subtle to gross creation from *tejobanna*
- One to many to many to one
- Timeless and spaceless existence of Sat
- 3 states of waking, dreaming and deep-sleep
- *tattvamasi*, Thou art That
- Gross to subtle dissolution

Swamiji's discourses were packed with humorous anecdotes, connecting the age-old wisdom of rishis with modern quantum theory and punched with ready wit and humour. Like a mother reaching out to her

wailing infant, Swamiji lifted us all very lovingly and connected with our hearts with his amiable countenance and lucid explanation. He was cool and unruffled through the long sessions and patiently answered our queries however trivial they were. The daily self-study and group discussions helped us in removing knots in our minds and reinforce the vedāntic core of Chāndogya Upanishad firmly. The group discussions were very beautifully steered by Swamini Tatwapriyānandji and Mohan Hejmadiji.

The efficient and service-oriented staff at Arunodaya Institute of Culture headed by Ms. Sangita Sirsath tended to our needs very lovingly and took good care of us. The food served was Sātvik and perfect for the occasion which was planned with great care by the in-house nutritionist and dietician, Ms. Deepali Fargade. The 19 participants were highly motivated, sincere and disciplined during the entire seven days of retreat. The icing on the cake was our visit to Shirdi on the 4th day of the retreat; we were all blessed with a beautiful darshan of Sai Maharaj!

Kudos to the organisers for selecting the perfect place and to their meticulous planning, organizing and execution skills.

Swamiji had enlightened and emphasized on *āchara*, *upadesha* and *smarana* aspects i.e. steady practice, attending discourses on the vedāntic concept Sat, contemplation on the same. So, as we contemplate on the learning about *tattvamasi*, we look forward to fortifying it with Swamiji's nectarine words on '*aham brahmāsmi*' in the upcoming retreat in Jan 2019.

Our visit to the Health Centre at Shrirampur

- Parvathy Jeevan



Amidst lush, verdant countryside, myriad flowering bushes beneath tall trees stretching over a large expanse, nestles the Arunodaya Institute of Culture. The institute in Shrirampur, Maharashtra, was the setting for our week long retreat on Chāndogya Upanishad. Besides imbibing from Pujya Swāmiji's profound knowledge and wisdom, we also had the good fortune of visiting the Arunodaya health centre. The centre was established by Smt. Shivani and Shri Amit Dahanukar of the illustrious Dahanukar family.

We were escorted around the health centre very graciously by the nutritionist, Ms. Deepali Fargade, who gave us a detailed presentation of their activities. The centre has trained some local young women who assist the doctor Dr. Sampada Kale. This dedicated team of women counsels the illiterate, pregnant women from the surrounding villages on the care and nutrition to be followed during pregnancy. They teach them how to use the abundant vegetables, fruits, herbs and other plants growing all around them, so that all their nutritional needs can be met; instead of depending on expensive allopathic medicines and tonics, which they can ill afford. Besides they also counsel their husbands and their extended families on the care to be given to the expecting mothers. The staff from the centre work very hard to dispel various superstitions which the older

generation of mothers-in-law cling to, many of which would not be conducive to the wellbeing of the pregnant women. They also stress on the importance of the expectant mother being admitted to a hospital at the time of delivery. This is very important, as otherwise the babies are delivered at home without proper knowledge or necessary equipment or facilities to deal with emergencies. Continuing their engagement with the new mothers, they are taught the correct way of nursing the new born. They are also coaxed to only breastfeed their babies for the first six months as breast milk contains every nutrient required for the good health of the infant. Towards this end, they have prepared various visual aids with information regarding lactation and nutrition for the benefit of the mother and child.

Over and above this, a team of nurses visits every village and resides there for six months at a time, interacting with the inhabitants and counseling them regularly. Hats off to these young women who sacrifice their time with their families in order to serve the needy.

The centre does not give up on the babies once they are born. They maintain records of inoculations and keep track of their overall growth and development. The families are encouraged to bring the infants to the centre for treatment in case of any illness. All of this is done free of cost to the poor families, thanks to the large-heartedness and generosity of the Dahanukar family. God bless them!

Pujya Swāmi Chidānandaji addressed the staff at the end of our visit. I am certain Swāmiji's words of praise has given them a lot of encouragement and renewed their dedication to this noble cause.

We came away from our visit to the health centre filled with awe and admiration for all the young doctors and nurses, who are a source of inspiration to all of us. It was such a privilege to get to see the health centre in action and meet these wonderful women who maintain this vital safety net for their communities.

- Svargeeya Bhātaratna
Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee

मैं शंकर का वह क्रोधानल कर सकता जगती क्षार-क्षार।
डमरू की वह प्रलय-ध्वनि हूँ, जिसमें नचता भीषण संहार।
रणचंडी की अतृप्त प्यास, मैं दुर्गा का उन्मत्त हास।
मैं यम की प्रलयकर पुकार, जलते मरघट का धुँआधार।
फिर अंतरतम की ज्वाला से जगती में आग लगा दूँ मैं।
यदि धधक उठे जल, थल, अंबर, जड चेतन तो कैसा विस्मय?
हिन्दू तन-मन, हिन्दू जीवन, रग-रग हिन्दू मेरा परिचय!

मैं अखिल विश्व का गुरु महान्, देता विद्या का अमरदान।
मैंने दिखलाया मुक्तिमार्ग, मैंने सिखलाया ब्रह्मज्ञान।
मेरे वेदों का ज्ञान अमर, मेरे वेदों की ज्योति प्रखर।
मानव के मन का अंधकार, क्या कभी सामने सका ठहर?
मेरा स्वर्णभ मे घहर-घहर, सागर के जल में छहर-छहर।
इस कोने से उस कोने तक, कर सकता जगती सोराभमय।
हिन्दू तन-मन, हिन्दू जीवन, रग-रग हिन्दू मेरा परिचय!

मैंने छाती का लहू पिला, पाले विदेश के क्षुधित लाल।
मुझको मानव मैं भेद नहीं, मेरा अन्तस्थल वर विशाल।
जग से ठुकराए लोगों को लो मेरे घर का खुला द्वार।
अपना सब कुछ हूँ लुटा चुका, फिर भी अक्षय है धनागार।

मेरा हीरा पाकर ज्योतिर परकीयों का वह राजमुकुट।
यदि इन चरणों पर झुक जाए कल वह किरीट तो क्या विस्मय?
हिन्दू तन-मन, हिन्दू जीवन, रग-रग हिन्दू मेरा परिचय!

होकर स्वतन्त्र मैंने कब चाहा है कर लूँ सब को गुलाम?
मैंने तो सदा सिखाया है करना अपने मन को गुलाम।
गोपाल-राम के नामों पर कब मैंने अत्याचार किया?
कब दुनिया को हिन्दू करने घर-घर में नरसंहार किया?
कोई बतलाए काबुल में जाकर कितनी मस्जिद तोड़ी?
भूभाग नहीं, शत-शत मानव के हृदय जीतने का निश्चय।
हिन्दू तन-मन, हिन्दू जीवन, रग-रग हिन्दू मेरा परिचय!

मैं एक बिन्दु परिपूर्ण सिन्धु है यह मेरा हिन्दु समाज।
मेरा इसका संबन्ध अमर, मैं व्यक्ति और यह है समाज।
इससे मैंने पाया तन-मन, इससे मैंने पाया जीवन।
मेरा तो बस कर्तव्य यही, कर दूँ सब कुछ इसके अर्पण।
मैं तो समाज की थाति हूँ, मैं तो समाज का हूँ सेवक।
मैं तो समष्टि के लिए व्यष्टि का कर सकता बलिदान अभय।
हिन्दू तन-मन, हिन्दू जीवन, रग-रग हिन्दू मेरा परिचय!

- अटल बिहारी वाजपेई

My Introduction (Merā Parichaya)

“Merā Parichaya” is one of the most well-known and famous compositions of Atal ji. In this poem his profound understanding and love of Hinduism are vividly expressed, with intense passion. His selection of words is tremendous, which reflects his deep emotion with a lofty vision towards the theme. Hinduism is flowing in his body, his mind, his life and in every vein.

Here he doesn't mean Hinduism as a religion or a sect but a way of life which includes all. It is not about conquering any individual by brutal force but rather winning over his heart with love. He passionately expresses the backbone of Hinduism which is Vedas, and there again the knowledge of the infinite, of oneness (*Brahma jnāna*) that is for the welfare of all. Hinduism destroys the deep darkness pervading the whole world, by the lamp of this knowledge and shows the way to ultimate freedom. Hinduism has always welcomed anyone who ever took shelter

under its umbrella. Of Delhi are a witness of such generosity. Many invaders looted this land and yet the most precious diamond Kohinoor of India today shines on the crown of the Queen of England. Hinduism never tried to convert any one by force or violence to its own belief. History is witness to its valour, to its uncompromising adherence to truth and to lofty values in the midst of cruelty. “Jauhar” is among many such incidents where the ladies of Chittoor entered the fire alive. The same fire, the poet expresses, is still burning in his veins.

Lastly the poet expresses that he is a drop which is, all the same, like the Full Ocean. His relationship with his society is immortal. He can sacrifice fearlessly his individuality for the whole of the society.

(The above is not a translation of the poem but a few words of appreciation, penned by Gargi Dikshit. – Editors.)

ETERNAL VIBRATIONS

THE TEACHER'S THREE QUALITIES

Austere way of life, deep study and clear communication.



तपस्वाध्याय-निरतं | tapah-svādhyāya-niratam |
तपस्वी वाग्विदां वरम् | tapasvee vāg-vidām varam |
नारदं परिपप्रच्छ | nāradam paripapraccha |
वाल्मीकिमुनिपुङ्गवम् | vālmikir-muni-pungavam |

Vālmiki, himself engaged in austerities, enquired of Nārada, preeminent among the sages, ever engaged in the practice of religious austerities and in the study of the Vedas, and also the best among the eloquent (being able to convey profound truths in an unambiguous language).

Vālmiki Rāmāyana, Bāla Kānda, 1.1.1

{The above is how the great itihāsa (epic) begins, running into 24,000 verses.}

Note: For the full text of Vālmiki Rāmāyana with English translation,
visit www.valmiki.iitk.ac.in



FOWAI FORUM

Wisdom for Right Action

Dissemination of spiritual and secular wisdom is the main objective of the Fowai Forum. Educational activities, human welfare and services to all life are its concerns. Insights and observations especially based on Indian culture and heritage will find expression in its activities.

This public trust came into being in the year 2006. Registered as per the Mumbai Public Trust Act of 1950, the Forum engages in organizing talks and workshops as well as in publication of books and audio-visual media.

F.O.W.A.I. = Flame Of Who Am I?

“Who am I?” is the most basic question of life. The understanding of the self, the ‘me’, can cause radical change in the quality of life. This requires turning (the flame of) attention towards thoughts and emotions. When likes and dislikes fall away, pure perception takes place. That heralds freedom.

Dates of publication : 15th of October, December, February, April, June & August

www.fowai.org

E-mail : fowaiforum@yahoo.com