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# Chinmaya Smriti

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



*Chinmayam Jagadeeshwaram Pranamaamyaham*



"Man can change his destiny-not by wishing for it, but by working for it." -Swami Chinmayananda



The loving touches of Sri Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda, in establishing a mission center in the Washington DC region are unmistakable. One of his messages to the lead sevaks at that time was to start a newsletter to inform and inspire the members at the newly established center. Sri Gurudev coined the name, Smrithi, for it. The newsletter was meticulously prepared and published in print and mailed to members since then. Later, it switched to electronic medium under a revised name 'Chinmaya Smrithi', coined by Swami Dheerananda. It is now published regularly on a bi-monthly basis. It remains a reliable source for recording, celebrating, and informing activities and spiritual thought carried out across the center, now spanning the states of Maryland and Virginia.

An archive of all the magazines is available at [chinmayadc.org/portfolio/chinmayasmrithi](http://chinmayadc.org/portfolio/chinmayasmrithi)

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September  
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## STUDY GROUPS

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## USEFUL LINKS

Central Chinmaya Mission Trust (CCMT)  
[www.chinmayamission.com](http://www.chinmayamission.com)

Chinmaya Mission West (CMW)  
[www.chinmayamissionwest.com](http://www.chinmayamissionwest.com)

Chinmaya International Foundation (CIF)  
[www.chinfo.org](http://www.chinfo.org)

Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center (CMWRC)  
[www.chinmayadc.org](http://www.chinmayadc.org)

Chinmayam (Silver Spring, MD)  
[www.chinmayam.org](http://www.chinmayam.org)

Chinmaya Somnath (Chantilly, VA)  
[www.chinmayasomnath.org](http://www.chinmayasomnath.org)

Frederick Chapter (Urbana, MD)  
[www.chinmayaafrederick.org](http://www.chinmayaafrederick.org)

Richmond Chapter (Richmond, VA)  
[www.chinmayarichmond.org](http://www.chinmayarichmond.org)

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Browse Books, CDs, DVDs, etc. online at [www.chinmayapublications.com](http://www.chinmayapublications.com)

## FEEDBACK/IDEAS/SUBMISSIONS

Have feedback, ideas, or submissions?  
Interested in joining the editorial staff?  
Email us at [smrithi-editor@chinmayadc.org](mailto:smrithi-editor@chinmayadc.org)





From the Desk of The President Anil Kishore	04
Upcoming Events	06
Latest News	07
Swamiji's Message Editor's excerpt from Swami Dheerananda's Teachings	09
The Devotee's Song Deepa Krishnan	11
Nachiketa, The Prepared Student Pratima Jadhav	12
Reflections on Upadesa Sara Deepa Krishnan, Praveen Kumar, Anil Kishore, Kamal Dewan, Raj Kulkarni, Ramdas Jadhav	14
Make Peace With Your Unlived Life Neelima Polam	21
Reflections on Narayaneeyam Kodanate Lakshmanan	24
Reflections on Hymn to Ganga Sitaram Kowtha	29
Gurudeva Uvacha	33

**PLEASE NOTE**

The opinions expressed in this magazine are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of Chinmaya Mission or CMWRC.



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HARI OM

Dear Chinmaya Family,

As a vibrant non-profit institution, CMWRC continues to spread out to serve the community and meet their needs. In this seva, the members of our **Board** and **Executive Committee (EC)** play a critical leadership role. Our growth and recognition are directly or indirectly attributable to these selfless dedicated sevaks and all the sevaks that compose our teams in various areas. Their work as Gurudev's instruments is shown in the seamless operation that we see every day. We are strong because we have a dedicated and devoted team. The Board oversees the Center and has fiduciary responsibility; and the EC runs the day-to-day operations of the Center. The Board and the EC members deeply appreciate your support for us in all phases of our operations.

From time to time, we make changes to the EC and the Board. The changes to the Board are approved by Swami Swaroopananda, Head of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide. I am honored to give an update of changes to our Board. A Board of Trustees meeting was held on January 29, 2023, to review 3-year terms and make changes to its composition. A motion was passed to renew the 3-year terms for Vilasini Balakrishnan, Jay Sriram, Humcha Hariprakash and Sitaram Kowtha. Srikumar Gopalakrishna desired to vacate the Joint Secretary role. Dineshkumar Dhanasekharan was nominated to the role of Joint Secretary. Srikumar will continue to be an active member of the Board and the EC. These changes were blessed by Swami Swaroopananda.

Let me take a moment to recognize the dedicated seva of Srikumar Gopalakrishna and give you a brief introduction to our new board members:

There are no words to express our thanks to **Srikumar Gopalakrishna** for his years of seva as Joint Secretary. He was with CMWRC when he was a graduate student at the University of Virginia and CMWRC was a fledgling organization. He brought us years of experience and knowledge in most phases of our operations. In addition, his leadership in camps, yajnas and weekend events are boundless. Lately, his shloka class has a popular demand, and its importance and impact are also shown by the performances of the students he teaches. It is a joy knowing that he will continue to serve on the Board and the EC, and actively contribute to our operations.

**Dineshkumar Dhanasekharan** joins the board as the new Joint Secretary for CMWRC. He is no stranger to the Center. His active roles, mostly behind the scenes, have been very instrumental in our membership development. Besides being a data guru and helping us make important decisions based on data, he has supported our online camps, website revamp and developing strategies to increase membership in our programs.

**Deepa Krishnan** joins the Board as a new member. As a long time, dedicated sevak for our Center, she has been instrumental in developing our Geeta Chanting program. Deepa has also led several of our initiatives, the Devi group, camps, and various events. I should add that she also served as Bala



Vihar Director and has spearheaded satsangs.

**Suresh Ramakrishnan** - Finally Suresh has also been added to the Board. Suresh worked tirelessly in developing Chinmaya Somnath as the Director for that chapter and its growth is a result of his hard work and his management skills. In addition to his leadership role, he was always an ardent student of Vedanta. Recently, he left for a one-year Sadhak course at Chinmaya International Foundation and now returns to us as a support to our Vedanta Teachers in spreading our spiritual knowledge in our chapters.

Let me also take the opportunity to welcome **Shashi Duraiswami** as a Vedanta Teacher. She has been a constant presence at Chinmaya chapter, an ardent student of Vedanta, and served in many seva roles. Along with Suresh, she attended the one-year Sadhak course and returned to serve at our center.

Please join me in welcoming the new additions. Our Center continues to grow with His grace, and the guidance of our Swami Dheerananda. It is a blessing to belong to this beautiful Mission that we all call home.

With love,

Anil Kishore, President-CMWRC  
[president@chinmayadc.org](mailto:president@chinmayadc.org)

## ARPANAM

The Arpanam initiative offers the Chinmaya families an opportunity to donate at various levels on an ongoing basis to support the current and future growth of CMWRC. Inspired by Gurudev's message that true loving is not in passive taking but in dynamic giving, the program is expected to help the mission pay down its debt while also positioning it for future growth to continue to spread the spiritual message of Vedanta. Donors making an Arpanam pledge may fulfill the pledge during the calendar year, and all tax-deductible offerings, such as Gita chanting registration, membership, Bala Vihar, enrichment, Guru Dakshina, event sponsorship, etc. are recognized towards the fulfillment of the pledge. Please refer to our [website](#) to learn more about this exciting new consolidated fundraising initiative.

**Please make your pledge today!**



**April 5****Hanuman Jayanti**

Location: Chinmayam

Time: 7 pm - 9 pm

**April 15****Sri Rama Navami &  
Hanuman Jayanti**

Location: Chinmaya

Somnath

Time: 4 pm - 6:30 pm

**April 16****Sri Ramanavami  
with Bala Vihar  
Children**

Location: Richmond

Chapter

Time: 11 am - 12 pm

**May 5****Chinmaya Jayanti**

Location: Richmond

Chapter

Time: 10 am - 12 pm

**May 6****Chinmaya Jayanti**

Location: Chinmayam

Time: 5 pm - 7 pm

## Summer Immersion Camp

Theme: Ganesha Mahima

The Glory of Ganesha

**Chinmayam**

June 26 - July 21

9 am - 5 pm

**Frederick Chapter**

June 19 - June 30

9 am - 5 pm

**Chinmaya Somnath**

June 19 - July 14

8:45 am - 4:45 pm

**June 20 - August 4****Chinmaya  
Blossoms Summer  
Camp**

For ages 3 - 5 years

Location: Chinmaya

Somnath

Time: 8:30 am - 5 pm

**July 7 - July 9****CHYK Retreat**Yaksha Prashna: Dialogue  
with Dharma

Location: Chinmaya

Somnath

**July 24 - July 28****CMWRC Youth  
Camp**

Embracing Discomfort

Location: Chinmaya

Somnath

Time: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

View more details about all CMWRC events at [www.chinmayadc.org](http://www.chinmayadc.org)



# Maha Shivaratri Celebrations

Chinmaya Somnath | February 18, 2023





# Geeta Chanting Competition

Chinmaya Somnath | March 18, 2023





## 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 23.

विषयेभ्यः परावर्त्य स्थापनं स्वस्वगोलके।  
उभयेषामिन्द्रियाणां स दमः परिकीर्तितः।  
बाह्यानालम्बनं वृत्तेरेषोपरतिरुत्तमा॥ २३॥

viṣayebhyaḥ parāvartya sthāpanaṁ  
svasvagolake,  
ubhayeṣāmindriyāṇāṁ sa damaḥ  
parikīrtitaḥ,  
bāhyānālabanaṁ  
vṛttereṣoparatiruttamā. (23)

***Steering both kinds of sense organs (of knowledge and action), away from their sense objects and placing them in their respective centers of activity is called “Dama” (self-control). The best “Uparati” (self-withdrawal) is that condition of the thought waves in which they are free from the influences of external objects.***

Adi Shankaracharya described in the previous verse how “Shama” helps in identifying one’s defects. When external objects (Vishayas) come and one is not able to detach, then Dama (self-control) is needed. Dama helps with controlling one’s mind. One should turn back from the external sense stimuli by placing the attention on its own center.

To further explain this, Swamiji gave a few

examples. When the door opens and someone walks in during the class, everyone has a thought (desire) to look at the door and they keep looking at the person. This happens because they are not able to focus on their goal which is to be attentive in class. One should think about why this thought or desire arises and practice saying, “Not Now”.

Each sense and sense organ can be controlled this way. When one hears criticism and is tempted to respond in kind, one should remind oneself, “Not Now”. Similarly, when one feels like hitting someone, one should practice self-restraint and clasp the hands together. This practice is applicable to the five Jnanendriyas (organs of perception) and five Karmendriyas (organs of performance or action).

The practice of Shama and Dama leads the seeker to Uparati. This literally means withdrawal. In practice, the highest form of Uparati is the complete lack of dependence on (or total freedom from) external objects even in thought. This is declared to be the best or highest form of withdrawal.

In our daily life, a person is driven to action only by two things – either one is attracted by something external or else, their own desires prompt action. When a person can overcome these two forces, then they are established in the practice of Uparati.

An excellent description of Uparati is given in Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2, Verses 58 and 59) where this behavior is illustrated through the example of the tortoise which withdraws all its six limbs in an act of self-defense at the first sign of an external predator. Similarly,

the self-realized master can withdraw their sense organs but there is a very important distinction – the behavior of the tortoise is driven by fear, but the realized master withdraws based on being established in the Self.

In the following verses, Acharya continues to describe the essential qualities of the spiritual seeker such as Titiksha and Shraddha finally culminating in Samadhana or concentration.

Open  
to All

# Study Vivekacūḍāmaṇi

WITH SWAMI DHEERANANDA



EVERY THURSDAY

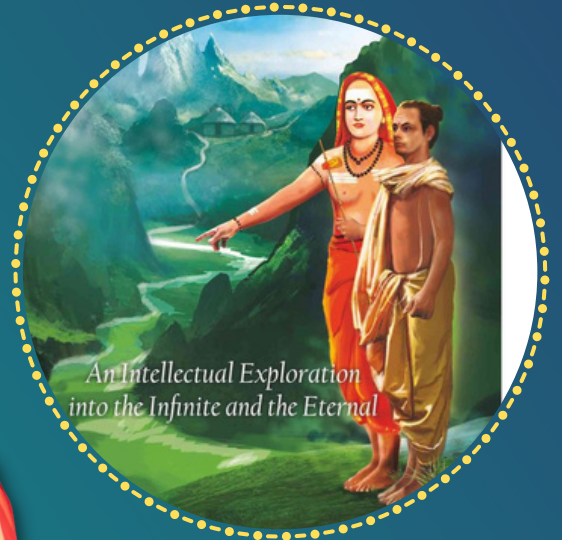
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM (EST)

ONLINE

Join the online class via Zoom

<https://chinmayadc.org/thursdayclass>

For any questions or to receive announcements about the class,  
please email [thursdayclass@chinmayadc.org](mailto:thursdayclass@chinmayadc.org)!





# The Devotee's Song

A Poem by Deepa Krishnan

My life after I met You  
Centers on You,  
At every step,  
And around all my steps.

I cannot explain  
From moment to moment  
How much I long  
To be  
In Your presence.

How can it be?  
I did not know You  
For most of my life  
And now  
That I have met You once,  
There is  
Just You.

# Nachiketa, the Prepared Student of Brahma Vidya

by Pratima Jadhav

## EDITOR'S NOTE

This is a reflection on Mantra 1.1.29 from Kathopanishad which describes why Nachiketa is considered a qualified spiritual seeker.

In this Mantra, Nachiketa insists to Lord Yamaraj that there is some higher knowledge and he would like to know that. He says knowing this knowledge will give him a greater purpose in life. This knowledge is so subtle that a Guru is necessary to understand this knowledge. Nachiketa understands that Lord Yamaraj is the best Guru to get this knowledge. The mind has to be extremely pure to understand this reality which is embedded deep in our own self.

यस्मिन्निदं विचिकित्सन्ति मृत्यो  
यत्साम्पराये महति ब्रूहि नस्तत् ।  
योऽयं वरो गूढमनुप्रविष्टो  
नान्यं तस्मान्नचिकेता वृणीते ॥ २९ ॥

yasminnidam vicikitsanti mrtyo  
yatsamparāye mahati brūhi nastat |  
yo'yaṁ varo gūḍhamanupraviṣṭo  
nānyaṁ tasmānnaciketā vṛṇīte || 29 ||

Here the Shruti says, Nachiketa has no desire for anything else and he does not ask

for anything else other than the higher knowledge.

This prathama valli of Kathopanishad shows the firm determination of Nachiketa including all his qualities of Sadhana Chatushtaya- Viveka, Vairagya, the Shat Sampathi of Shama, Dama, Uparama, Titiksha, Shraddha and Samadhana and Mumukshatvam. Brahma Vidya is glorified through all the mantras in this valli as well as the glory of the student who is seeking the Brahma Vidya. This valli signifies that knowing Brahma Vidya is more important than anything, any worldly desire.

**Viveka:** Discrimination between Real and Unreal, Nitya and Anitya at the worldly level.

Nachiketa shows his Viveka when he understands that his father giving barren cows to the Rishis as dakshina is wrong and will take him to hell. His Vairagya is founded on his Viveka.

**Vairagya:** Dispassion.

Nachiketa shows his Vairagya by staying unshaken in spite of potential fulfillment of all worldly desires through the gifts offered by Lord Yamaraja. The gifts offered were fantastic, far in excess of what he craved for in life. Still, Nachiketa declined them.



## **Shat Sampathi:**

- **Shama and Dama:** Peace of Mind/Control over Sense

Nachiketa shows his Shama and Dama qualities by staying calm while communicating with his father and telling him that giving barren cows is a wrong thing. Also he remains calm when his father asks him to go to Swarga Loka in anger, analyzing what he did to upset his father so much. This shows his control over the senses as well as mind.

- **Uparama:** Ability to Withdraw

By concentrating with his full attention and grasping each and every word of Agni Vidya knowledge from Lord Yamaraja, Nachiketa shows his Uparama quality

- **Shraddha:** Faith in Scriptures and Guru

Nachiketa's decision on going to Swarga Loka to meet Lord Yamaraja to get the knowledge of Agni Vidya shows his belief in the scriptures and here his Guru is his father whose word he respects despite implication of death. Because of his total faith in the Guru, he stays firm and unshaken in his resolve to know Brahma Vidya, in spite of the offered wealth, pleasures and fulfillment of desires offered by Lord Yamaraj and in spite of all the suffering he has to go through.

- **Titiksha:** Ability to Endure all suffering

Nachiketa does not eat or drink for 3 days and waits for Lord Yamaraj. This shows his Titiksha. He knows going to Swarga Loka

means facing death but he is ready to take that risk.

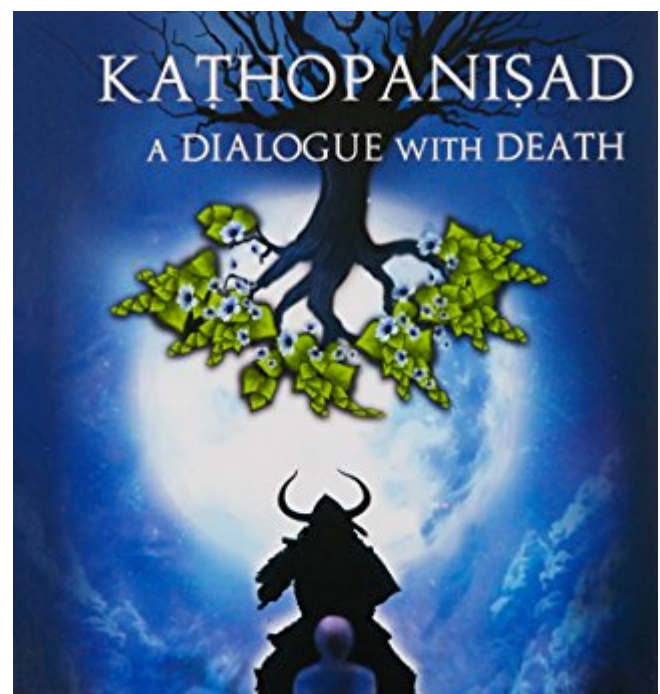
- **Samadhana:** Ability to concentrate, reveling in the goal.

Nachiketa maintains clear focus on Brahma Vidya even as he first fulfills his duty to his father and community at large – integrating multiple goals.

## **Mumukshattvam:** Desire for Liberation

Nachiketa shows his Mumukshattvam by displaying his burning desire of knowing Brahma Vidya and by staying firm on his decision and definitively rejecting all the this-worldly and other-worldly temptations presented before him by Yama Dharmaraj.

These qualities of Nachiketa are what every spiritual seeker must strive toward so that they become qualified to imbibe the knowledge of the scriptures.



## EDITOR'S NOTE

These are reflections by a few members of the Potomac Study Group,  
on their favorite verses from **Upadesa Sara**.

## The Inward Path

(Upadesa Sara, Verse 4)

by Deepa Krishnan

कायवाङ्मनः कार्यमुत्तमम् ।  
पूजनं जपश्चिन्तनं क्रमात् ॥४॥

kāyavāṅ-manah kārya-muttamam  
pūjanam japa-ścintanam kramāt ॥4॥

***This is certain:***

***Worship, praise and meditation,  
Being work of body, speech and mind,  
Are steps for orderly ascent.***

Sri Ramana maharishi asserts Puja (ritualistic worship) performed by the body, Japa (repetition of the Lord's name) performed by speech and Contemplation and Meditation performed by the mind, all lead us on the inward path towards realization of our real Self and each is superior to the previous one.

**Puja or Worship:** I like puja and chanting because it helps build devotion and love to the Divine. I feel this bhakti or love for the Lord helps in meditation and also gives a

certain peace of mind.

**Japa:** Japa is the repetition of a mantra. A mantra is a mass of radiant energy. "Every mantra has got tremendous force. It helps the spiritual power and reinforces it" writes Swami Sivananda. The word 'mantra' is derived from the root man which means to think. Tra means to protect or to free and thus a mantra protects our own mind from negativity and frees it from the bondage of the illusory world. Mantras fill the mind with purity, improve concentration, generate harmony and divine love.

Our Swamiji says Japa is like a windshield wiper and it prepares the mind for deeper meditation. There are four types of japa:

- Vaikhari – loud, audible japa
- Upamshu – whispering japa
- Manasika – mental japa
- Likhita – written japa

It is said of the first three, each of the succeeding ones is more powerful than the previous one so Upmashu is more powerful than Vaikahri and Manasika japa is more powerful than Vaikhari.

**Meditation:** Swami Sivananda says and I am paraphrasing here based on a teaching on meditation by Swami Shambhudevananda from Sivananda Ashram in Bahamas:

If you believe you are a sinner - a sinner you become (You crystallize it)

If you think you are impure - impure you become (You crystallize that)

If you think you are Brahman- Brahman you become (you realize it)

Don't focus your mind on a notion that you are so impure.... it's not the way

Just practice with devotion, bring in the light.... the darkness will be dispelled by itself

Focus only on the LIGHT

### Conclusion:

My takeaway is to continue my puja/chanting, my japa and meditation i.e. my spiritual sadhana in all these ways and continue to strengthen my meditation practice.

## भावशून्यता

(Upadesa Sara, Verse 9)

by Praveen Kumar

भावशून्यसद्भावसुस्थितिः ।  
भावनाबलाद्भक्तिरुत्तमा ॥९॥

bhāva śūnyasad bhāva susthitiḥ  
bhāvanā-balād bhaktir-uttamā ॥9॥

My favorite verse in Upadesa Saram by Bhagawan Ramana Maharshi is verse 9. In

this verse Ramana Maharshi succinctly captures the desirable direction of a meditator's efforts and the result of such efforts.

Literally translated, this verse means: 'By the बल (strength) of भावना (contemplation), सुस्थिति (state of firm abidance) in सद्भाव (सत् – existence principle, भाव – state of disposition, feeling, becoming) is gained, which is भावशून्य (devoid of any भाव) and is उत्तम (supreme) भक्ति (devotion). In other words, the pinnacle of bhakti is achievement of a भावशून्य state.

This verse tells how the results of jnana, yoga and bhakti come together as a sadhak makes progress. In verse 8, Ramana Maharshi had stated that it is the मत (opinion) of श्रुति that contemplation with अभिदा भावना (i.e., the contemplation without duality) is पावनी (holier, purer) than that done with भेद (duality). Therefore, jnana contributes to what should be the nature of contemplation -- it should be the one with a sense of non-duality, namely with a sense of सः अहम् इति (He is me). Yoga would help in concentrating the mind and providing बल to the non-dual भावना. When the non-dual भावना is sufficiently strong, it would lead to the भावशून्य state, i.e., a state without any भाव, which would also be the state of firm abidance in सत्.

Ramana Maharshi is also indicating here that a भावशून्य state can be attained with effort and earnestness. We all are endowed with a स्वभाव which is the result of relative strength of innate gunas in us. In a भावशून्य state, स्वभाव is in complete abeyance and one is beyond gunas. Implicitly, it is indicated that our स्वभाव is not permanent or unchangeable.



It may appear to be unchangeable in the short time period (and therefore a determinant of स्वधर्म), but over a longer period, स्वभाव can be attenuated so that it is ultimately sublimated in सत् भाव. A sadhak's journey in essence involves evolution from स्वभाव to सद्भाव.

स्वभाव -> सद्भाव

## A Quiet Mind

(Upadesa Sara, Verse 15)

by Anil Kishore

नष्टमानसोत्कृष्टयोगिनः ।  
कृत्यमस्ति किं स्वस्थितिं यतः ॥१५॥

naṣṭa-manasot-krṣṭa yoginaḥ  
kr̥tyam asti kiṃ svasthitim yataḥ ॥15॥

The state of *manolaya*, is the state of a quiet mind something that we all find impossible to achieve. We are constantly subjected to the captivity of the mind, except in sleep. To be freed from the “captivity” of the mind is sort of victory. We saw v13 layavinasine by ubhaya-rodhane or restraining prana and mind. The mind comes and therefore is not destroyed.

Sri Ramana talks about *manolaya* and *manonasa*. When the power of the mind is directed to power of breath, we direct the mind to the intellect. Just by practicing *asanas* and *pranayamas* does not make a true yogi but it is the yogi who has destroyed

his mind becomes an *utkrishta yogi* (the one who remains unchanged after the *laya* state is called a *Nikrishta Yogi*).

Sri Ramana Maharshi tells us that such a mind is put to its best use by making it contemplate on the Self “Ek Chintam”. The *manolaya* mind does not possess the impulse to seek knowledge. It is an inert state and if we keep the mind engaged and reflecting on the Self within the mind gets “destroyed”.

In verse 14, Sri Ramana states that nothing changes when we restrain the breath but everything changes when we restrain the mind along with the breath. Sri Ramana is encouraging us to engage in *tapas*. In *ek chintam* or contemplation on the ONE, there is no attachment to *samsara* (joy and sorrow) likes and dislikes, ego, ignorance etc.

In this verse 15, it is explained that the nature of the mind is thoughts and thoughts cannot be stopped. Controlling, restraining and directing the thoughts is possible. For a yogi, the *utkrishta yogi*, who has destroyed his mind and realized that he is the Self, there is nothing left for him to do.

In our own lives, we are frequently discontented and constantly seek something fulfilling to quench it. It arises from our sense of want or incompleteness in life. Desire arises and in the hunt to satisfy desire after desire we remain discontented (also explained in the Ladder of Fall and the Holy Geeta). In the *utkrishta yogi* there is no discontent, therefore no desire to act or feel fulfilled or happy because he has already

reached the state of fulfilled, happy and contented. There is no need to do anything. Abidance in the Self brings the greatest happiness since the nature of the Self is to be all-Bliss.

Of reference, in *Yoga Vasishtha*, one of Ramana's favourite traditional texts, says 'Supreme Bliss cannot be experienced through contact of the senses with their objects. The supreme state is that in which the mind is annihilated through one-pointed enquiry.' and elsewhere it also states 'Every moving or unmoving thing whatsoever is only an object visualized by the mind. When the mind is annihilated, duality (i.e. multiplicity) is not perceived.'

(compiled from readings)

## Vision of Reality

(Upadesa Sara, Verse 16)

by Kamal Dewan

दृश्यवारितं चित्तमात्मनः ।  
चित्त्वदर्शनं तत्त्वदर्शनम् ॥१६॥

drśya-vāritam citta-mātmanah  
citva-darśanam tattva darśanam ॥16॥

My favorite verse in Upadesa Saram by Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi is verse 16. This is a turning point verse in Upadesa Saram as Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi after explaining Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga

and Astanga Yoga turns his attention to Jnana Yoga. This verse lays down the very basic premise for the rest of verses explained for the Jnana Yoga. This verse explains the method of contemplation.

### Word Meanings:

**cittam** – the mind

**drśya-vāritam** - withdrawn from the seen (objects)

**ātmanah** - of its own

**citva-darśanam** – vision of the form of consciousness (which is called)

**tattva darśanam** – the vision of reality

### Meaning:

***The mind withdrawn from the objects sees itself as Consciousness and that is the vision of Reality (Self-Realization).***

This verse (verse 16) highlights withdrawing or shifting of one's attention away from all distracting outward objects and fixing attention exclusively on the subject 'I'. As explained by Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi in verse 14, the objects of the world including the body, mind and intellect are manifold and known, but the Knower – the Witnessing Self, is the one consciousness which does not change.

Generally, our mind is extrovert. When we see an object and a thought arises in our mind, we start thinking continuously about the object and our mind plays about thoughts associated with the object. The world around us is a ceaseless interplay between subject and object(s). The subject is 'I' which sees or perceives the object(s). The happiness we derive from object(s) is temporary and fleeting. These objects appear to exist, but

they are not real and are changing. We never think of turning our attention to the Seer of the object or on our self.

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi teaches that in contemplation our effort is to shift the attention of our mind from the object and turn it towards the Consciousness which illumines the object by using the thought, 'I am the Witness Consciousness'. When a continuous flow of the same thought is maintained, we experience that the mind withdraws from the objects seen and merges in the Consciousness, the Consciousness being the Reality (uninterrupted joy and bliss : Sat-Chit-Ananda). This abundance of the mind in its own nature of Consciousness is the 'Vision of Reality'.

## Destruction of Ego

(Upadesa Sara, Verse 20)

by Raj Kulkarni

अहमि नाशभाज्यहमहंतया ।  
स्फुरति हृत्स्वयं परमपूर्णसत् ॥२०॥

ahami nāśa-bhā-jyahama-hantaya  
sphurati hr̥t-svayaṁ parama-pūrṇa-sat ॥20॥

I found Verse 20, "Destruction of Ego", one of the more interesting verses. It attempts to go against the grain of acquisitiveness which is generally present in all of us.

A compelling observation is made that the

destruction of the ego does not mean the demise of the body, mind, and intellect, but the destruction of our false impression, "I am the body". It is further stated that the ego is the cause of our misery. That is a plausible theory, which some people can agree with.

I was curious of real world examples of people who have had some success in destroying their ego. An example was given how an actor does not fear changing from his stage costume to his normal dress. It was not clear how the ego was destroyed during that process.

I believe that we have some general idea about what it means to have an excessive ego, but what does it mean to have minimal or no ego? Who is this type of person? Can we picture him or her? This is where I believe the summarization of the verses go off the rails. The explanation of getting from Point A to Point B involves quite a bit of hand waving.

Upadesa Sara is a very involved text. As I have stated in the past (Verse 1), it is mainly for the advanced student. More real work examples might have eased the way for me. I hope the next text goes that way.

## The Essential Teaching

(Upadesa Sara, Verse 28)

by Ramdas Jadhav

Sri Bhagwan Ramana Maharshi's core teaching is the path of self-inquiry, also known as Atma-Vichara. This path involves



This path involves asking oneself the question "Who am I?" and investigating the nature of the self. While this path can be challenging, as it involves confronting deeply ingrained beliefs and conditioning, it ultimately leads to a sense of inner peace and contentment that is not dependent on external circumstances. The direct method of self-inquiry involves asking the question "Who am I?" and investigating the source of the "I" thought. Rather than trying to negate or suppress thoughts and desires, this method involves going directly to the source of these thoughts and desires and inquiring into the nature of the self. By asking oneself the question "Who am I?", and following the trail of thoughts and sensations that arise in response, one can gradually come to the realization that the sense of individual self is illusory, and that one's true nature is the unchanging consciousness that lies beyond it.

Let us look at the Verse 28 from Sri Bhagwan Ramana Maharshi's book: Upadesa Sara (The Essential Teaching).

किं स्वरूपमित्यात्मदर्शने ।  
अव्ययाऽभवाऽऽपूर्णचित्सुखम् ॥२८॥

kiṁ svarūpam-ityātmadarśane,  
avyayābhavā"pūrṇa-cit-sukham. ॥28॥

Pujya Gururji Swami Tejomayananda translated to,

‘What is (my) nature?’ Thus inquiring, one realizes the Self and knows, ‘I am the undecaying, unborn, all-complete

Consciousness-Bliss.’

In other words:

Having known one's nature  
One abides as being  
With no beginning and no end  
In unbroken consciousness and bliss.

When Bhagwan says, "Having known one's nature," he is referring to the process of self-inquiry, which involves questioning the nature of the self and investigating our true nature. The aim of self-inquiry is to discover the essence of the self, which is pure consciousness, and to realize that this consciousness is the ultimate reality underlying all of existence. In his teaching, he emphasized that our true nature is not limited to our physical body, thoughts, or emotions, but rather it is infinite, eternal, and unchanging.

Once one has realized their true nature as pure consciousness, Ramana Maharshi says that one "abides as being with no beginning and no end." This means that the enlightened person experiences themselves as timeless and infinite, without any limitations or boundaries. They recognize that their true nature has always existed and will always exist, and that it is not subject to birth, death, or change.

To illustrate this point, let's consider the example of a wave in the ocean. The wave appears to have a distinct beginning and end, and it appears to be a separate entity from the ocean. However, upon closer examination, we realize that the wave is not separate from the ocean, but rather it is an expression of the ocean. In the same way,

the individual self is not separate from the infinite consciousness, but rather it is an expression of that consciousness.

When Ramana Maharshi says, "in unbroken consciousness and bliss," he is referring to the experience of the enlightened person, who is in a state of continuous awareness and joy that is not dependent on external circumstances. The enlightened person recognizes that their true nature is not affected by the ups and downs of life, but rather it is a source of unshakable inner peace and contentment.

To illustrate this point, let's consider the example of a person who is in a state of deep meditation. During meditation, the person may experience a sense of inner peace and stillness that is not dependent on external circumstances. They may experience a sense of joy and bliss that arises from within, rather than from external sources. In the same way, the enlightened person experiences a state of unbroken consciousness and bliss that arises from within and is not dependent on external circumstances.

Ramana Maharshi once said, "Happiness is your nature. It is not wrong to desire it. What is wrong is seeking it outside when it is inside." This quote illustrates his teaching that true happiness and contentment come from within, and that we can experience this happiness by realizing our true nature as pure consciousness.

Ramana Maharshi believed that self-inquiry is not just a theoretical concept, but something that can be experienced directly

through practice. Here are some quotes from Maharshi that further illustrate his teachings on self-inquiry:

"The question 'Who am I?' is not really meant to get an answer, the question 'Who am I?' is meant to dissolve the questioner."

This quote emphasizes that the purpose of self-inquiry is not to find a specific answer, but rather to dissolve the ego or the sense of individual identity that asks the question.

"The mind is only a bundle of thoughts. The thoughts have their root in the I-thought. Whoever investigates the True 'I' enjoys the stillness of bliss."

This quote emphasizes that the mind and the ego are not the true self, but rather a collection of thoughts and impressions that arise from the "I-thought." By investigating the nature of the true "I," one can experience the stillness and bliss that is inherent in consciousness.

In summary, Verse 28 refers to the experience of self-realization, in which one recognizes their true nature as pure consciousness and experiences a state of inner peace and contentment that is not dependent on external circumstances. Through self-inquiry and realization of our true nature, we can experience a sense of timeless and infinite being, and a source of unshakable inner peace and joy that comes from within. While there can be obstacles on this path, such as identification with the ego, fear of the unknown, and lack of self-discipline, the rewards of self-inquiry are ultimately transformative.

## Make Peace With Your Unlived Life

by Neelima Polam

I was invited as a guest speaker to join the **Devi Group** Satsang at **CMWRC Richmond Chapter** in February 2023. The topic for reflection was 'Make Peace With Your Unlived Life' based on the ninth chapter of the book **Am I that I am?** from the **Mananam Series**.

I resonated a lot with the topic. Perhaps most of us have been in situations where we thought our life could have been different had we made other choices and felt regret at some point. Like Tina in the book, I was at crossroads in various stages of my life. I ended up struggling with conflicting inner and outer voices. Although this may not have been visible to others, many questions were swirling in my mind. I struggled to find meaning and purpose. That led me to pursue various interests/careers for the fulfillment that I was yearning for. In hindsight, this struggle was well worth it as it compelled me to delve inward to understand my true nature.

In the book, Tina was lost when her daughter moved away from their home to attend college. That caused her to question all her life choices up to that point. She lost interest in work and wanted to quit but was afraid of what others would think. Suddenly she began to wonder whether all the choices she made thus far were hers or if they were made because of her family's expectations. These conflicting thoughts in her mind made her

delve into a quest for her identity and embark on a journey of self-exploration.

Who and what we identify with largely dictates how we live and see the world around us. If we are asked, "Who are you?", any answer we have is only in relation to another, like, I am someone's mother, someone's wife, someone's daughter, I am working as so and so, I own a home, a car, etc. But the question is not what you are in relation to others, what you own, or what work you do.



In any relationship, when we identify too much with another person, there is a feeling of emptiness when the same is either not reciprocated or if the person is not accessible. Our role feels diminished, and a lot of confusion creeps into our minds about



all the choices that led us to that point. For example, if one is strongly identified as a parent, there is a feeling of emptiness and loneliness when kids grow up and move out. This may cause a lot of confusion and may push us toward losing interest in everything in life. This also could happen in other instances such as losing a job, loved ones, etc.

As we go through various experiences, we gather a lot of impressions about desirable and undesirable qualities based on parental and societal attitudes. When we observe ourselves feeling the "undesirable" qualities it causes a lot of agitation, especially if we can't express what we feel to anyone, fearing damage to our relationships. At times we also assume these feelings are unimportant when others minimize them. We are constantly trying to please others and follow what others are doing while suppressing our own desires and needs.

The more and more we move away from being authentic and integrating our personality, the more gap there is between our true self and false self (conditioned self). When these are at loggerheads, there is no stable sense of identity. Every decision seems confusing because of an identity crisis. We all go through this at some stage, perhaps not at the same intensity levels. It depends on our experiences and how we've been able to integrate our true self and false self.

When there is no stable sense of identity, it can be very draining and unmotivating. We begin to visualize what our life could have been if other choices were made. There is no

limit to imagination. With every unmade choice, life could have turned out in many different ways.

Mulling over what could have been can completely deplete our energies and disable us from focusing on what could serve our real needs to take care of ourselves. This situation can easily lead one to extreme levels of stress and depression, but it could also present a lot of opportunities. At times like these, pertinent and profound questions come into our minds like Who am I, What do I want to be, Why do I want to be that, What is my purpose in life, Why am I not able to be happy, What is the source of happiness, and so on. Instead of dwelling in self-pity and thinking about what life could have been, one can be on a transformational journey to know the true Self.



It is important to go through past experiences and get them out, maybe by writing a journal or sharing your true feelings with someone you trust. This helps one to be more aware of one's life journey. It also helps with letting go of the past and being more open to doing what needs to be done by finding creative ways to better our lives. It also gives more



clarity on what we can do at this moment to improve our standard of life by understanding that we cannot change the past. Our past determines what our present is. What we do in the present moment will have an effect in the future.

The whole attitude changes when we are more self-aware. The confusion decreases

thereby allowing us to express and live more honestly where the gap between true and false self minimizes. Most of us feel this inner work to be hard and confusing. But doing this inner work is very liberating. And once we experience the sweetness of that, there will be no regrets about any past choices because without those you would not be at this point where you are more conscious and self-aware enabling you to make better choices for your well-being and to lead a life with no regrets.

Reflecting on our thoughts, asking questions, and having meaningful conversations, all these help to bridge the gap between the true self and the false self. Seeking our true self is a very enriching journey and if approached with genuine curiosity can help us understand so much more about our true Self which is previously unknown to us.





## Reflections on Narayaneeyam (Dasaka 16) The Nara and Narayana Avatar and Daksha Yagna

by Kodanate Lakshmanan

### EDITOR'S NOTE

With the grace and blessings of Swami Dheeranandaji, this is a series of reflections on Narayaneeyam, a devotional composition by Melpathur Narayana Bhattathiripad, containing the essence of Srimad Bhagavatam. This series borrows from the spiritual significance and connotation explained by Sri S.N. Sastry in his commentary on Narayaneeyam.

pride was vanquished by Lord Shiva. Readers may recall that the Narayaneeyam is a poetic composition based on Srimad Bhagavatam. This Dashaka is based on the first few chapters of the fourth canto. Chapters 4 through 7 of the fourth canto describe in detail the story of Daksha Prajapati and his enmity with Lord Shiva after which Daksha bowed down to Lord Shiva.

***Om Ganeshaya Namaha. Om Saraswatyai Namaha. Om Shri Gurubhyo Namaha.***

This Dashaka is chanted primarily in the Vasantatilakam meter. Specific verses are chanted in a different meter (indicated) which is another feature of this composition. Interested readers may reference the website <https://www.prapatti.com/categories/naarayaniiyam.php> where the audio version and transliteration of the various Dashakas are available online. Please note that there are various popular methods of reciting these beautiful Shlokas and there may be slight variations in the meter used. The author wishes to acknowledge stotranidhi.com for the Roman transliteration of the verses. The sixteenth Dashaka describes the Lord's Avatar as the brothers Nara and Narayana, who were born to vanquish the Asura, Sahasrakavacha. The Dashaka also briefly describes the story of Daksha Prajapati's



दक्षो विरिञ्च तनयोऽथ मनोस्तनूजां  
लब्ध्वा प्रसूतिमिह षोडश चाप कन्याः ।  
धर्मे त्रयोदश ददौ पितृषु स्वधां च  
स्वाहां हविर्भुजि सतीं गिरिशो त्वदंशे ॥ 16-1॥

dakṣo viriñcatanayō:’tha manōstanūjāṁ  
labdhvā prasūtimiha ṣoḍaśa cāpa kanyāḥ |  
dharmē trayōdaśa dadau pitṛṣu svadhāṁ ca  
svāhāṁ havirbhujī satīm giriśe tvadamśe || 16-1 ||

In the first verse, the poet narrates to us that Daksha, the son of Lord Brahma got married to Swayambhu Manu’s daughter Prasoothi. They had sixteen daughters and the first thirteen were married to Dharma. His daughter Swadha was married to the manes and Swaaha to Lord Agni. His daughter Sati was married to Lord Shiva, who is an aspect of Lord Vishnu.

मूर्तिर्हि धर्म गृहिणी सुषुवे भवन्तं  
नारायणं नरसखं महितानु भावम् ।  
यज्जन्मनि प्रमुदिताः कृततुर्य घोषाः  
पुष्पोत्करान् प्रववृषुः नुनुवुः सुरौघाः ॥ 16-2॥

mūrtirhi dharmagrhiṇī suṣuvē bhavantāṁ  
nārāyaṇaṁ narasakhaṁ mahitānubhāvam |  
yajjanmani pramuditāḥ kṛtatūryaghōṣāḥ  
puṣpōtkarāṇpravavṛṣununuṣuḥ suraughāḥ || 16-2 ||

The birth of the two brothers Nara and Narayana, who are incarnations of Lord Vishnu is described in this second verse. They were born to Dharma through his wife Murti. Their birth gave great joy to the celestial denizens who celebrated by showering flowers on this joyous occasion.

दैत्यं सहस्र कवचं कवचैः परीतं  
साहस्र वत्सर तपः समराभिलष्यैः ।  
पर्याय नीर्मित तपः समरौ भवन्तौ  
शिष्टैक कङ्कटममुं न्यहतां सलीलम् ॥ 16-3॥

daityaṁ sahasrakavacaṁ kavacaiḥ parītaṁ  
sāhasravatsaratapassamarābhilavyaiḥ |  
paryāyanirmitatapassamarau bhavantau  
śiṣṭaikakaṅkaṭamamuṁ nyahatāṁ salīlam || 16-3 ||

In the third verse, the poet goes on to describe the purpose of the incarnation as Nara and Narayana. There was an Asura Sahasrakavacha. As the name suggests, the Asura had a thousand armors attached to his body. He had a boon by which he could only be killed by someone who performs penance for a thousand years and then fights with him for the same number of years. The brothers took turns performing penance and fighting the demon and ultimately vanquished the Asura.

Shri S.N.Shastrī states that Sahasrakavacha was later born as Karna. The story of Sahasrakavacha is not mentioned in the Bhagawatam and the poet Narayaneeya Bhattathiri seems to have taken this story from the Mahabharata.

In the third verse, there is also the spiritual significance of performing penance and fighting the battle. This alludes to a person needing to do his duty while also surrendering to the Lord and echoes Lord Krishna’s advice to Arjuna in the Bhagvad Gita about surrendering to the Lord and getting ready to fight.

The fourth verse describes how Nara and Narayana then retired to Badarika Ashrama in search of liberation. They started their austerities to reach the goal of self-realization. The next few verses describe how Lord Indra, becoming pensive at the thought that their austerities may lead to him losing his throne, sends celestial damsels to disturb their penance and the outcome. The story again is used to signify how our own senses (Indriyas which are ruled by Indra)

अन्वाचरन् उपदिशन् अपि मोक्षधर्मं  
त्वं भ्रातृमान् बदरिकाश्रमं अध्यवात्सीः ।  
शक्रोऽथ ते शम-तपोबल-निस्सहात्मा  
दिव्याङ्गना परिवृतं प्रजिघाय मारम् ॥ 16-4॥

anvācarannupadiśannapi mōkṣadharmam  
tvam bhrātṛmān badarikāśramamadyavātsīḥ ।  
śakrō:'tha tē śamatapōbalanissahātmā  
divyāṅganāparivṛtam prajighāya māram ॥ 16-4 ॥

कामो वसन्त मलयानिल बन्धुशाली  
कान्ता कटाक्ष विशिखैः विकसत्-विलासैः ।  
विध्यन् मुहुर्मुहुर् अकम्पं उदीक्ष्य च त्वां  
भीतस्त्वयाथ जगदे मृदु हासभाजा ॥ 16-5॥

kāmō vasantamalayānilabandhuśālī  
kāntākāṭākṣaviśikhairvikasadvilāsaiḥ ।  
vidhyanmuhurmuhurakampamudikṣya ca tvām  
bhītastvayātha jagadē mṛduhāsabhājā ॥ 16-5 ॥

become obstacles on the path of meditation and try to distract the mind and intellect from single-pointed concentration. The fifth verse is another great example where the poet uses lyrical poetry to draw a fascinating word picture. The verse describes how Lord

Kamadeva, at the instruction of Indra, aided by his trusted companions i.e. the pleasant winds in the mountains and the spring weather, tries to distract the penance of Nara and Narayana. He makes multiple attempts to distract them (the poet says he is shooting his arrows of passion) and the divine damsels try to gain his attention through their side long glances and dance. Finally,

भीत्यालं अङ्गज वसन्त सुराङ्गना वो  
मन्मानसं त्विह जुषध्वं इति ब्रुवाणः ।  
त्वं विस्मयेन परितः स्तुवतामथैषां  
प्रादर्शयः स्व परिचारक कातराक्षीः ॥ 16-6॥

bhītyālamaṅgaja vasanta surāṅganā vō  
manmānasantviha juṣudhvamiti bruvāṇaḥ ।  
tvam vismayēna paritaḥ stuvatāmathaiṣām  
prādarśayaḥ svaparicāarakakātarākṣīḥ ॥ 16-6 ॥

सम्मोहनाय मिलिता मदनादयस्ते  
त्वत् दासिका परिमलैः किल मोहमापुः ।  
दत्तां त्वया च जगृहुः त्रपयैव सर्व  
स्वर्वासि गर्व शमनीं पुनरूर्वाशीं तां ॥ 16-7॥

sammōhanāya militā madanādayastē  
tvaddāsikāparimalaiḥ kila mōhamāpuḥ ।  
dattām tvayā ca jagṛhustrapayaiva sarva-  
svarvāsigarvaśamanīm punarurvaśīm tām ॥ 16-7 ॥

दृष्ट्वोर्वशीं तव कथां च निशम्य शक्रः  
पर्याकुलोऽजनि भवत् महिमावमर्शात् ।  
एवं प्रशान्त रमणीयतराऽवतारत्  
त्वत्तोऽधिको वरद कृष्ण तनुस्त्वं एव ॥ 16-8॥

drṣṭvōrvaśīm tava kathām ca niśamya śakraḥ  
paryākulō:'jani bhavanmahimāvamarsāt ।  
ēvam praśāntaramaṇīyatarāvatārā-  
ttvattō:'dhikō varada kṛṣṇatanustvamēva ॥ 16-8 ॥



realizing his inability to disturb their penance, Lord Kamadeva is scared and surrenders to them. They then smilingly address him.

In the sixth verse, the brothers address Lord Kamadeva and the divine Apsaras gently and assuaging their fear (of repercussions for possibly disturbing the brothers' penance), they explain to Kamadeva about the divine attendants who are constantly at Nara and Narayana's service. This is hardly surprising considering that the brothers are the incarnation of Lord Vishnu, who is constantly served by the divine Apsaras.

In the seventh verse, the poet describes how Lord Kamadeva, and his group of divine damsels are themselves bewitched by the beauty of the attendants of Lord Vishnu and bow down in humility. In order to send a message to Lord Indra and vanquish his false pride, the sages then create a new divine Apsara from the dust of their thighs. This Apsara, named Urvashi, is gifted to Kamadeva to take back to Indra's court.

Having seen Urvashi's incomparable beauty and heard the story of Kamadeva's meeting with the sages, Indra is astonished and realizes his mistake. Indra's reaction is captured by the poet in the eighth verse. For good measure, the poet adds that the sages Nara and Narayana, incarnations of the Lord Himself, are thus enchantingly beautiful and peaceful. Their beauty is surpassed only in the incarnation of the Lord as Shri Krishna.

The last two verses of this Dashaka go on to briefly summarize the story of Daksha Prajapati. This story is described in elaborate detail in Chapters 4 through 7 of the fourth

दक्षस्तु धातुरतिलाळनया रजोन्धो  
नात्यादृत-स्त्वयि च कष्टं अशान्तिरासीत् ।  
येन व्यरुन्ध स भवत् तनुमेव शर्वं  
यज्ञे च वैर पिशुने स्वसुतां व्यमानीत् ॥ 16-9॥

dakṣastu dhāturatilālanayā rajō:'ndhō  
nātyādr̥tastvayi ca kaṣṭamāśāntirāsīt ।  
yēna vyarundha sa bhavattanumēva śarvaṁ  
yajñe ca vairapiśunē svasutāṁ vyamānit ॥ 16-9 ॥

क्रुद्धेश-मर्दित मखः स तु कृत्त शीर्षो  
देव प्रसादित हरात् अथ लब्ध जीवः ।  
त्वत् पूरित क्रतुवरः पुनराप शान्तिं  
स त्वं प्रशान्ति कर पाहि मरुत्पुरेश ॥ 16-10॥

kruddhē śamarditamakhaḥ sa tu kṛttaśīrṣō  
dēvaprasāditaharādatha labdhajīvaḥ ।  
tvatpūritakratuvaraḥ punarāpa śāntim  
sa tvaṁ praśāntikara pāhi marutpurēśa ॥ 16-10 ॥

canto. Here, the poet makes a quick allusion to the story and emphasizes how Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu are two forms of the same divinity. If one looks back at the cultural milieu in which the poet was working a few centuries ago, there was a great need to bring together the Vaishnavite and Shaivite sects to overcome challenges and restore Sanatana Dharma to its glory.

The story, in brief, goes as follows. Daksha is one of the favorite sons of Brahma and was appointed as the head of the Prajapatis. This causes him pride and affects his ability to discriminate. Once, he enters his court for a Yagna and everyone, except Lord Brahma (his father) and Lord Shiva (his son-in-law) stand up in respect. Annoyed at Lord Shiva for not giving him due respect, he develops a

hatred for Lord Shiva. To show his displeasure, he organizes his next Yagna without allocating a share of the offerings for Lord Shiva. Furthermore, he does not invite Lord Shiva and his daughter Sati to the Yagna. Goddess Sati attends the Yagna and annoyed by the disrespect to Lord Shiva, she sacrifices her body. Learning about this, Lord Shiva then sends his attendants to destroy the Yagna and behead Daksha. Advised by Lord Brahma and humbled by his mistakes, Daksha Prajapati then surrenders to Lord Shiva and is granted a new lease of life. He

then goes on to complete his Yagna.

In his customary way, the poet requests the benevolent Lord of Guruvayoor to bless him and cure him from his diseases in the concluding portion of the final verse.

In the next Dashaka, the poet narrates the fascinating story of Dhruva and his unique achievement of being able to meditate and get the Lord's blessings at the tender age of five years.



## Reflections on Swami Tapovan Poetry Hymn to Ganga - 14 (Excerpts)

by Sitaram Kowtha



Param Pujya Gurudev, Swami Tapovanam, nurtured his disciple, Swami Chinmayananda on the banks of River Ganga at Uttar Kashi and Gangotri. Tapovanji himself 'wandered' across Himalayan peaks, traversing the glaciers, streams, rivers, and mountain peaks to include such places of lore as Mount Kailas, Char Dham (Gangotri, Yamunotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath), Sri Sarada

### EDITOR'S NOTE

We are pleased to introduce this series of articles by Sitaramji, excerpts of poetry by Swami Tapovanam.

Sources:

- Sri Ganga Stotram (Hymn to Ganga) by Swami Tapovanam
- Commentary by Swami Chinmayananda
- Pujya Guruji, Swami Tejomayananda, discourse on this work. Discourse available on [ChinmayaClix](http://ChinmayaClix.com) website

temple, Amarnath and Vaishnavi Devi temples in Kashmir, and so on. His journey prior to becoming a sannyasi took him to Kolkota, Kashi, Haridwar, and Rishikesh. In other words, he traveled to the source of Ganga in Goumukh glacier as well to various locations where the river journey down the mountains to the plains, onwards to Bengal. In this composition, he invokes Mother Ganga as a divine mother and the supreme Self, and expresses the manifestation of the divine beauty and divinity indicated in the Upanishads. In this work he exalts Ganga and Gangotri, and it also serves as his teaching of Upanishads to us.

Altogether there are 125 verses in 5 sections of 25 verses each. In the following series, we will excerpt 5-10 verses, with meanings and



highlights from Sri Gurudev's commentary,  
and further elaboration in discourse by  
Guruji, Swami Tejomayananda

त्राकाभेदेषु निराकृतौ वा  
निष्ठैव कार्या दृढमन्यवर्जम्।  
निष्ठा सवित्री न तु रूपभेदः  
फलस्य यस्मात्तव विश्वमूर्ते ॥१६॥

trprākārbhedeṣu nirākṛtau vā  
niṣṭhaiva kāryā dṛḍhamanyavarjam |  
niṣṭhā savitrī na tu rūpabhedaḥ  
phalasya yasmāttava viśvamūrte ||16||

***What is wanted is single-pointed-attention (Nishtha) at the form-full or the form-less Reality, where in the mind-in-Nishtha is no more running towards other objects. This Nishtha is the spiritual path, and the question of "What form?" has no spiritual value.***

***The whole universe is Thy form! O Vishwamoorthae!  
Therefore, the result will certainly come to the true devotee.***

The seeker's attempt is to hold his mind away from all its wanderings in the world of dissimilar objects of pleasure. To do so, he will have to fix his entire mind, with single-pointed attention, at an altar of deep devotion and fervent reverence. This altar may be in a form or formless representation of the divine. The mind resting in alert attention continuously at the altar is called Nishtha.

Nishtha is all important for the spiritual progress of the seeker. Mother, Thou art of the form of the entire universe. The cosmos

is Thy form only. O Vishwamoorthae! As such, any form that suits the mind and temperament of the devotee can fully represent Thee, for him. He will certainly gain his end (goal).

मिथ्याऽथ सद्देति जगद्दिनानि  
विवादतो हन्त नयन्ति लोकाः।  
मिथ्यात्वसत्यत्वविचारणेन  
किं वा पिपासोस्तव भक्तिपेयम्॥१७॥

mithyā'tha sadveti jagaddināni  
vivādato hanta nayanti lokāḥ |  
mithyā'tvasatyatvavicāraṇena  
kiṁ vā pipāsostava bhaktipeyam ||17||

***What a pity, that a large number of people  
Spend their days in endless discussions –  
Whether the world is false or true.  
What is there to gain in such an enquiry  
Into the illusoriness or otherwise, of the  
perceived word?  
May he who is thirsty for joy of devotion  
Slack his thirst at his love for Thee...***

The majority of the students of the scriptures end their spiritual efforts in a fatiguing, merely intellectual inquiry into the world and its reality. This is only an academic interest in, and not an actual thirst for the Supreme. Some hold the view that the world is the only reality; while others strongly hold the opposite view that the world perceived is a delusion of the mind, and therefore a pitiless illusion. The discussions never end.

Having ascertained the scriptural theme, the seeker must feel the impatience to come to 'experience' the promised unfoldment.

Through sincere self-application, the seeker must strive towards reorganizing relationships in the outer life and reorienting values in the inner life.

A true devotee of the Mother Divine is ever thirsty to experience the nectarine bliss of his all-giving love for Her Sacred Feet. He pursues his worship and adoration and steadily pours out his love at Her altar, and comes to live at least the distant aroma of a Bliss Divine, which is Her very presence.

यथा तथैवास्तु न काकदन्त -  
परीक्षणव्यग्रतयाऽस्ति किञ्चित्।  
परात्परे ! त्वत्यदपद्मसेवा -  
रतिः स्वयं मुक्तिपदैकहेतुः ॥१८॥

yathā tathāivāstu na kākadanta -  
parīkṣaṇavyagratayā'asti kiñcit |  
parātpare ! tvyadapadmasevā -  
ratiḥ svayaṁ muktīpadaikahetuḥ ||18||

**“As the thing is, so let it be.”**

**The impatient restlessness for, and the excitement in inquiry into the exact number of teeth in a crow's beak, is indeed a vain effort, a futile endeavor. O Paratpare! O Beyond the Beyond! To revel in the joy of serving Thee alone Is the way to final liberation.**

This verse opens with an idiom in Sanskrit which means the end of discussion, saying “as the thing is, so let it be.” Whatever be the nature of the Supreme, let it be as it is. All our impatient restlessness at and weary excitements for counting and exactly ascertaining the precise number of teeth in

the crow are all at best only futile efforts. Even if you have ascertained it, there can always be somebody to contradict your conclusions. And, compared with the energies spent in this investigation, what use are the conclusions? Similarly, all the arrogant intellectual arguments upon the nature of Reality would lead us nowhere.

Thou art Parat-Para (beyond the beyond). This manifested world perceived is experienced as a result of the play of our mind-intellect equipment, and its rhythm of expression is ordered by the vasanas in us. The inner realms that order and control our outer expressions are subtler and therefore called as the beyond. Thou Art Mother Divine, the very life-force, the atman in us, and as such Thou art beyond the beyond.

To learn to revel in Thy service alone is the grand way to reach ‘liberation’ – liberation of personality from all its physical, mental and intellectual conditionings.

को वा विजानाति विशेषतस्त्वत् -  
स्वरूपयाथात्म्यमबुद्धिगम्यम्।  
त्वत्सृष्टिमाहात्म्यमपीश्वरि ! स्वां  
स्वप्रक्रियां च स्वयमेव वेस्ति ॥१९॥

ko vā vijānāti viśeṣatastvat -  
svarūpayāthātmyamabuddhigamyam |  
tvatsṛṣṭimāhātmyamapīśvari ! svāṁ  
svaprakriyāṁ ca svayameva vesti ||19||

**Who knows Thy Real Nature, which is beyond all intellectual comprehension?  
O Iswari! O Ruler of the Universe!**

***O Iswari! O Ruler of the Universe!  
Thou alone can'tst Thyself comprehend  
the totality of Thy Creation and its glory,  
and all Thy special doings (prakriya)..***

Since the Consciousness, the Life, is the play of all the activities, none of our instruments of perception or feelings or thinking can comprehend It. The Self is “that which the eyes can never see, but because of which the eyes can see”, says the Upanishad. It is a subject, and so can never become an object of our understanding; It is the very Power Divine, beneath our intellect, because of which our intellect has its intelligence.

The “created” world of objects is perceived only because of the Self within, the Witnessing Consciousness. Thus, O Rules of the Universe! O Iswari! Thou art the only ‘knower’ who can comprehend Thy creation, its full glory and Thy own mysterious doings (prakriya).

The ‘ego’ of the seeker can never ‘see’ the Self. When the ego is transcended, the Self reveals the Self, in the Self, in all Its full perfection, as pure Sat-Chit-Ananda. “The one who has realized Brahman is none other than Brahman Himself”, thunder the Upanishad seers.

को वेद को वा वदतीह सम्य -  
गियं विसृष्टिर्यत त्राबभूव।  
त्रप्रहो महादुर्गमंब ! युष्मत् -  
सतत्वमित्यार्षनिरुक्तिरेषा ॥२०॥

ko veda ko vā vadatīha samya -  
giyaṁ viśṛṣṭiryata trābabhūva |  
trpraho mahādurgamaṁba ! yuṣmat -  
satatvamityārṣaniruktireṣā ||20||



***Who knows from what this creation  
arises?***

***Who can express it?***

***O Ambae, O Mother Divine!***

***Thy true nature is indeed, beyond  
comprehension.***

***The Rishis simply say expressively –  
“Thou Art”.***

Since the seeker himself is a created being, it is impossible for him to objectify the cause of his own being. No one can ‘know’ exactly from what this created Universe had risen. Even if anyone comes to apprehend It, he cannot express It. The world of objects exists and functions only in the medium of ‘Time’. Time is a concept of the intellect. Through intellect, we can recognize the world of plurality. Those who have realized That, which is consciousness beneath the intellect, are those who have adventured beyond their own intellect. To express that Transcendental Experience, the realized one has to return to his intellect – then how can he express It? Thus the poet-sage asks, “who can express It”.

Since, Mother Divine, Thou art an existent state of Supreme Awareness, realized in that transcendental state, the Rishis have declared “Thou Art”.





## Some Inspiring Quotes by Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda

”

To say, 'LORD IS' is Gyanam.  
But 'THE LORD IS I' is Vigyanam.

”

Dignity of labor consists in  
service.

”

Even though you have not  
conquered the battles of the  
world, you become the world  
conqueror when you have  
conquered your mind.

”

Carefully navigate around the  
dangerous rocks of thy own  
Lower nature. Thou shall reach  
the eternal Heaven of peace and  
Bliss – TRUTH.

### EDITOR'S NOTE

We encourage all members to submit your articles, reflections, and pictures so that we can share your experiences with the wider CMWRC family and continue to inspire each other in our common quest for spiritual growth.

Please refer to the **information page** for submission deadlines.

Hari Om!  
Unto Sri Gurudev!

