

Vedant Bhaskar

Newsletter - English, March 2026







About Vedant Bhaskar



The sole aim of Vedant Bhaskar organization is to make the non-dual philosophy (Kevaladvaita Tattvadnyan) put forward by Shrimad Adi Shankaracharya available to seekers across the United States and abroad, enabling everyone to apply this practical wisdom to transform their everyday life into a blissful and harmonious experience. The foundation of this work is laid by Sadguru P.P. Dr. Shrikrushna Dattatreya Deshmukh (lovingly known as P.P. Dr. Kaka). Under his revered guidance, the organization continues to expand this work so that more and more people are drawn toward the ultimate purpose of human life – Self-realization (Swarupanubhuti). To support spiritual aspirants in this path, the organization regularly conducts programs that explain the essence of the profound Advait Vedantic principles that includes (but not limited to) study retreats, regular study of Vedantic texts, collective Upasana (worship), and a newsletter publication. In addition, to carry forward the timeless learnings of Sanatan Bharatiya Vedic culture to the younger generation, Vedant Bhaskar also conducts ongoing Bal-Sanskar Varg (value-education classes) for the children and youth. Vedant Bhaskar is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in the United States.

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Special Thanks: Shree. Milind Jagannath Kale – Hindi Translation

To ensure that language does not become a barrier in the study of spirituality, Vedant Bhaskar quarterly is available in three languages – Marathi, Hindi, and English.

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The original image of 'Shree Ram Mandir, Ayodhya' featured on the cover has been sourced from the internet.



Editorial

"Salutations to the Lord Ganesha."

यावद् स्थास्यन्ति गिरयः सरितश्च महीतले ।
तावद् रामायणकथा लोकेषु प्रचरिष्यति ॥वाल्मीकी रामायण, बालकांड - सर्ग २.३५ ॥

(Lord Brahma says to Maharishi Valmiki) As long as the rivers flow, as long as the oceans exist, as long as the mountains stand tall, and as long as the sun and moon remain in the sky, the epic of Rama (Ramakatha) shall remain immortal in this world. (Valmiki Ramayan, BaalKand Sarg 2.35)

‘रामो विग्रहवान् धर्मः । ~ ‘Lord Rama is the personification of Dharma.’ — A hundred crore salutations at the feet of Maryada Purushottam Prabhu Ramachandra, based on whose actions the rules of the Dharma-shastras were written!

On the auspicious occasion of Shree Ram Navami, Vedant Bhaskar Organization's first quarterly of 2026, and its fourth edition overall, is being published.

May the banner of this organization's work, dedicated to spiritual elevation, keep flying eternally, just like the Dharma Dhvaja recently installed upon the main golden spire of the Shree Ram Temple in Ayodhya. This is our prayer at the feet of Lord Shree Rama!

This quarterly publication is an integral part of this very spiritual endeavor. Adorned with profound contemplations, it aims to steer a seeker's thoughts and deeds toward a path of lasting, constructive grace.

Human existence, though fundamentally incomplete, finds its fulfillment through divine communion. Sadguru P.P. Dr. Shreekrishna Deshmukh's article, 'Spirituality and Life', presents a profound, Bhagavadgeeta-inspired vision of 'Worship through Action.' It asserts that the heart of true devotion lies in performing every task as a divine command, for a divine purpose, and as a final offering to the Divine. While the pursuit of spiritual perfection demands discernment and detachment, the rigorous disciplines of Yoga and Knowledge often feel too harsh for the average seeker. The Path of Devotion (Bhakti), as shown by the Saints, provides a gentler alternative. In her article 'Do Not Let the Senses Wander,' P.P. MandaTai eloquently explains the beauty of the Bhakti Marg, showing how self-control and detachment are naturally and effortlessly mastered when the heart is anchored in devotion.

Written by Shree. Mangesh Phadke, the contemplative series 'Shree Ganapati Atharvashirsha' offers a profound exposition of Ganapati's divine form in a fluent and engaging style. The second article in this series serves as a vital reminder that 'the Atharvashirsha is an Upanishad' and advocates that its contemplation must be approached from that very philosophical perspective. In his article titled 'Na Me Bhaktah Pranashyati,' Shraddheya MuleyShastri unveils the deep significance of the divine promise found in the ninth chapter of the Geeta. He explores the essence of 'Ananya Bhakti'—exclusive devotion



—and explains why the Lord guarantees that such a seeker will never be perished. An insightful article by the venerable Dr. Mayanil, exploring the Yogic science and modern neuroscience underlying the hymn 'Hanuman Chalisa'—a perspective designed to resonate deeply with the younger generation.

We are honored to announce the highlight of this edition: the launch of a regular column by P. P. **Swami GovindDev Giri Maharaj**. His masterful writing now finds a permanent home in our pages. The timing is profoundly significant—as we publish on the auspicious day of Ram Navami, we celebrate the contributions of Swamiji, who served as the Treasurer of the Trust for the Ayodhya Ram Mandir. This convergence of sacred timing and sacred authorship is indeed a 'sweet and divine alignment' for our readers.

The cover of this edition celebrates a historic epoch: the completion of the Shri Ram Temple in Ayodhya. After five centuries of longing, the sacred Dharmadhvaja—the banner of victory—was hoisted by Honorable Prime Minister **Shree. Narendra Modi** on November 25, 2025. In honor of this golden milestone and the auspicious arrival of Shree Ram Navami, we dedicate this issue's cover to the enduring glory of Lord Shree Ram.

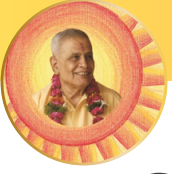
The duty fulfilled by the Vedant Bhaskar quarterly is that of offering spiritual writings, created with the pure intention that readers may gain spiritual inspiration from, attain clarity of spiritual concepts, be aided in removing the impurities and distractions of the mind, enrich their indirect (theoretical) knowledge, and develop consistency in spiritual contemplation.

As previously announced, this quarterly publication has been made available in three languages right from its first issue — Marathi, Hindi, and English. Following Sadguru P.P. Kaka's guidance, the work of the organization has begun by rising above all boundaries of language, region, nation, and spiritual lineage—holding to the Shuti's call 'कृण्वन्तो विश्वमार्यम्' (Let us inspire righteousness across the entire world) as an ideal, and embracing the core of the word Sadguru, 'जेथे माया स्पर्शो सकेना।' (That which remains beyond the grasp of Maya).

The responsibility of regularly publishing a trilingual quarterly issue has been shouldered with the support of many devoted Sadhaka brothers & sisters alike. It is their spirit of selfless service that forms the true strength behind carrying the weight of this long-term endeavor.

॥ Jai Jai Raghuveer Samarth ॥

Shree. Mangesh Phadke
Chaitra Shuddha Navami, Shalivahana Shaka 1947
Thursday, 26th March 2026, Shree Rama Navami
Bay Area, California, USA



Section: The Quest for Lasting Happiness

Adhyatma and Life (Part 4)

P.P. Dr. Shrikrishna Dattatreya Deshmukh

Worship/Devotion:

In the context of spirituality and life, the worship of God is a vital component. People all over the world worship God based on one concept or another. Even though the concepts and methods differ, their underlying principle—knowingly or unknowingly—remains the same.

The first principle is that a human being is never perfect in all aspects. In one area of life or another, everyone continually senses that incompleteness; which keeps on nagging and tormenting them. It is never possible for everyone to have everything exactly as they desire — be it body, intellect, success, fame, power, wealth, art, sports, knowledge, children, profession, relatives, job, industry, caste, religion, society, state, nation, or the world. No one can escape this affliction of incompleteness. Be it those who are absorbed in the pride of the 'self', those who live in the

arrogance of wealth, those who relish the 'high' of art and creativity, those who shine in the light of fame, those intoxicated by power, those immersed in sensual pleasures, or those who get carried away by their professional success—all of them, at some point or another, are struck by the blow of incompleteness. However, those who have surrendered to God and those who perform the worship of God can remain insulated from it.

Those who do not perform the worship of God may collapse mentally due to this incompleteness, waste their lives in idle fantasies, and continue to burn with envy and jealousy. By shifting the blame for their own imperfections onto others, they may render their future life futile, or keep deceiving themselves with endless justifications. Such a life cannot possibly be a happy life. It can never attain completeness, nor can it deny this reality. Such a



truly realistic perspective forms a strong foundation for the worship of God.

According to spiritual science, God is endowed with six divine attributes such as Yasha (renown that is stainless, timeless, and spans across the three worlds - Triloka), Shree (an eternal and constant abundance), Audarya (magnanimity that is independent and limitless, flowing freely without discriminating between the worthy and the unworthy), Dnyan (unimpeded and eternal knowledge of all subjects—encompassing both their general nature and their specific details—at all times), Vairagya (complete dispassion and detachment toward all worldly and celestial pleasures), Aishwarya (divine majesty and absolute, unhindered authority over the entire universe); He is self-fulfilled and hence desireless, the eternal witness of all, and omnipotent. He possesses the power of Truthful Resolve (Satya-sankalpa) and the absolute capacity to act, not to act, or to act in a different way (Kartum-Akartum-Anyathakartum). If, through worship, the individual jīva becomes one with this Divine, then all the qualities attributed to God will manifest in him as if they were his own. Then, as stated in the Narada Bhakti Sutras, that seeker becomes profoundly satiated (Trupto bhavati) and overwhelmed with spiritual ecstasy (Matto bhavati). (Na. Bha. Su. 4, 6).

It does not matter if anyone labels this process 'brainwashing'. If one thinks about it, the process of washing away thoughts of incompleteness and establishing thoughts of perfection is indeed similar. When one progresses from the first stage of devotion, listening (Shravana-bhakti), to the ninth, self-surrender (atmanivedana), the seeker begins to feel with absolute conviction that the Cosmic Order established by God for this world

and all living beings is, in a sense, his own; consequently, his tendency to react to that divine plan with either favorable or unfavorable emotions comes to a complete halt.

Personal (physical) sufferings, the sufferings of loved ones, or those of society and the nation, along with their worldly remedies, all occur according to the divine plan, and their outcomes are also part of this very plan. The devotee, however, must fulfill his respective duties. These must be performed meticulously, wholeheartedly, with full knowledge, and with great skill.

Because the disciples of Samarth [Ramdas Swami] plucked pods from a farmer's field, Samarth himself had to endure blows from sticks. Because society boycotted him, Saint Dnyaneshwar did not even get a clay pan to bake his bread. Saint Tukaram Maharaj once had to endure boiling water thrown on him by a woman. Gadge Maharaj had to tolerate public criticism. Saint Chokhoba was denied entry into the Vitthal temple. Ramakrishna Paramahansa suffered from cancer. These Saints endured all this with the attitude:

ठेविले अनंते तैसेचि राहावे । चित्ती असो द्यावे समाधान ।
(तुकाराम गाथा - वै. खंदारकर ११७८)

"Let one remain exactly as the Infinite has kept them; let the mind remain in contentment." (Tu. Gatha 1178). They accepted it as a part of the Divine plan—meaning, a plan that was in essence, their own plan for themselves.

Later, all these great souls attained immense public reverence. Through it all, they never abandoned their constant state of bliss, which is the very nature of the Self (Atmarup-Sukha).

Time answers all questions and redresses injustice. But all of this unfolds according to the plan of destiny. Man is merely an instrument. Over a



thousand years ago, there were thousands of kingdoms and kings in Bharat. After the Mughal invasions, India became largely unified. Following the British invasion, it moved toward complete integration. With the abolition of princely states, it became fully united. Then, it was partitioned again. Now, once again, some states are dreaming of secession. All of this is the play of regional destiny. Even a fervent patriot must continue to serve the country while viewing this play with detachment. There are many today who have witnessed (from the past and witnessing in the present) the changing destinies of Iran, Russia, China, and Europe.

The reason for writing all this in such detail is that man should strengthen the foundation of his worship by accepting the doctrine of Destiny as part of the divine plan—a plan so immensely complex that it is beyond the comprehension of human intellect.

Once we accept the fundamental premise that the human being is incomplete and God is complete, the role of worship (Upasana), as defined by the science of spirituality (Adhyatma-shastra), can be clearly established in human life. Worship performed for the purpose of changing one's destiny is desire-driven and is therefore considered worthless from the perspective of authentic spirituality.

जैसी स्थिती आहे तैशापरी राहे । कौतुक तू पाहे संचिताचे ।
(एक. हरि. २३)

'Remain in whatever state you are placed; witness the wonder of your past deeds (Sanchita) unfolding.' (Eknathi Haripath 23)'

According to this teaching from the abhang of Saint Eknath, it is the duty of the seeker to remain in a state of acceptance while continuing their worship. Whether to assist the seeker by utilizing

His power to act, not to act, or to act in a different way (Kartum-Akartum-Anyathakartum) is a matter entirely within God's domain. Many do indeed experience such divine assistance. However, it is not at all intended that one should glorify this help as a "miracle," create a spectacle out of it, or drag the entirety of spirituality into the public marketplace of miracles. Such help is limited in nature. It has no eternal value. Due to human incompleteness, man is in a state of constant need—satisfying a single need accomplishes very little. Therefore, the true secret (Varma) of worship lies in not harboring any desire for the fruit of one's actions.

Devotion can also be broadly classified into two categories, namely: secondary devotion (Gauni-bhakti) and supreme devotion (Para-bhakti). Observances (Vrate), austerities (Vaikalye), fasting (Upasa), pilgrimages (Tirtha), scriptural recitations (Parayane), and charity (Dana) all fall under the category of secondary devotion. Since these practices involve high levels of activity and receive greater social recognition, common people often remain engrossed in them. Undoubtedly such devotion is certainly better than wasting time in meaningless or destructive activities. Vows and ritualistic observances are far superior to idle gossip, sessions of slandering others, reading film magazines, loitering at street corners, eavesdropping, spreading rumors, reading multiple newspapers, listening to or watching news all day, sleeping out of laziness, or wasting someone else's precious time!! Yet, from the perspective of highest devotion, all this is secondary (gaun).

To instill discipline in human life, Vows and similar practices must be carried out with firm resolve. Such observances are definitely useful for



building a strong and resilient mind. They provide a definitive framework to an otherwise unrestrained life. The support of such structure aids in attainment of the Supreme Devotion (Para-bhakti). Through devotion, the inner instrument (antahkarna) becomes tranquil. Unnecessary agitation and excitement decreases, and the capacity for decision-making increases. Life attains stability. Looking at the world with that same calm inner instrument, one can fulfill one's duties toward the world with sufficient competence. A profoundly important aspect of this Supreme Devotion is the firm conviction that every individual one encounters is an embodiment of the Divine. As a result, this realization greatly aids in fostering harmonious social relations.

जे जे भेटे भूत । ते ते मानिजे भगवंत ।

हा भक्तियोग निश्चित । जाण माझा ॥ (ज्ञाने. १०.११८)

"Whichever beings you encounter, consider them to be the Lord Himself (Divine); know for certain, this is My path of devotion (Bhakti Yoga)." (Jnaneshwari 10.118). In this perspective, there is no room for the aloofness seen in Western society or the perceived mysticism of the East. Injustice, apathy, exploitation, envy, and hatred are all resolved. The factors that create social unrest, such as the hierarchy of superior-inferior, inequality, and cruelty, are eliminated. Spirituality possesses this transformative potential.

Western people have nowadays become legalistic and self-centered. Their Christian religion is now serving more as a tool for proselytization to increase their numbers. If we do not want India to face a similar situation, it is essential to impart a discerning vision to our spiritual practices. Mere constitution and laws prove ineffective on their own.

There is a third category of Worship: Saguna

(with form) and Nirguna (formless). Spirituality intends a journey from the attribute-based to the attributeless, from the manifest to the unmanifest, and from 'I' (Aham) to 'That' (Sah). The worship of idols or incarnations is merely the beginning; the experience of the formless reality (Pure Existence, Consciousness and Bliss)

is the ultimate end. This is not the place for an exhaustive discussion of the three components within Adhyatma (Spirituality)—Karma, Upasana, and Jnana. However, we must reflect on the impact that spirituality has on the human life. Performing one's duty according to the Divine command, for the sake of the Divine, and with a spirit of surrender must be regarded as the very soul of Upasana.

तया सर्वात्मका ईश्वरा । स्वकर्मकुसुमांची वीरा ।

पूजा केली होय अपारा । तोषालागी ॥ (ज्ञाने. १८.११७)

O Hero (Arjuna), When an infinite worship is offered to that all-pervading Lord, through the flowers of one's own assigned duties (swadharma), such devotion leads to His supreme satisfaction.

When the all-pervading Ishvara is worshipped with the 'flowers' of one's own work, He is deeply satisfied. In this context, traditional ritualistic worship with sixteen offerings is not what is implied; rather, the "Bakul" flowers of performed duties, the "Mogra" of righteous conduct (Dharma), and the "Champa" of spiritual actions are expected. The "Jai" and "Jui" jasmine flowers of a professional vocation practiced with justice and ethics are expected. When such beautiful and fragrant flowers are offered to the all-pervading Ishvara, He experiences boundless satisfaction. It is His command that these flowers be fragrant and beautiful. They should be offered to Him for His contentment; this, too, is His command.



When these divine commands are followed, human life becomes far more joyful and bearable. It flows in a peaceful rhythm. If all actions are grounded in discipline, justice, ethics, Dharma, law, the constitution, compassion, and forgiveness, the occasion for regret never arises. Regardless of the outcome, the doer remains calm and fearless.

For instance, in one's job, if a responsibility is executed strictly in accordance with the established rules, in alignment with the underlying purpose of the role, and with absolute meticulousness, the individual is not bound by its consequences. The accountability lies entirely with the rule-makers. This holds true whether the outcome is right or wrong, expected or unexpected, and regardless of whether it is liked or disliked by others. Following the orders of superiors with absolute precision is a fundamental part of military discipline. Those who issue the commands do so after making decisions with great responsibility. Consequently, they are the ones held accountable for the results of those orders being carried out.

Following the orders of their superiors, American pilots dropped atomic weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. While the world lamented and was shaken by that destruction, there was no reason for the pilots to harbor personal guilt. While it is natural to feel sorrow, feeling 'guilty' is incorrect according to Dharmashastra. Does the same logic not apply to judges who award the death penalty or the prison officials who carry it out? An action performed as a Divine command must be executed by utilizing all of one's knowledge, skill, and dedicating the necessary time.

तैसैं आपलिया हिता । उपाय असे न विसंबतां ।
ऐसा कीजे कीं जगन्नाथा । आभारु पडे ॥ (ज्ञाने. १८.११०)

One should perform their assigned duty so perfectly, without the slightest neglect, that the weight of the 'favor' of that action should rest upon the head of the Lord of the Universe (Jagannatha). This very concept is magnificent. This grand idea impels a person to take a great leap forward by casting aside all pettiness. Nowadays, it is a prevalent misconception that success is impossible without stubborn grit, fierce competition, and the like. But will there be any difference in terms of success or results between an action fueled by these external pressures and an action performed simply as a Divine command? As stated before, if one utilizes all available knowledge, masters and stakes their skill, and dedicates the necessary time to the task—will the fruit differ whether the act was born of envy or of Divine obedience? The logical and definitive answer is a firm 'No'. Then why endure the internal storms raised by envy, competition, and aggressive ambition? Why suffer the resulting restlessness, the constant agony of comparison, the bitterness of jealousy, the sting of hatred, or the volatile swings between hope and despair?

On the contrary, excellent work performed as a Divine Command yields not only practical results but also an increasing gain of contentment, satisfaction, peace, and well-being. If we assume that a motive is necessary to impel a person toward action, then which motive is truly conducive to happiness and, ultimately, blissful? In fields ranging from medicine, law, academia, senior government service, corporate executive roles, sales, business, students, and political leadership, the term 'cut-throat competition' is frequently used. There is truly no need for these two words. The very basis of competition is the constant preoccupation with others. If all these



individuals perform their respective duties impeccably, keeping the thought of the Divine in mind, they could experience the pure and unadulterated joy of power, wealth, and fame. It would not be tainted by fear, competition, uncertainty, anxiety, conspiracies, hatred, or revenge. Even in India, we have lost sight of this ancient spiritual wisdom that brings true joy to life. Seeing this, one wonders: do we truly want happiness?

Spirituality and Science:

Many believe that spirituality (Adhyatma) has become meaningless due to the dazzling and mind-boggling scientific progress of the current century. But how much of a relationship does the spiritual philosophy discussed so far actually have with this progress? Just as some negative views are propounded regarding spirituality, they are also presented regarding science. For example, it is argued that weapons of mass destruction have been created due to scientific progress. However, even if this is true, this view is inherently negative. Once it is accepted that war is a perpetual necessity for humans, one must also accept the development of the destructive power of weapons in order to win it. Consequently, developing technologies such as stealth bombers, intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), nuclear-powered naval vessels, submarine-launched missiles, and 'Star Wars' defense systems becomes essential for every major nation.

A second negative perspective asserts that because scientific progress has made daily human life so comfortable, that there is a decline in our physical stamina and capacity. Since strenuous manual chores like fetching water have diminished, people feel compelled to pursue expensive workout regimens. Yet, one must critically ask: even if one cannot afford modern sports like tennis as a substitute for fetching water, is there any actual

prohibition against performing standard push-ups and squats?

Just as there are such cynical notions regarding science, there are equally numerous negative assumptions about spirituality.

For instance, it is often argued that because humanity has set foot on the moon, spirituality has been rendered obsolete and meaningless. But has stepping onto the moon truly eradicated human sorrow? Has everything in life suddenly become favorable to us? Have the traumas inflicted upon the human mind ceased? Has the entire world attained lasting happiness? At the very least, does Neil Armstrong's footprint hold the system required to make the world a happy place? The unequivocal answer to all these questions is 'No'. People often challenge with great arrogance: 'Today, any person can instantly converse with anyone else across the globe. We can see each other live on digital screens. Who even cares about your so-called miracles anymore?' However, such questions stem entirely from a deeply naive and flawed assumption—'Spirituality' is a mere show of 'Miracles'.

Unfortunately, even in the current scientific environment, the influence of miracles is strong on the majority of Indians and even on some Westerners. True spirituality is lost behind the veil of such miracles. As long as a person does not wholeheartedly accept their destiny and strive for the Bliss of the Self, the influence of miracles will persist, and so will those who claim to perform such miracles. People also desire such self-styled godmen/godwomen. It is their own need. Consequently, these figures turn out to be their own creation. In this regard, a commonly read incident is worth examining. A news report appears in the newspaper: 'A fraudster cheated a villager by claiming he could double his currency notes.' If we examine this news objectively, the



following conclusions emerge:

1. The fraudster possesses two counterfeit currency notes.
2. He wants one genuine currency note in exchange for these two counterfeit ones.
3. The villager has one real currency note.
4. According to his foolish imagination, he wants two real currency notes instead of one.
5. The fraudster is cunningly greedy.
6. The villager is foolishly greedy.
7. Using sleight of hand, the fraudster foists the two fake notes onto the villager and vanishes with the genuine note in his pocket.
8. The common man's sympathy lies with the villager.
9. A person always feels sympathy for those of their own kind.
10. The crafty greedy person is a creation of the foolishly greedy one. He is exactly what the other needs!

In exactly the same way, when people believe that they can achieve or obtain something—which is otherwise impossible due to a lack of merit, competence, hard work, skill, or favorable destiny (Prarabdha)—simply by bowing at the feet of some fake godmen/godwomen and offering a hefty donation, they inevitably encounter those so-called providers or miracle-makers. A foolish disciple is bound to find crafty 'Gurus'. They come into existence solely out of that disciple's own need. The entire empire of miracles is created out of this need. Who is responsible for this? The primary law of economics—supply follows demand—works here. When Science casts a spell over the intellect, and the intellect remains lost in that delusion, it loses the very capacity to think of its own true welfare. Is it not surprising that this is precisely the accusation often leveled against spirituality?

About the Author:

P. P. Dr. Shrikrishna Dattatreya Deshmukh (fondly Dr. Kaka) – Murgud (Kolhapur), India

Param Pujya Kaka is a doctor by profession. For many years, he served tirelessly as a physician in Murgud, a town in the Kolhapur district of Maharashtra. At the age of fifty-two, after dutifully fulfilling all his family responsibilities, he chose to step away from his medical practice and dedicated the rest of his life to the divine work of raising social and spiritual awareness. Through insightful talks and thoughtful writing, he began sharing the nectar of spiritual wisdom in simple and accessible language. His words carry maturity, gravity, and Grace — enriched by a natural clarity and a serene candor. He has never entertained the narrowness of caste, religion, or creed. He gently clears the common misconceptions people carry about the words "spirituality" and "philosophy" and guides them to uncover the true nature of Paramartha with remarkable clarity. His work has been ongoing for the last 4 decades. He has authored numerous spiritual texts for various publishing houses and has contributed prolifically to spiritual periodicals such as Prasad, Sajjangad, Bhaktiyog, and Jeevan Vikas. Through study retreats, discourses, and workshops, he has traveled extensively across India and abroad.



Let the senses not wander

P.P. MandaTai Gandhe

घेईं घेईं माझे वाचे । गोड नाम विठोबाचे ॥ १ ॥
तुम्ही घ्यारे डोळे सुख । पाहा विठोबाचे मुख ॥ २ ॥
तुम्ही आईकारे कान । माझ्या विठोबाचे गुण ॥ ३ ॥
मना तेथें धांव घेईं । राहे विठोबाचे पायीं ॥ ४ ॥
तुका म्हणे जीवा । नको सोडू या केशवा ॥ ५ ॥
(तुकाराम गाथा - ३९४)

O my voice, constantly chant the sweet name of Vithoba

O my eyes, attain your ultimate fulfillment by beholding the beautiful face of Vithoba

O my ears, listen deeply to the divine virtues of my Vithoba

O mind, run swiftly to Him, and remain anchored at His feet.

Tuka (Tukaram Maharaj) says, O my soul (Jiva), never let go of Lord Keshava. (gatha - 394)

While The literal meaning of this Abhanga is evident, we shall now contemplate its underlying spiritual essence.

पराञ्चि खानि व्यतृणत्स्वयंभूस्तस्मात्पराङ्मुपश्यति नान्तरात्मन् ॥
(कठोपनिषद - २.१.१)

Brahma, the Creator, designed the senses to face outward. Therefore, a person naturally looks outward at the external world, and not within the Inner Self. (Kathopanishad - 2.1.1)

Just as Ishwara manifested sense objects to allow for the unfolding of Prarabdha, He provided the senses as the essential instruments for their experience. The senses were created with an outward tendency (bahirmukha), directing themselves toward external objects, and drawing the mind along with them. Since all objects are products of Maya, they undergo the sixfold

modifications (Shadvikara) - existence, birth, growth, transformation, decay, and destruction. Consequently, these do not constitute the Self (Ātman); they are essentially of the nature of the non-Self (Anātmān). The Atman, however, is Nirvikara - eternally beyond all modifications.

The Atman is not perceivable to the senses, nor does it appear as a manifest object. Because it is hidden from external perception, it is described as dwelling 'within.' Conversely, since sensory objects are Anatman and possess attributes entirely opposite to those of the Atman, they are regarded as 'external'. Because the senses perceive the external world, they are naturally directed outward. The mind also becomes outward-facing the moment it begins to focus on worldly objects. Once a craving for these objects takes hold, the senses become uncontrollable. Through this association, the mind itself becomes object-oriented, losing its capacity to dwell on anything else. Even in the absence of physical objects, the mind conjures its own imaginary world through Sankalpa (desire) and Vikalpa (doubt) and revels in them.

ह्या विषयांवाचूनि काही । आणीक सर्वथा रम्य नाही ।
ऐसा स्वभावोचि पाही । इंद्रियांचा ॥
(ज्ञानेश्वरी २.१२०)

The very nature of the senses is such that they find absolutely nothing else to be as delightful or pleasing as these sensory objects. (Jnaneshwari 2.120)

Turning toward the Self creates a state of inwardness, while turning toward the world of objects is to be in a state of outwardness. Senses



that are perpetually outward-oriented are considered 'unrestrained'; and for the senses to be unrestrained is to live in a state of 'delirium' or 'senseless babbling' - they begin to wander aimlessly.

The Senses in the Gross Body - Within the gross body, the physical locations where the ten faculties - the five of knowledge (Jnanendriyas) and five of action (Karmendriyas) - along with the internal instrument (Antahkarana) reside, are known as the 'Golakas,' or sensory centers. Restraining the mind involves preventing it from reaching sensory objects, or recalling it should it wander toward them; this act of withdrawing the mind from sensory objects is called 'Shama.' Likewise, to check the outward rush of the sense instruments and hold them back from objects is called 'Dama' or 'Pratyahara.' These are technically termed the 'pacification' (Shamana) of the mind and the 'subjugation' (Damana) of the senses. We shall now understand each sense faculty and its respective physical seat.

The Five Organs of Knowledge (Jñāna Indriyas)

- **Faculties (Indriya):** Shrotra (Hearing), Tvak (Touch), Chakshu (Sight), Rasana (Taste), Ghrana (Smell) .
- **Physical seat (Golaka):** Karna (Ears), Tvacha (Skin), Netra (Eyes), Jivha (Tongue), Nasika (Nose)
- **Sense (Vishaya):** Shabda (Sound), Sparsha (Touch), Rupa (Form), Rasa (Taste), Gandha (Fragrance)

The Five Organs of Action (Karma Indriyas)

- **Faculty (Indriya) - Hasta (Hands), Pada (Feet), Vaak (Speech), Upastha (Procreation), Paayu (Excretion)**

- **Physical Seat (Golaka) - Paani (Palms /Hands), Paada (Feet/Legs), Jivhaa (Tongue/Vocal Cords), Shisna (Genitals), Guda (Anus)**
- **Function (Vishaya/Action) - Giving and Receiving, Motion - Coming and Going, Articulation/Speaking, Procreation/Urination, Excretion/Elimination**

The physical seat (Golaka) of the inner faculty (Antahkarana) is the Heart (Hrudaya). The 'Heart' (as a field of consciousness) is said to pervade the entire body. The mind is a functional modification (vrutti) of that very Antahkarana. When the senses and the mind are to be restrained and withdrawn from external objects, where should they be brought back and kept? They are to be drawn back and fixed in their own respective golakas, and anchored therein. This process is called Pratyāhāra (withdrawal of the senses). Such withdrawal and re-establishment alone constitutes the true nature of Vairāgya (dispassion).

To begin this journey, one must first cultivate Viveka (discernment). Without the foundation of Viveka and Vairagya (detachment), the spiritual journey (Paramartha) cannot even begin. - the supreme spiritual pursuit. While we talk about turning the senses inward, it is more fitting to say we must turn our mind inward. Among the many paths leading to God, Samarth Ramdas advocates the path of Bhakti (devotion), for it is simple, accessible, and well-traversed; hence, there is no fear in following it. Along this path, kīrtans and spiritual discourses serve as nourishing stations; thus, one need not worry even if they lack their own provisions of discernment and dispassion. There are 'water stations' (Panpoyas) of Bhajans



and week-long communal chanting programs to quench the seeker's thirst. This path is safe, as it is constantly 'patrolled on all four sides' by the vibrant sounds of cymbals and drums (गस्त फिरे चहुकोनी । टाळमृदंगाचे ध्वनी ।). Because only saints and true devotees tread this path, the seeker's spiritual practice remains shielded from harm. On the contrary, the seeker is graced with the company of saints, effortlessly attaining the supreme benefit of their presence - for as it is said, 'In the sight of a saint, one finds the Lord Himself.' (संतदर्शने हा लाभ । पद्मनाभ जोडला ॥) Along the route, the hermitages and ashrams of sages provide rest for the weary traveler. Because of the lush forests and gardens, the path is enchanting, and free from worldly distractions. In the pleasant company of trees, creepers, and forest-dwellers, the journey passes swiftly. One only needs to keep walking with eager longing for God; fueled by divine love, faith, devotion, and steadfast perseverance.

The senses have developed such a deep-seated liking, habit, and repeated practice for indulging in sense objects that they have become truly addicted to them. Just as it is exceedingly difficult to liberate an addict from their vice, breaking the grip of the senses is a formidable challenge.

विषयविषाचा पडिपाडु । गोड परमार्थ लागे कडु ।

कडु विषय तो गोडु । जीवासी जाहाला ॥

(ज्ञानेश्वरी १०.१५९)

- Such is the overwhelming allure of sensory objects that the Supreme Truth begins to taste bitter, while the bitter objects of the world seem sweet to the soul. Due to the 'deceptive outward beauty' (Aapaat Ramaniyata) nature of Maya, objects enchant and mesmerize the mind the moment they are perceived; they are inherently designed to be captivating.

At the outset, indulging in these objects feels pleasurable. However, as the Bhagavad Gita (18.38) warns: 'परिणामे विषमिव' - though it is 'like nectar at first, it is like poison in the end' and by the time one realizes this, the enjoyer has already suffered great loss. The ultimate consequence of sensory indulgence is inevitably sorrow. The physical senses cannot grasp this, and neither can a mind that has surrendered to them. In truth, it is the mind that drives the senses. If one attempts to forcibly separate the senses from their objects, or vice versa, they will rebel, causing the addiction to erupt with even greater intensity. To let them run wild is perilous, yet to restrain them is incredibly difficult.

The oppressive rigor of the Yogic path of restraint is plainly evident. The path of Knowledge (Jnana) is equally demanding; the only difference is that its sternness is wrapped in a refinement of the intellect. In contrast, Mother Devotion (Bhakti-Mauli) is tender-hearted, and her grace rests upon the saints. Therefore, moved by compassionate reflection upon the helpless condition of ordinary human beings, the saints devised a gentle means for internalizing dispassion (Vairagya). 'काय वानू या हो संतांचे उपकार ।' - How can one ever describe the immense debt of gratitude we owe to these Saints? Let us now attentively consider the path they have indicated.

In worldly objects, the qualities of Rajas (restlessness) and Tamas (inertia/ignorance) are predominant; it is this very dominance that is disruptive and obstructive. If this excess is reduced, these objects lose their 'object-ness'—that toxic quality which acts like a poison. We must eliminate the 'poisonous nature' of the object - which acts like a toxin; without necessarily changing its outward form. Imagine a snake whose



venomous fangs have been removed; one could wear it freely around one's neck or play with it without any fear of harm. The five sensory experiences - Sound, Touch, Sight, Taste, and Smell; are normally infused with the 'poison' of Rajas and Tamas. Removing these qualities is impossible because they are the defining characteristics of material objects. Instead, if the five sense-objects marked by an abundance of Shuddha Sattva (pure goodness/luminosity) were to become available, there would be no outward difference in the experience of enjoyment; yet the affliction that binds would no longer remain. Does such an object of experience exist? Yes, indeed! That object is the manifest, physical form of the Divine—the Avatars (incarnations) of God. As the saying goes, **विषय तो त्यांचा झाला नारायण** - When the Divine (Narayana) Himself becomes the object of our focus, how can any harm arise? Such an object is a sensory object in name only. In Him, the mind finds delight, and because the senses have found their true fulfillment, they no longer wander unrestrained. These Divine forms are not subject to the laws of death and decay; they are embodiments of Existence, Consciousness, and Bliss (pure Sat-Chit-Ananda).

Sant Dnyaneshwar Maharaj says:

1. **कान्होबा तुझी घोंगडी चांगली । आम्हासी का दिली
वांगली रे ॥ स्वगत सच्चिदानंदे मिळोनि । शुद्ध सत्व
गुणे विणली रे ॥ षड्गुण गोंडे रत्नजडित तुज श्यामसुंदरा
शोभली रे । कान्होबा ॥ (येथे घोंगडी - देह.)**

O Krishna, your blanket is exquisite; why have you given us this stained and tattered one? Your own blanket is woven by the Supreme Being (Satchidananda) Himself, Crafted entirely from the threads of Pure Goodness (Shuddha Sattva). Adorned with tassels of the six divine attributes

and studded with gems, it suits you perfectly, O the Dark and Beautiful One (Shyamasundara). (Here, the blanket represents the Body/Form).

2. **अनुपम्य मनोहर कासे शोभे पीतांबर ।**

Meaning: O Shri Krishna! You are resplendent in Your exquisitely beautiful Pitambara (sacred yellow silken garments) that graces your waist; or rather—it is You who brings a supreme charm to the very Pitambara You adorn.

3. **राजस सुकुमार मदनचा पुतळा । - तुकोबा**

Meaning: O Lord Vitthala! You are the King of Elegance, the essence of Grace—the very idol of Cupid (Madana) himself. This Vighraha of the Divine is exquisitely pleasing to the eyes and purely celestial, containing not even a trace of anything that could cause agitation or disturbance. Therefore, this form is the very essence of Sukha (Bliss). Just as sweetness is the quality of a substance, and the substance itself is sweet—in the same way, this form of the Lord is not merely a possessor of the 'attribute' of happiness; it is the very Ocean of Bliss (Ananda-Sindhu) itself. - says Tukaram Maharaj.

4. **रूप पाहता लोचनी । सुख जाले वो साजणी ।**

Upon beholding this enchanting and divine Shrivighraha of the Lord, my Chitta (consciousness) has become utterly inundated and overflowing with Paramananda (supreme bliss).

5. **सर्व सुखाचे आगर । बापरखुमा देवीवर ॥**

Lord Vitthala, the Beloved of the Universal Mother Rukmini, is the Supreme Father (Jagat-Janaka) of the entire cosmos. He alone is the inexhaustible treasure (Akshaya-Nidhi) of all Ananda (bliss).

6. **आवडे हे रूप गोजिरे सगुण । पाहता लोचन
सुखावले ॥ - ज्ञानेश्वर**

Meaning: This Shrivighraha (saguna form) of the



Lord is so profoundly beautiful and enchanting to the mind, that the mere sight of it has caused my eyes to become submerged in Paramananda (supreme bliss), reaching their ultimate fulfillment - Dyaneshwar maharaj explains in this verse.

7. सर्व सुखाचे आगर। जनी म्हणे शारंगधर - संत जनाबाई

The Meaning: He (Lord Vitthal) the Wielder of the Bow (Sharangdhara), is the Treasury (Abode) of all Bliss - Janabai says.

8. सुखाचे ओतले सकळही। ... - संत तुकाराम महाराज

The Meaning: Bhagavan Vitthal is Bliss personified. His entire form is nothing but the flow of Ananda, crystallized into a shape for your eyes to behold. - Tukaram Maharaj

These divine manifest forms (Saguna-Sakar Vighraha) appear like sensory objects, yet they lack the binding nature of worldly things. The forms of Rama, Krishan, Vithoba, Ganpati, Shiva-Parvati, and others are 'sweet' - meaning they are flawlessly blissful. The faculty of sight - eyes; find their ultimate contentment in these forms. Hence, exhortation by Sant Tukaram Maharaj "डोळे तुम्ही घ्यारे सुख। पाहा विठोबाचे मुख ॥" (O my eyes, attain your ultimate fulfillment by beholding the beautiful face of Vithoba)

In the sequence of cosmic manifestation, Space (Akasha)—and its primary attribute, Sound (Shabda) - is the first to emerge. Therefore, Sound is the closest element to the Atman (Self). Because of this proximity, Sound - in the form of the Divine Name (Nama) - possesses the attribute of the Self's bliss in abundance. Thus, Tukoba says: "गोड तुझे रूप गोड तुझे नाम। देई मज प्रेम सर्व काळ ॥" (Sweet is Your form, sweet is Your Name; grant me Your love for all time.) This Divine Name is full of 'rasa' (Nectarous essence);

therefore, it is also an object for the sense of taste (rasana). Since it is composed of sound, the Name is an object for the faculty of speech (Vak). Because the Name is so sweet, the organs of taste and speech are both satiated. Tukoba says: "घेई घेई माझे वाचे।" (O my voice, constantly chant the sweet name of Vithoba) and he further explains जिव्हे गोडी तीन अक्षरांचा रस। अमृत जयास फिके पुढे ॥ (O tongue, taste the sweetness of the three-syllabled essence [Vithoba]; even nectar pales in comparison.)

Tukoba declares: जिव्हे गोडी तीन अक्षरांचा रस। अमृत जयास फिके पुढे ॥ सर्वांगी साखर अवधी गोड। (Upon the tongue dwells the sweetness of the three-syllabled nectar (Vithoba), a juice so divine that even the nectar of the gods (Amruta) pales in comparison.) Just as a doll made entirely of sugar is sweet in every part, the physical manifestation of the Divine is blissful in its entirety. We have reflected upon three senses here (sight, taste, and speech); in the same manner, one can consider the rest. Not only are the external forms of these manifestations beautiful, but their divine attributes (Gunas) are equally blissful. Hence: "तुम्ही आईकारे कान। माझ्या विठोबाचे गुण ॥" (O my ears, listen deeply to the divine virtues of my Vithoba.)

Now, let us consider the mind for a moment.

कां जें यया मनाचें एक निकें। जें देखिलें गोडीचिया ठाया सोके। म्हणोनि अनुभवसुखचि कवतिकें। दावीत जाइजे ॥
(ज्ञानेश्वरी - ६.१२०)

This mind possesses a singular, positive trait: once it glimpses a source of true happiness, it becomes habituated to it. Therefore, to the mind, one should skillfully and persistently reveal the sublime bliss of the Self (Atman).

Instead of worldly, mortal objects, the mind should be redirected toward the divine incarnations of God, allowing it to experience the



bliss found there. Saint Tukaram achieved this through conscious effort, and His direct experience was: ‘आता कोटे धावें मन। तुझें चरण देखलिया ॥’ – Now, where else could my mind possibly run, having beheld Your lotus feet (tasted bliss)? What is true for the mind holds equally true for the senses.

The Saints offer this counsel to the senses: ‘Once you taste this Bliss, your restless wandering from door to door will cease.’ While the breath remains, the seeker should allow the senses to feast upon the sweetness of the Divine. This is the sacred play within the realm of Duality (Dvaita). Yet, when the body falls away, the soul dissolves into the seamless unity of Non-Duality (Advaita). Thus, the seeker is urged: whether dwelling in the body or beyond its dissolution, never let go of Keshava. Let your communion with Keshava be unbroken - first through the Beloved’s manifest form (Saguna), and finally in His formless, eternal essence (Nirguna).

In this manner, without forcibly imprisoning the senses or punishing the mind, one performs

devotion to the Manifest Form (Saguna) through these very instruments. Even though the ‘medium’ remains the senses and the mind, the actual experience is of the objectless Supreme Self (Nirvishaya Paramatman)—it is an experience of His inherent Bliss.

The joy (bliss) derived from the Divine Form is divine and flawless, far superior to the fleeting pleasure of mortal, material objects. Just as a person with diabetes craves sweetness but is harmed by sugar, necessitating the use of ‘sugar-free tablets,’ Saint Tukaram has similarly connected the devotee to the Divine Manifest Form. The forms of Rama and Krishna are like ‘sugar-free tablets’: they are intensely sweet, but they lack the ‘harmful sweetness’ of worldly attachment. In this realm, indulgence is safe, for the experience is pure Ananda. When left to run wild, the senses are our enemies; but when they are anchored in the Lord, they become our greatest friends. Therefore, discipline the vision with this practice: ‘O eyes, attain your highest state by gazing upon the form of Vithoba’.

॥ Thus, blessings upon all ॥

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Param Pujya Mandatai is a mathematics teacher by profession and has served as a senior member of the Maharashtra Mathematics Education Board. Post-retirement, she has dedicated her life wholly to the teachings and service of Advaita Vedanta. She currently serves as the head administrator of Shri Gopalkrishna Temple in Ambapeth, Amravati. Pujya Manda Tai has the rare ability to explain complex Vedantic principles in simple and accessible language. She has delivered lectures on various topics in India as well as abroad. In addition, she has composed numerous devotional bhajans. Pujya Manda Tai has been the inspiration behind Vedant Bhaskar, USA. Under her revered guidance, the organization undertakes various spiritual initiatives and programs.



Shree Ganapati Atharvashirsha (Part 2)

P. Shree. Mangesh Phadke

Our previous edition marked the beginning of a contemplative journey into the Upanishadic depths of the 'Shree Ganapati Atharvashirsha'. This issue brings you the second flower in that garland of reflections.

Before we dive deeper into the actual meaning of the hymn, we must reflect on what our perspective towards it should be, and what meaning and conviction we should hold in our minds when reciting it. This is essential so that we may receive the full measure of what this hymn intends to bestow upon us. Otherwise, there is a strong possibility of getting weighed down by the number of recitations and losing the core essence in the casual chatter that follows during the distribution of prasad.

We have been reciting the Atharvashirsha since childhood; however, just as a student's backpack and studies evolve with their academic progress, shouldn't there be a corresponding progression in our actions and thoughts? The hymn remains the same - it is we who must evolve!

As we saw in the previous edition, 'Atharvashirsha is an Upanishad.' Consequently, our contemplation must reflect the philosophical altitude, rigor, and profound gravity that the study of an Upanishad demands. It is on us to accord that reverence to it.. For that, we must first comprehend the precise meaning of the word 'Upaniṣad'.

Expounding on the etymology of this word, Shrimad Adi Shankaracharya states in his UpadeshaSahasri:

सदेरुपानिपूर्वस्य क्विपचोपनिषद् भवेत् ।
मन्दीकरण भावाच्च गभदिः शातनात्तथा ॥
(उ.सा. पद्यबंध उपोद्घात १.२६)

The word 'Upanishad' is formed by adding the suffix 'kvip' to the root verb 'sad,' preceded by the prefixes 'upa' and 'ni.' That which weakens or loosens the grip of the cycle of birth and death, or destroys it altogether, is the Upanishad.

Acharya's commentary on the Kathopanishad also echoes the very same definition.

There, Acharya instructs: 'संसारबीजस्य विशरण'— meaning, that which destroys the very seed (possibility) of one's worldly existence through deep contemplation, is the Upanishad.

To illustrate this, let's look at an anecdote: An elderly woman once visited Sadguru Doctor Kaka as a patient. She had been suffering from chronic asthma for many years. Highly agitated and frustrated, she asked, 'But Doctor, why did I have to suffer from this asthma in the first place?'

Param Pujya Kaka calmly replied, 'You got asthma simply because you took birth! If you wish to be free from such suffering hereafter, then ensure that you are never born again!'

What a stunning response! Now, one may wonder, "how do I ensure that?" The answer is simple: 'Dedicate yourself to the study of the Upanishads!'

This perfectly echoes the profound declaration that we explored earlier: मन्दीकरण भावाच्च गभदिः शातनात्तथा!

Acharya provides a third profound meaning for the root verb 'Sad': to grant 'Gati' (progression).

Naturally, this meaning raises some questions:



Progression from where to where? For whom is this progression? And what is its ultimate purpose?

The essence is captured in:

असतो मा सद्गमय । तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय ।

मृत्योर्मा मृतं गमय ॥ (बृह १.३.२८)

- **From the Unreal (Asat) to the Real (Sat):** Progression from all the perishable objects that are either seen, perceived, felt or experienced, towards the principle of Absolute and Indestructible Existence.
- **From Darkness/Ignorance (Tamas) to Light/Knowledge (Jyoti):** Progression from the constant experience of ignorance towards a state of Pure Knowledge (Jnanarupata)
- **From Death (Mrutyu) to Immortality (Amrutatva):** Progression from the realm of death—which is the nature of the unreal(Asat) and ignorance (Tamas)—towards Immortality, the essential nature of Truth (Sat) and Pure Knowledge (Jñana).

In summary, the very term 'Upanishad' proves that through the rightful contemplation of the Atharvashirsha—done with the necessary spiritual authority—one attains such progression (Gati). If I merely chant the Atharvashirsha without grasping this entire scope, it is akin to using a mighty sword merely to chop vegetables!

Arthanatar (Shifting context) - from the literal meaning (Vachyarthā) to the intended, deeper meaning (Lakshyarthā) - is the very nature of true contemplation.

For example - The refrain (Dhruvapad) of the Ganapati Aarti is: "दर्शनमात्रे मन कामनापूर्ति"

What does the straight, literal meaning (Vachyarthā) suggest to us? It suggests that as soon as I take Darshan of Ganapati (behold Him), all the desires within my heart get fulfilled.

However, the deeper, intended meaning (Lakshyarthā) tells me that when I have the 'true Darshan' of that Ganapati, 'all desires find cessation' (they simply cease to be).

The Ganapati who comes and goes, and whom we ceremonially immerse (Visarjan), has a true nature that is 'Nirguna Nirakara' (Attributeless and Formless). There is no space where He is not, and no time in which He does not exist. He is everywhere (Sarvatra), eternally (Sada), and equally (Sama). It is not as if He is more present in one place and less in another.

Echoing this precise truth, Samartha Ramdas Swami declares: 'रिता ठाव या राघवेंवीण नाही' ('There is not even an iota of space left where Raghava (God) is absent.'). Sant Tukaram Maharaj sings: 'त्रिभुवन संचले विठ्ठलेगा ।' ('Vitthala has permeated all the three worlds.'). Jnaneshwar Maharaj proclaims: 'भरला घनदाट हरी दिसे ।' ('Hari is seen (experienced) filled everywhere, dense and pervasive.'). The Ishavasya Upanishad (Mantra 5) describes this very Reality as:

तदेजति तन्नैजति । तदूरे तद्वन्तिके ।

तदन्तरस्य सर्वस्य । तदु सर्वस्यास्य बाह्यतः ॥ (ईश ५)

('That is far, yet It is near; It moves, and yet It moves not; It is within all this, yet It exists outside of all this.')

The Logical Consistency of Thought:

Desires (Kamāna) are for the sake of happiness. An individual (Jiva) lives under the illusion that the fulfillment of a desire will lead to the attainment of happiness. However, Ganapati is the very embodiment of 'Sat-Chit-Ananda' (Truth-Consciousness-Bliss). His 'true vision' (Darshan) is the realization of absolute oneness!

'He is I' – Sah Aham – 'So'ham!'

When I experience the Darshan of Ganapati in this way, I too become 'Bliss-incarnate' (Ananda-



rupa), just like Him. My pursuit of external happiness will then come to a halt, because I will have directly experienced that the very source from which the urge for happiness arises—the Blissful Ganapati—is 'Me!' Naturally, at that point, all my desires find a complete full stop (total cessation).

When initiating the actual contemplation or recitation of the Atharvashirsha, the very first verse that we invoke is the peace invocation (Shanti Mantra): 'ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवाः ।' (ॐ, O Gods, may we hear what is auspicious with our ears). This is also referred to as the Shantipatha.

The ten principal Upanishads upon which Acharya (Adi Shankaracharya) has written his commentary are widely recognized. Shantipatha is an integral part of every single one of these Upanishads.

For instance, in the Ishavasya Upanishad, the Shantipatha is: 'ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥' (ॐ, That is infinite, and This is infinite. This infinite proceeds from That infinite. Realizing the infinitude of That Infinite, the Infinite alone remains.)

Similarly, in the Kathopanishad, the invocation is: 'ॐ सह नावतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं करवावहे । तेजस्वि नावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहे ॥' (ॐ, May He protect us both [teacher and student] together. May He nourish us both together. May we work together with great vigor. May our study be illuminating and fruitful. May there be no animosity or misunderstanding between us.)

As an Upanishad of the Atharva Veda, the Atharvashirsha shares its lineage and its specific Shantipatha with other seminal texts of that Veda, such as the Prashna, Mundaka, and Mandukya Upanishad. The Shantipatha for all of these is identical:

'ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवा भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः । स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवांसस्तनूभिर्व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः ॥' (ॐ, O Gods, may our ears hear only that which is auspicious. O Worshipful Ones, may our eyes see only that which is auspicious. May we attain a life with able limbs and bodies, singing your praise and live the lifespan graciously granted to us by the Divine.)

In short, it is an established tradition of reciting the Shantipatha both before and after the study of an Upanishad. The Shantipatha primarily is an 'aspiration of divine grace'. Therefore, it is chanted before as well as after the study, and an invocation to various deities is performed to seek their benevolence.

The Shantipatha manifests as a 'form of well-wishing' (benediction) with the objective that our human life be elevated and advanced through the mutual harmony and development of our physical, mental, and spiritual powers, and that we all may be endowed with the strength to attain knowledge. This is the very purpose of the Shantipatha, and it is for this reason that it is chanted with deep faith and devotion!

The Shantipatha of the Atharvashirsha is as follows:

'ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवाः । भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः । स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवांसस्तनूभिः । व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः ॥'

This Shantipatha commences with the sacred monosyllable 'ॐ'. The Taittiriya Upanishad declares: 'ओम् इति ब्रह्म!' (ॐ is Brahman!). Similarly, the Bhagavad Gita (8.13) affirms: 'ॐ इत्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म' (ॐ is the one-syllabled Brahman).

This entire world that is experienced and perceptible to our senses is the very manifestation of Omkara. And since Omkara is Brahman, it naturally aligns with the great Upanishadic declaration: 'सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म ।' (All of this is indeed



Brahman), as illuminated in the Chandogya Upanishad (3.14.1): 'सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म । तज्जलानिति शान्तं उपासीत ।'.

This single-syllabled Omkara (ॐ) is the symbol of the Nirguna Nirakara Brahman (the attributeless, formless Reality). By beginning the Shantipatha with ॐ, a sacred invocation (Mangala) is performed through the remembrance of the Supreme Reality.

Let us examine the prose order (Anvaya) of this Shantipatha to grasp its deeper meaning. The term 'देवाः' translates to 'O Gods!'—it is expressed in the vocative case. 'कर्णेभिः भद्रं शृणुयाम' means: may our ears hear only that which is auspicious and beneficial. 'भद्रं पश्येम अक्षभिः' expresses: may I be blessed to see only pure, auspicious, and uplifting sights with my eyes. 'स्थिरैः अङ्गैः' refers to a healthy, disease-free body that has absolute steadiness and vitality. 'स्तुष्टुवांसस्तनूभिः' signifies continuously praising You with pleasing, reverential words and being in Your divine service. 'यत् आयुः' (यदायुः) means whatever life span we have been graciously granted. 'देवहितं' implies: for the Gods, or for the ultimate attainment of the Divine. 'व्यशेम' means may we spend or live in this very manner. This is the complete meaning of the verse.

However, as we delve into the deeper, implied meaning of this Shantipatha, 'Bhadra' is the most crucial word. In our daily worldly affairs, we are quite familiar with the word 'Abhadra' (inauspicious or impure), but rarely do we reflect on 'Bhadra'! Bhadra represents the supremely auspicious, the absolute sacred—and whatever is not Bhadra, is naturally Abhadra.

One thing to note is that here, the text explicitly mentions only the ears and the eyes. Even though only the eyes and ears are named, the remaining three senses are inherently included. This style is

known as 'Upalakṣaṇa' (a figure of speech where a part represents the whole). These two specific sense organs are highlighted here because they are our primary means of engagement and interaction in the world.

Everything that I see or hear can be broadly classified into two distinct categories:

1. That which is within my control
2. That which is beyond my control

To a large extent, what I see and hear is within my control!

1. Regarding that which is within my control: Samartha Ramdas Swami provides an exquisite guidance in his Manobodh (also known as Manache Shloka - Verses addressed to the mind) regarding the ideal start to one's day:

प्रभाते मनी राम चिंतित जावा ।

पुढे वैखरी राम आधी वदावा ।

सदाचार हा थोर सांडू न येतो ।

जनी तोची तो मानवी धन्य होतो ॥ (म.बो. ३)

Every morning, one should contemplate on Lord Rama. Then, the speech should first utter His name. One must never abandon this righteous conduct. Such a human being is indeed blessed in the world.

However, in today's times, our day begins with the mobile phone! We have become so habituated to it that referring to it as our 'sixth limb' would hardly be an exaggeration. The very moment we are awoken, this device instantly turns into a means of absorbing all the 'garbage' from the external world into our minds.

Actually, during deep sleep, our mind attains a state of natural tranquility. Yet, the moment we wake up, we make arrangements to disturb that peace. One person may check WhatsApp, another one Facebook or Instagram, someone else their office emails, or the daily newspaper. And if



someone happens to be a truly 'exalted soul', might even start watching a movie or a TV serial right away!

We have cultivated the deeply detrimental habit of starting our day with stimuli that stir up the latent storehouse within us—Lust, Anger, Greed, Arrogance, Delusion, and Envy.

Crucially, one has absolute control over all of this. Therefore, the onus is entirely upon me to consciously choose what is profoundly auspicious (**Bhadra**) and strictly avoid what is degrading and inauspicious (**Abhadra**).

The choice rests with us: Should we immerse ourselves in the wisdom of the Jnaneshwari and Dasbodh, or lose ourselves in the fleeting world of fictional novels? Should our ears be listening to spiritual discourses, or continue to indulge with film songs?

One may naturally ask, how can I precisely discern between what is **Bhadra** and **Abhadra**?

The answer is profound: if there is absolutely any entity in this entire universe that is supremely auspicious and unconditionally pure, it is that Supreme Reality (**Brahman**). Why? Because It is that only principle which remains absolutely untouched by Maya (the cosmic illusion).

Samartha Ramdas Swami identifies this foundational Truth as the Sadguru, declaring:

आतां सद्गुरु वर्णवेना । जेथें माया स्पर्शो सकेना ।

तें स्वरूप मज अज्ञाना । काये कळे ॥ (दासबोध १.४.१)

(I am incapable of describing the Sadguru. For it is a state where Maya cannot even touch. How then, can I, a mere ignorant being, ever comprehend His true nature?)

Things in our worldly dealings (Vyavahara) might be called auspicious or holy in a relative sense, but ultimately, they still fall within the realm of Maya.

On this very point, we must look at a beautiful verse by Mauli in the Jnaneshwari (9.316):

स्वर्गा पुण्यात्मकें पापें येइजे । पापात्मकें पापें नरका जाइजे ।

मग मातें जेणें पाविजे । तें शुद्ध पुण्य ॥ (९.३१६)

(One reaches heaven through 'merit' which is essentially a form of bondage (golden shackles); one reaches hell through 'sin.' But that which leads one to Me (the Divine) is 'Pure Merit' (Shuddha Punya))

This is the ultimate definition of Pure Merit (Shuddha Punya). Any action that guides me directly towards the experience of my true nature, towards Self-realization, and towards the ultimate attainment of the Supreme Lord—that alone is termed Shuddha Punya.

Therefore, '**Bhadra**' refers to only that action which propels me toward that supremely auspicious and absolutely pure Supreme Reality (Brahman)!

Even our daily obligatory duties, when performed with selfless detachment, lead to the purification of the mind, indirectly serving as a catalyst for Self-realization.

Without understanding all of this, and without making the necessary corrections in my life, if I continue to behave in an inauspicious (Abhadra) manner while reciting the Atharvashirsha mechanically for years, will that Ganapati look 'at' me (bestow His grace), or will He 'look into' me (deal with me)?

2. Now for the second aspect: how do we deal with those things that are entirely beyond our control?

For instance, despite having absolutely no desire to do so, my eyes might inevitably witness many inauspicious things. Occasionally, I might be compelled to listen to words or encounter situations that are deeply impure and unholy. Numerous such events unfold in the natural



course of life over which I exercise absolutely no control.

The profound question then arises: In the midst of all such unavoidable circumstances, how am I to seek and behold the supremely auspicious (Bhadra)?

In our every action, 'knowing' (awareness) is the common element. We know by seeing, we know by hearing, we know by touch, and so on. Through the five sense organs, I am constantly taking things in; while the objects of the senses vary, they all ultimately resolve into 'knowing.' Generally, all our dealings happen in the light, yet I also 'know' the darkness! I 'know' my dreams as well. In short, 'knowing' is of utmost importance. But what enables this 'knowing'?

On this aspect, the following Śruti from the Kena Upanishad offers an insightful guidance:

प्रतिबोधविदितं मतममृतत्वं हि विन्दते ।
आत्मना विन्दते वीर्यं विद्यया विन्दतेऽमृतम् ॥
(केन २.४)

Meaning: The Self is truly known only when It is realized as the witness in and through every single act of cognition - be it every sight seen or every sound heard. In this awareness, one finds Immortality. Through the Self, one gains spiritual strength (Virya), and through this Sacred Knowledge (Vidya), one attains the Eternal.

The secret to beholding the auspicious (Bhadra) even amidst the inauspicious (Abhadra) lies in anchoring our awareness upon the true Self; the very Light by which all is known and to disregard the illusory realm of Maya.

This alone is the true essence of praying: 'ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवाः । भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ।'

When I live my life in this manner, the Shanti Mantra attains its true significance.

In the forthcoming issue, we shall contemplate the remaining verses of this Shanti Mantra. This second blossom of reflection is offered at the lotus feet of the Sadguru, in deep reverence.

॥ Shri Sadgurunath Maharaj ki Jai ॥

About the Author

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Shree. Mangesh Phadke is originally from the Vidarbha region of India. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science and an MBA in Marketing. Professionally, he held senior leadership roles in various multinational corporations (MNCs) in the United States for many years. In 2022, upon being bestowed with the title of Sadguru, Mangesh Dada, at the age of 50, retired from his position as Vice President and, with the grace of his Sadguru, dedicated his life fully to the path of spiritual service. There are ongoing discourses from him on various spiritual topics and they are available on [@vastusiddhiH](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvastusiddhiH) YouTube channel. Sadguru P. P. Dr. Kaka has officially announced P. Shree. Mangesh Phadke as his spiritual successor.



My Devotee Never Perishes

Shraddheya Shree. Mule Shastri

क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शश्वच्छान्तिं निगच्छति ।
कौन्तेय प्रति जानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति ॥
गीता - ९.३१

Meaning: One who practices unswerving devotion to Me, attains eternal peace without delay. O Arjuna, declare to all, with a solemn vow and absolute conviction, that My devotee never perishes (spiritual decline).

We need to contemplate on the final line of the above verse: “na me bhaktaH pranashyati – My devotee never perishes.” In the Gita, the Lord gives many assurances to His devotees. This is one such aforementioned assurance, and for its fulfillment, a specific condition is laid out. This condition is mentioned in the previous verse of the very same chapter (9.30). There, the Lord says, even if a person has been a great sinner earlier, but now begins to practice unswerving devotion (ananya-bhakti) to Me, then, because of the righteousness of that resolve, I consider him a saintly person. The meaning of verse 9.31 is given above. Such a devotee – who practices unswerving devotion to Me – never perishes (spiritual decline). He becomes a righteous being (dharmatma) and attains eternal peace. This is the fruit he receives. But to receive the fruit “na me bhaktaH pranashyati,” the Lord lays down the condition that he must practice unswerving devotion. Let us briefly reflect upon what this unswerving devotion is.

All Vedas, scriptures, Saint-authored literature, and the teachings of Rishis and Munis unanimously declare that realization of the Supreme Lord is impossible without devotion

(bhakti). Adi Shankaracharya says: ‘मोक्षकारणसामग्र्यां भक्तिरेव गरीयसी ।’ - Among all means to liberation and realization of the Supreme, devotion is indeed the most supreme. He also defines Bhakti as remaining in constant remembrance and contemplation of one’s true nature. What then is ananya-bhakti (unswerving devotion)?

The Master of Devotion (Bhakti) Shri Narada says: अन्याश्रयाणां त्यागोऽनन्यता’ (नारद भक्तिसूत्र १०) – Giving up all supports other than the Supreme (Paramatma) is called unswerving devotion (Ananyata) (Bhakti-sutra 10).

The very nature of the jīva is to live by taking refuge in something or someone. Under the influence of beginningless ignorance, the jīva has taken refuge in the body and constantly asserts, “देहोऽहं” – I am this body.” But this exclusive identification with the body is opposite to Jiva’s true nature (Vijatiya), rooted in ignorance, and perilous. It leads to suffering, because the body and all associated things are non-Self (Anatma), unreal (Asat), inert (Jada), and sorrowful in nature. “Body and associated things” includes the gross and subtle body, spouse, children, power, wealth, etc. According to the science of devotion, when the jīva renounces all these worldly supports and holds a firm conviction that “Only that Supreme Self (Paramatman) is my refuge,” that is called ananyata.

A well-recognized verse from the Bhagavad Gita describes the true nature of such ananyata:

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥ (9.22)



Those devotees who contemplate upon Me and worship Me alone in every way by renouncing all other supports, I carry the burden of their Yoga (the attainment of the unattained) and Kshema (the preservation of the attained).

In this verse, the words paryupasate and nityabhiyuktanam reveal the true nature of ananyata. Paryupasate implies seeing the Lord everywhere; there is nothing apart from Him. This indicates transcending the limitations of space (deśa-pariccheda). Nityabhiyuktanam signifies transcending the limitations of time (kāla-pariccheda). The word Ananya (exclusivity) indicates seeing the Divine in every object – that is, the absence of limitation by objects (vastu-pariccheda). Thus, contemplation that is free from the divisions of space, time, and objects is unswerving devotion (ananya-bhakti). However, a doubt may arise: if one practices such devotion, then how will his worldly life continue? The answer is given in the same verse: “योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् – I Myself carry the burden of his life”. The Lord takes care of his Yoga (the attainment of the unattained) and Kshema (the preservation of the attained).

Saint Tukaram Maharaj also declares:

त्याचा भार वाहे माथा । करी योगक्षेम चिंता ॥

“He (the Lord) carries his burden on His head and takes care of his yoga and kshema.”

In this way, the devotee who has renounced all worldly supports and taken only the Supreme as his refuge is called ananya (unswerving). The Lord says that such an exclusive devotee never meets spiritual decline. Let us now look at the deeper, philosophical meaning of this statement.

“My devotee never perishes” – this is the assurance. The word pranashyati – “perishes” – can mean: to end, to cease being an object of

experience, or to become imperceptible to the five senses, etc. One might infer that “the devotee does not perish” means that the Lord’s devotee does not die. But this is not what the Lord intends to say. That would go against the very laws of the creation that He Himself has established. The law is: ‘यत् दृष्टं तन्नष्टम्’ – Whatever is perceived, ends. Whatever is perceptible is destined to be destroyed. The body is clearly seen; therefore, it must end. Then what is the precise meaning of “न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति”? What does “the devotee does not perish” actually mean?

Due to the effect of beginningless ignorance, every jīva identifies itself with its body. It considers the body to be the ultimate truth. When the body perishes, it is commonly said that the person has died. However, the reality is quite different. The body is made of the five great elements. Since these elements are perishable by nature, the body is also bound to perish. This is why it is called Sharira (Shiryate iti Shariram) – that which decays is called the body. When a person dies, it is only the gross body that has perished. The jīva does not die. Along with its subtle body, it transmigrates to the next physical body. Because the state of being an individual soul (JivaBhava) is rooted in ignorance, as long as that ignorance persists, the jīva continues to exist. Bodies are born and die. The jīva goes from one body to another, according to its karma. The Katha Upanishad also states this:

योनिमन्ये प्रपद्यन्ते शरीरत्वाय देहिनः ।

स्थाणुमन्येऽनुसंयन्ति यथाकर्म यथाश्रुतम् ॥ (Katha 2.2.7)
Some souls enter the womb to be embodied (as humans, animals, etc.), while others enter into 'motionless' forms (like plants), according to their deeds (Karma) and according to their knowledge (Shrutam).



Once a Jiva (soul) attains a human body, it becomes eligible for Moksha (liberation). The Lord declares: if a jīva, having obtained a human body, practices unswerving devotion to Me, then this beginningless ignorance comes to an end effortlessly, and he attains knowledge. Through Divine Grace, the soul's limited state (Jivadosha) is dissolved, and the individual soul becomes one with Me (Lord). Since I, the Lord am unborn (Aja), immortal (Amara), eternal (Nitya), enlightened (Buddha), and free (Mukta), the devotee—by uniting with Me—naturally experiences these same divine attributes. Since all these attributes belong to the imperishable Self (that can never be destroyed), My devotee never perishes. It is in this profound sense that the Lord has declared: 'न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति'. This is the true, original nature of every living being. This nature is known by various names: Atman, Paramatman, Brahman, etc. Adi Shankaracharya expresses this truth in the statement: 'जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः' – The jīva is indeed Brahman and not different from it. The four Great Sentences (Mahavakyas) of the Vedas propound this very truth regarding the Brahman-nature of the jīva. Samartha Ramdas Swami likewise says with the same intent: 'देहबुद्धी (जीवभाव) ते आत्मबुद्धी करावी.' – Renounce the body-identification (jīva-nature) and realize the Atman nature. There is yet another meaning to "My devotee never perishes." Every jīva, for the sake of experiencing the fruits of his Karma, comes into contact with sense-objects. Driven by ignorance, the jīva misconstrues these sense-objects as sources of happiness and becomes attached to them. Attachment to sense-pleasures is a powerful bondage. Enslaved by this bondage, he performs various actions and consequently assumes numerous births to experience the fruits

of those actions. In short:

Attachment to sense-objects → source of action
→ actions generate outcomes → to experience
these outcomes, many births are taken.

This chain continues endlessly, and the jīva's suffering never truly ends. The Lord explains that constant dwelling on sense-objects destroys the intellect. In the second chapter of the Gita (verses 2.62–63), this very chain of downfall is described. In brief, it is as follows:

Dwelling on objects (Vishaya-dhyana) → Leads to Attachment (Sanga) → From attachment arises Desire (Kama) - From frustrated desire arises Anger (Krodha) → From anger comes Delusion (Sammoha) → From delusion comes Loss of Memory about true nature (Smriti-vibhrama) → From loss of memory comes Destruction of Intellect (Buddhi-nasha) → From the destruction of intellect comes Complete Ruin (Pranashyati)

Such a great disaster occurs simply by dwelling on sensory objects. In these verses, "Delusion" causes a "Loss of Memory"—meaning it destroys the remembrance of one's true nature (the memory that "I am the Atman"). Consequently, the intellect turns away from the Self and runs toward sensory objects in search of happiness. This turning away from the Truth is what is called the "Destruction of the Intellect."

The Atman (Self), whose very nature is Bliss, is ever-present in one's heart. Yet the intellect, ignoring this, runs outward toward objects in search of happiness. This is akin to killing the Self. The intellect has the capacity to recognize the Self and unite with it, yet, deluded by the contemplation of sense objects, it fails to do so. This failure to recognize the Self is what the Lord describes as the "killing of the self" and the "destruction of the intellect." But My devotee, who



practices unswerving devotion to Me, is never bound by attachment to sense-objects. Having become one with Me, for him, I alone exist everywhere. For him, all sense objects become forms of the Divine. Tukaram Maharaj says: 'विषय तो त्यांचा झाला नारायण।' – for them, the objects themselves have become the Divine. The antahkarana (especially the intellect) of My devotee never assumes the form of sense-objects; rather, it remains established in the Self. The intellect that has taken the form of the Self can never be destroyed, because the Self is indestructible. It is in this profound sense that the

Lord gives the assurance: “न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति – My devotee never perishes.” Thus, by practicing unswerving devotion to the Lord, the devotee rejoices in the Bliss of the liberated state even while living in the body. He continually experiences, “That indestructible principle – the Self – is what I truly am.” Through this assurance, the Lord reveals the glory of devotion to all devotees. Let us pray that by the grace of the Lord, all devotees practicing such unswerving devotion attain the immediate experience of “न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति – My devotee never perishes.” This is the prayer offered at His holy feet.

॥ Thus, blessings upon all ॥



About the Author

Shraddheya Shree. Mule Shastri

Shraddheya Shree. Prakash Keshavrao Mule is from Malkapur in Buldhana district. He completed his schooling in Malkapur and pursued higher education in Nagpur. After working for 40 years in a bank, he retired as an officer in 2012.

The Mule family has a long-standing tradition of studying religious scriptures, Vedanta, and astrology over many generations. Shree. Prakash Mule's father used to offer free astrological guidance to people in the town. After coming to Amravati, Shree. Mule began giving discourses and studying Vedanta at the Shree Gopalkrishna Temple. By the grace of destiny, he was guided by Pujya Mandatai Gandhe and Pujya Dr. Kaka. Under their guidance, Shree. Mule delivered many spiritual discourses.

Even today, he continues to guide the Gopalkrishna Temple family and others in astrology and spiritual science. Vedant Bhaskar's followers in India and abroad have benefitted from his timely guidance.



What is Vedanta?

P. Swami GovindDev Giri Maharaj

The Vedic literature is the supreme wealth of the people of India. Without contemplating the Vedas, an Indian cannot truly reflect on the nation, dharma, or culture. Our Indian tradition is rooted in the Vedic tradition. It is difficult to estimate how ancient this Vedic literature is, for till today, no definitive proof regarding its exact age has been found. Dr. Winternitz says, "No power on earth can decide the date." Various learned scholars have expressed differing estimates regarding how ancient the Vedas are, and it is difficult to arrive at a firm conclusion. However, certainly, this Vedic literature is not from recent times. Scholars from around the world agree that the Vedas are the first notes that have emerged from the Veena (musical instrument) of Goddess Sarasvati.

The Rigveda is the most ancient literature in the world. This Vedic literature is not only the incomparable treasure of Indians, but of the entire human race; it is a unique gift bestowed upon us by the divine. If one wants to have a coherent discussion on Vedanta, one must first understand the Vedas. Some people have tried to contemplate Vedanta while setting the Vedas aside, but then such a contemplation remains incomplete. In fact, the word "Veda" is inherently contained within the word "Vedanta" itself. When we speak of Vedanta as the description of the highest peak of philosophical reflection, its foundation is the Vedas; without knowing the foundation, how will

we know the form of the peak? Therefore, it is necessary first to make an effort to understand the Vedas.

We all know that there are four Vedas, known as Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda, and Atharvaveda. Although these four names are distinct, in reality, the Veda was one, is one, and shall remain one. Because the term "Veda" refers to the entire collective compendium of Vedic hymns (mantras). It is difficult for a single person to memorize the entire Veda, and recognizing this, it was divided into four parts. Considering that the retentive power of the common man is limited in the Kali Yuga, Lord Vedavyasa divided the single Veda into four sections so that people could memorize at least one portion or study at least one part. It was as if he categorized scattered papers and prepared four 'files' for the convenience of the people. Because of this great act, he came to be known by the name "Vedavyasa" (the one who classified the Vedas). Of course, the number of Vedas is not limited to these four texts alone. As I mentioned earlier, the Veda is one; yet, the Vedas are also infinite. Upanishadic sages say: अनन्ता वै वेदाः । — The Vedas are indeed infinite. The Veda is one and yet infinite because there are countless branches of Vedic mantras and knowledge. The texts through which we have gained the essential essence of all these Vedic hymns are the Vedas. Thus, Veda is not merely a single text.

When we study these Vedas from a special perspective, we see that they teach us the secret,



or means, by which a human being attains success in life. What exactly is a “Veda”? While analysing this, the great commentator on the Vedas, Sayanacharya, says:

**इष्टप्राप्ति-अनिष्ट परिहारयोः अलौकिकम् उपायम् यो ग्रंथो
वेदयति सः वेदः ।**

That is to say, those supreme texts which guide us toward the attainment of the desired and the removal of the undesired are called the Vedas. Every person in this world wishes that their desires be fulfilled. Who does not feel that they should obtain what they like? Everyone wants the food they receive to be good. Everyone wants to acquire abundant wealth. Everyone feels that not a single mishap should occur in their life, and if one does, it should be mitigated. In fact, life itself is the name given to the tireless efforts we put in to ensure that things happen per our wishes and not against them. To gain what is wanted and to avoid what is unwanted, people continuously employ various kinds of remedies.

Some strive to acquire wealth. Some toil for the attainment of knowledge. Some people apply various remedies to free themselves from disease. In short, one continues to strive throughout one's life for the attainment of the desired and the removal of the undesired. However, I do not attain what I strive for. Neither can I avert what I wish to. My efforts to ward it off go in vain. In such moments, I can seek the cooperation of various divine powers from the subtle world. The texts that provide me with the knowledge of how to obtain the cooperation of these divine powers are called the Vedas.

This Knowledge about the Veda is extremely

necessary. Oftentimes, the Veda is perceived merely as literature. While it is true that the Vedas possess all the qualities of great literature and contain history as well, it would be a mistake to limit them to these categories. The Vedas possess the power to make our entire life blissful. The profoundly esoteric (Gudha), and they can be used for divine purposes. By performing sadhana for many years in seclusion in the ashram at Pondicherry and by contemplating on the Vedas, Yogi Aurobindo concluded that grasping the secret of the Vedas is not within the capacity of an ordinary person. These Vedas are texts endowed with many types of sciences. The mantras of the Veda are an assemblage of diverse kinds of vibrations, such that, through their japa or through specific modes of recitation, many things can be obtained.

These mantras of the Vedas are the very foundation of our dharmic life and the starting-point of our national consciousness.

It is our firm belief that the Vedas are Apaurusheya (not of human origin). They have no individual creator.

This statement of mine can be interpreted on different levels in different ways, but that is not the main subject of the present article. The first part of the Veda is called Samhita, the second part is called Brahmana, the third part is called Aranyaka, and the fourth part is called Upanishad. The traditional definition of the Veda is that both the Mantras (Samhitas) and the Brahmanas together constitute the Veda. However, some brothers from the Arya Samaj do not consider the Brahmana portion as part of the Veda. In their view, only the Samhita texts should



be called the Vedas.

Let's describe Samhita, Brahmana, and Aranyaka each in one sentence. Samhitas contain the basic mantras of prayer. Brahmana contains the narratives connected with these mantras and explain the viniyoga (the practical application or ceremonial use) of those mantras. The Aranyakas contain certain contemplation. In the Upanishads, Let's describe Samhita, Brahmana, and Aranyaka each in one sentence. Samhitas contain the basic mantras of prayer. Brahmana contains the narratives connected with these mantras and explain the viniyoga (the practical application or ceremonial use) of those mantras. The Aranyakas contain certain contemplation. In the Upanishads, the ultimate and highest reflection on human life is found, and that is what is called Vedanta, or, in other words, the conclusion or essence of the Vedas is Vedanta. Gurudev Ranade used to say: "Vedanta is the culmination of Indian thought!" When we speak of Vedanta, the description of which texts are included is found within the Upanishad.

Fundamentally, the Upanishads themselves are called Vedanta: वेदान्तो नाम उपनिषत् प्रमाणम्। — The Upanishads are the authoritative source of Vedanta. The Upanishads and the Brahma Sutras form the very foundation of Vedanta.

If we consider the entire corpus, there are approximately two hundred Upanishads. However, the ones on which Adi Shankaracharya wrote commentaries are considered the most prominent because they are the most ancient. These include the Isha, Kena, Katha, Prashna,

Mundaka, Mandukya, Chandogya, Brihadaranyaka, and Taittiriya Upanishads. There are also Upanishads composed in the medieval period, but the word "Vedanta" is used primarily to refer to these ancient Upanishads, which are considered principal and the most authoritative Upanishads. There is one astonishing thing about the Upanishads. If we begin to contemplate what exactly has been stated in them, or if we study them from that perspective, we realize that what is said in one Upanishad is sometimes exactly the opposite of what is said in another. This paradox within the Upanishads is found in several places among their mantras. Therefore, there was a need for a single text that would set forth what exactly the Upanishads as a whole intend to convey. This work was accomplished by Lord Vedavyasa in the Brahmasutra. ब्रह्मसूत्रपदैश्चैव हेतुमद्भिर्विनिश्चितैः — this sutra-like description in the Bhagavadgita determines the definite, harmonized meaning of the Upanishad mantras and shows the perspective from which Vedanta should be viewed, along with the reconciliation of its apparent inner contradictions.

Following the Upanishads and the Brahmasutras comes the Bhagwad Gita, which is well-known to us all.

It is described as:

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दनः ।
पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ॥

Having made Arjuna the calf, Bhagavan drew the milk in the form of the Bhagwad Gita, from the cows in the form of the various Upanishads, and



bestowed it upon us. The Upanishads, the Brahmasutras, and the Bhagwad Gita – these

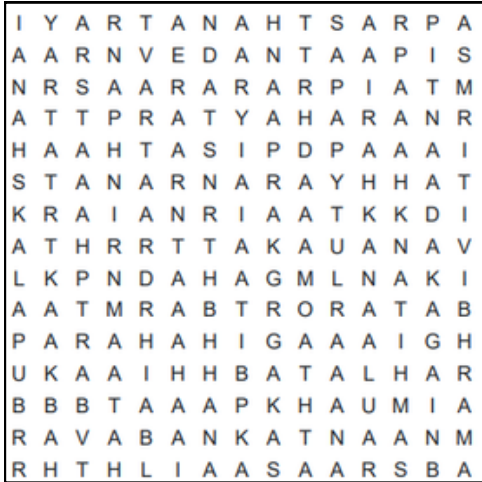
three texts are regarded as the prasthanatrayi of Vedanta. Collectively, these three are referred to as “Vedanta.”

About the Author

Pujya Swami GovindDev Giri Maharaj:

Pujya Swami Govind Dev Giri Maharaj is an eminent contemporary Vedantacharya and Bhagavatacharya, and a guiding light for the awakening of the National Dharma. His personality embodies a beautiful synthesis of knowledge, austerity, patriotism, and public service. He began his public discourses on the Gita at the age of fifteen. An 'Acharya' graduate from the Varanasi Sanskrit University, Swamiji represents the eighth generation of a distinguished legacy of Shrimad Bhagavat exponents. He was initiated into the spiritual path (Anugraha-Diksha) by P.P. Swami Jayendra Saraswati Maharaj, the Shankaracharya of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peeth. Later, he embraced the monastic order, receiving Sannyasa Diksha on the sacred banks of the Ganga from Mahamandaleswar P.P. Swami Satyamitranand Giri Maharaj of the Bharat Mata Mandir, Haridwar. Under Swamiji's visionary leadership, several institutions continue to flourish, including Gita Pariwar, Maharshi Vedavyas Pratishthan, and Sant Shri Dnyaneshwar Gurukul. Fluent in six languages, Swamiji has conducted over 2,500 'Jnana-Yajnas' (Spiritual discourses) globally, spanning America, England, and Australia. In recognition of his profound contributions, he has been conferred the honorary degree of D.Litt. by four prestigious universities.

Paramarthik Wordsearch



*Answers for this wordsearch can be found in various articles.

1. Moving from the literal meaning (Vachyartha) toward the profound, implied meaning (Lakshyartha).
2. A figure of speech where a part represents the whole.
3. The inherent nature of the senses to constantly run toward external objects.
4. The term used in the Shantipatha for things that lead toward the auspicious, the pure, and the Brahmatattva.
5. The physical location or seat within the gross body where the senses reside.
6. A process of turning uncontrolled senses away from their objects and stabilizing them in their original source.
7. The collective name for the Upanishads, Brahma Sutras, and Bhagavad Gita.
8. The forgetting of the remembrance "I am Atman," which leads to the destruction of the intellect.
9. The final portion of the Vedas or the Upanishads.
10. The first of the four divisions of the Vedas, which contains the original Mantras.



Paramarthik Terminologies

Readers often struggle with Vedanta texts because the Sanskrit terms used in them are not part of everyday language. There is often a vast difference between the technical meaning of a word in Vedanta Shastra and its common, worldly usage, which can lead to confusion. Furthermore, a single term may carry multiple meanings; in such cases, it is essential to understand the correct meaning according to the context.

To help with this, we have compiled explanations of these specific terms in this issue. We are certain that this will benefit both readers and those listening to spiritual discourses.

Classification of Spiritual Practices:

There is a variety of spiritual practices (Sadhana) that a person can undertake to realize the Supreme Self (Paramatman), depending on their unique temperament and level of spiritual competency (Adhikara). Ultimately, the extraordinary means to attain liberation (Moksha) is the 'knowledge of the oneness of Brahman and the individual soul' (Brahm-atma-aikya Jnana)."

पूर्णानन्दाद्वितीय ब्रह्मात्मपरिज्ञानात् एव परमपुरुषार्थप्राप्तिः न अन्येन इति ।

It is only through the thorough realization of the non-dual Brahman, which is absolute bliss, as one's own Self, that the supreme goal of life (Moksha) is attained—and by no other means.

This is in harmony with Shrimad aadya Shankaracharya's commentary on Śruti: “नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय ॥श्वेता ३.८ ॥” “There is no other path for liberation.” (Shvetashvetara Upanishad 3.8)

The spiritual practices are further classified based on whether their assistance in attaining Supreme Knowledge is direct (or proximate) or indirect (or distant). The journey from the indirect to the direct illustrates the seeker's gradual attainment of spiritual qualification. Accordingly, these disciplines are distinguished into two primary categories: the external means (Bahiranga Sadhana) and the internal means (Antaranga Sadhana)

Bahiranga Sadhana (External Means) - It consists of those spiritual practices that are traditional and preparatory in nature. While these practices do not have a direct application in the immediate realization of Brahmatmaikya-jnana (the oneness of Brahman and Atman), they serve as vital aids for the same by purifying one's mind (Chitta-shuddhi) and developing the mind's focus (Chitta-ekagrata). Both (Selfless) action and (selfless) worship are classified as these external means.

Through desireless action (Nishkama Karma) as prescribed by the Vedas, the defects of impurity of the mind (Maladosha) are dissolved. This process leads to the subsidence of the innate tendencies and desires toward prohibited actions, resulting in purification of the mind. Similarly, through Selfless worship (Nishkama Upasana) prescribed by the Vedas, the inherent restlessness or flitting nature of the mind (Vikshepa) is stilled, allowing the mind to reach a state of one-pointedness.

Antaranga Sadhana (Internal Means) - It refers to those spiritual practices that are 'direct' or proximate. These are the practices that serve as the immediate, direct instrument in the realization of non-duality between Brahman and Atman.



The Internal Means are further distinguished into two categories: direct and indirect.

Because the 'Sadhana Chatustaya' (the fourfold qualifications)—consisting of Viveka (Discernment), Vairagya (Dispassion), the sixfold virtues starting with Shama (Tranquility), and Mumukshutva (Desire for liberation)—have a direct utility in the process of Shravana (Listening), they are considered more 'internal' than Karma and Upasana.

Furthermore, since Shravana (Listening), Manana (Reflection), and Nididhyasana (Contemplation) have a direct utility in the actual attainment of the realization of Brahman-Atman oneness, they are more 'internal' than the fourfold qualifications (Viveka, etc.). However, 'Tattva-Padartha-Shodhana' (the validation/actual attainment of oneness of 'That' and 'Thou' by negating or setting aside the limiting adjuncts (Upadhis)) is considered the 'most internal' (extremely proximate) means.

मनसैवैदमाप्तव्यं नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन । - By the pure mind alone is this to be realized; there is absolutely no multiplicity here whatsoever.

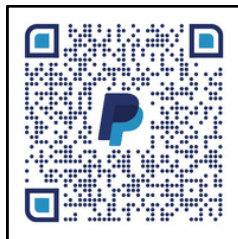
According to the scriptural command (Shruti Adnya) - By employing means such as Shravana (Listening), Manana (Reflection), Nididhyasana (Contemplation), and Tattva-Padartha-Shodhana (the validation/actual attainment of oneness of 'That' and 'Thou') through an intellect conditioned by the grace of the Guru and the Scriptures, one comes to the true understanding and firm, unshakable conviction that the perception of duality and separateness experienced by the individual Jiva is entirely an appearance (Mithya). Having gained that firm conviction, one attains the direct, non-dual realization of the oneness of Brahman and Atman—the 'Aparoksha' (experiential) knowledge: 'I am of the nature of Sat-Chit-Ananda (Existence-Consciousness-Bliss) Brahman.' This is the ultimate, crowning purpose of all these diverse spiritual disciplines

In summary, the practices of (Selfless) Action and Worship, the foundational qualifications beginning with Discernment (Viveka), and the core contemplative disciplines beginning with Listening or Studying (shravana) serve as the progressively inward means for attaining the ultimate realization of non-duality between Brahman-Self.



Vedant Bhaskar – Mangala Nidhi

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Spiritual writings of Param Pujya Dr. Kaka.

The spiritual and literary legacy of Param Pujya Kaka is truly beyond description. His body of work includes profound commentaries on the Prasthantrayi—the Brahmasutras, Upanishads, and Bhagavad Gita—along with texts that distill the essence of Shankaracharya's Advaita Vedanta and the teachings of Marathi saints. He authored numerous books and countless articles that clearly and insightfully explain a wide range of spiritual concepts.

- Panchadashi Bhavdarshan
- Sankshipta Shariraka Bhavdarshan
- Vikas Jeevanacha
- Geeta Deepstambh
- Naishkarmyasiddhi Bhavdarshan
- Dasbodh Chintanika
- Mandukya Upanishad
- Kathopanishad
- Taittiriya Upanishad
- Ishavasya Upanishad
- Brihadaranyaka Upanishad
- Chandogya Upanishad
- Kenopanishad
- Prashnopanishad
- Mundakopanishad Vivaran
- Drik-Drishya-Viveka Bhavdarshan
- Aparoksha Anubhuti Bhavdarshan
- Sukhacha Shodh
- Adhyatma Ani Jeevan
- Sadhak Sopan
- Sadhakbodh
- Dnyandevanchaa Haripath
- Paramarth Vidnyan
- Changdev Pasashti
- Eknathanchaa Haripath
- Aarti Bhavdarshan
- Vivekachudamani
- Shruti Gyan Deepaka
- Nivadak Veche
- Brahmasutra Pravachane
- Shrimad Bhagavat Bodh Katha
- Geeta Deepstambh (Hindi)
- Antaricha Gyan Dewa
- Dasbodh
- Vivekasindhu
- Samarth Vagvaijayanti (Samarthanchi Prasadik Vani)
- Brahmasutra Shankar Bhashya – Part 1
- Brahmasutra Shankar Bhashya – Part 2
- Brahmasutra Shankar Bhashya – Part 3
- Ganapati Atharvashirsha Bhavdarshan
- Soliv Sukh
- Atmaram
- Anugrah
- Narad Bhakti Sutra
- Pasayadan – Ek Chintan
- Mahavakya Chintan
- Atmashatkam
- Swanubhav Dinakar – Ek Chintan
- Paava
- Advaita Makarand
- Vivekananda Charitra
- Jeevan Sundar Aahe
- Pasayadan (English)
- Drik-Drishya Viveka (English)
- The Lighthouse of Bhagavad-Gita
- Journey to Bliss (English)
- Manobodh Bhavdarshan
- Vikas Jeevanacha
- Atmadarshan
- Saar Vicharsagar
- Teen Upanishade (Aitareya, Chandogya, Prashnopanishad)
- Paramarth Vidnyan
- Paramamrut
- Ramdas Bhare Antari
- Chatusloki Bhagavat (by Shri Eknath Maharaj)
- Shrimat Adya Shankaracharya Virachit Stotravali (With Meaning and Commentary) – Part 1
- Shrimat Adya Shankaracharya Virachit Stotravali (With Meaning and Commentary) – Part 2
- Saarth Shri Sadguru Balu Mama Vijay Granth
- Sadhana Panchakam

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Section: Youth Forum

Shree Hanuman Chalisa for the Present Generation (Part 4)

Dr. Shekhar Mayanil (Neuroscientist)

In the last two episodes, we learned that the Hanuman Chalisa chaupai "Jai Hanuman Jñan Guna Sagar, Jai Kapees Tihun Lok Ujaagar" encapsulates a layered doctrine, psychological, yogic, and neuro-spiritual, on the ideals and possibilities of the human mind-brain-spirit continuum. From Upanishadic Advaita and Sankhya Yog to classical and modern neuroscience, Hanuman ji emerges as the manifestation of brain-mind integration, neuroplastic transformation, and conscious evolution.

In this episode we shall delve into the following chaupai in detail:

रामदूत अतुलित बल धामा ।
अंजनि-पुत्र पवनसुत नामा ॥

Ramdoot Atulit Baldhama.
Anjani-Putra Pawansut Naama.

The Role of Sri Hanuman ji as Sri Ram's Messenger: Ramdoot:

"Doot" means messenger; "Ramdoot" is the messenger or envoy of Lord Ram. In the epic Ramayana, Sri Hanuman ji Maharaj takes on the crucial responsibility of acting as a messenger. His mission involves delivering a message from Sri Ram to Mother Sita ji and subsequently bringing a message back from her to Sri Ram. The position of a messenger in this context is fraught with challenges, particularly when the messenger is unfamiliar with both the location and the individual to whom the message must be delivered. Mother Sita ji resides in Lanka, a place that is not only foreign to Hanuman ji but also heavily guarded. Any mistake made by Hanuman ji during this mission could result in grave consequences, potentially endangering both his own life and the life of Sita ji. It is important to



note that Hanuman ji had never seen Sita ji before and had never visited Lanka prior to undertaking this task. These circumstances underscore the immense courage, resourcefulness, and devotion required for Hanuman ji to fulfill his role as Ramdoot. The word “Ramdoot” means more than just someone who delivers messages, it also suggests a spiritual purpose. Hanuman ji acts as both a literal and symbolic link between humans and the divine. On one hand, Hanuman ji’s role as messenger is evident when he bravely travels to Lanka to deliver Lord Ram’s message to Sita ji, showing both courage and creativity and emphasizing the importance of selfless service in carrying out a sacred task. On the other hand, Hanuman ji represents the soul’s (Jīva’s) journey toward the divine, embodying grace and the transformative effects of devotion. He is considered Sri Ram’s messenger not by chance, but because of his steadfast devotion, humility, and pure heart, which allow him to connect humanity with the divine.

In the Sundara Kanda section of the Ramayana, Hanuman ji’s journey across the ocean to Lanka is frequently interpreted as a metaphor for an individual’s leap of faith. Hanuman ji’s successful search for Mother Sita ji and the conveyance of Sri Ram’s message is regarded as an illustration of the value of faith, courage, and surrender, highlighting the significant spiritual implications of his role as Ramdoot. Sri Hanuman ji as Ramdoot embodies the ideal of the devotee whose life is dedicated to carrying the divine message of love, righteousness, and liberation to the world. His actions teach us that true service is rooted in humility, self-effacement, and the willingness to act as an instrument of divine will.

The Adhyatma Ramayana offers a mystical interpretation: Sri Ram represents the universal Self (Param-Atma), Sita ji the individual soul (Jiva-Atma), and Hanuman ji the force of bhakti that dissolves ego (ahankara) and reunites the soul with its source.

Psychologically, Ramdoot symbolizes the ego transformed into a vehicle for higher purpose. It is not destroyed but surrendered, aligned with divine will. Hanuman ji’s role reveals that devotion entails transcending personal desires, guiding the soul back to its origin, and manifesting the power of selfless surrender.

Sri Hanuman ji, a Symbol of an Immeasurable Reservoir of Strength

Atulit Baldhama: Atulit means incomparable or immeasurable; Bal is strength; Dhama is abode or repository. Together, the phrase signifies “the repository of immeasurable strength.”

Sri Hanuman ji’s power is inseparable from his devotion, always directed toward fulfilling Sri Ram’s purpose rather than personal gain. It is described as divine energy (shakti) guided by pure devotion (bhakti). As expressed in the Sundarkand of the Ramcharitmanas:

राम काजु कीन्हें बिनु मोहि कहाँ बिश्राम

Ram kaju kinhe binu mohi kahan bishram

Hanuman ji declares, “There can be no rest for me till I have accomplished Lord Ram’s work.”

His Atulit Bal reminds us that authentic strength arises from alignment with the divine, integrating body, mind, and spirit in service of a higher purpose. Invoking Hanuman ji awakens dormant inner power, enabling individuals to overcome obstacles and achieve what once seemed impossible when freed from ego and attuned to universal consciousness.



This immeasurable strength is closely tied to Atma-Shakti, the infinite energy sustaining all existence. Dedication to the Divine Self, as Hanuman ji exemplifies, grants access to this limitless reservoir. Philosophically, true strength is not external but inherent in consciousness. Human limitations stem from mistaken identification with the finite body-mind; by realizing our infinite nature, we transcend constraints and access boundless energy.

Atulit Bal thus signifies the liberation of human potential. Hanuman ji's strength flows not merely from physical ability but from spiritual clarity and devotion to his higher purpose. Psychologically, it represents courage and confidence born of insight, not ego. It symbolizes the integration of conscious and subconscious mind, where disciplined practice and focus unlock hidden capacities, supporting self-realization and fulfillment of divine objectives. The concept of **Bal** in Sanatan Dharma Sanskriti is multifaceted. It encompasses not only physical power but also mental resilience, moral courage, and spiritual energy. In the Yoga Sutras, **Bal** is associated with the awakening of latent powers (siddhis) through disciplined practice (sadhana). The Upanishads declare that "the Self cannot be realized by the weak," emphasizing the necessity of inner strength for spiritual attainment. Sri Hanuman Ji's Atulit Bal is thus a symbol of the potential within every being to overcome ignorance, fear, and limitation. His strength is the fruit of tapas (austerity), discipline, and unwavering focus on the divine.

Hanuman ji's identity as both Ramdoot, the messenger and servant of Sri Ram, and Atulit Bal, the repository of immeasurable

strength, is inseparably bound to the principle of dharma-righteousness, duty, and the maintenance of cosmic order. Throughout the Ramayana, he exemplifies unwavering adherence to dharma, whether through loyalty to Sri Ram, compassion for Mother Sita ji, or protection of the vulnerable.

Sri Hanuman ji as a son of Anjani and Embodiment of Maternal Consciousness **Anjani-Putra: Son of Anjani**

The reference to Mother Anjani, Sri Hanuman ji's revered mother, holds profound spiritual significance. She symbolizes the purified feminine principle-the receptive aspect of consciousness from which awakening arises. Within Sanatan Dharma, this maternal principle, known as Shakti, is honored as the creative force behind all manifestation.

Sri Hanuman ji, as Anjani-Putra, embodies consciousness nurtured through disciplined practice and moral integrity. His identity reflects receptivity, creativity, and the sustaining power of the Divine Feminine. The title emphasizes the necessity of harmonizing masculine and feminine principles on the spiritual path- activity with receptivity, will with surrender, and knowledge with devotion, so that true growth may unfold.

Hanuman ji as son of Wind God and the Principle of Prana:

Pawansut, meaning "son of Vayu" (the wind god), carries layered significance. Vayu is not merely atmospheric wind but the cosmic principle of movement, animation, and life force. Spiritually, Hanuman ji's lineage as Pawansut connects him to the primordial energy that animates existence, the bridge between the



On the individual level, Vayu becomes prana, the vital force underlying biological and psychological processes. Hanuman ji embodies the truth that real power is dynamic, flowing, and responsive. Wind itself symbolizes duality: gentle yet forceful, subtle yet tangible, nurturing yet destructive. This spectrum reflects cosmic power and suggests that spiritual growth requires becoming a clear channel for universal energy rather than imposing personal will.

Within Sanatan Dharma, Vayu represents intelligence, the ordering principle uniting all minds in interconnected consciousness. At a Vedantic depth, Pawansut signifies access to Pranava (OM), the vibration from which creation emerges. Hanuman ji exemplifies the harmony of energy, intelligence, and spiritual potential.

Prana, as embodied by Hanuman ji, parallels what modern psychology calls vitality, motivation, and enthusiasm—the essential energy of life. As Pawansut, he demonstrates mastery of this force, showing how individuals can cultivate and channel it within themselves.

Yogic Neurosciences describe Pancha Pranas, five vital energies governing respiration, digestion, neuro-immune activity, circulation, and excretion, including temperature regulation. These forces sustain physical health and psychological balance. Blocked energies lead to inertia and depression; chaotic energies manifest as anxiety or dissipation. Hanuman ji, as Pawansut, illustrates the importance of integrating prana for mental and emotional equilibrium.

Verse	Chakra Association	Yogic Symbolism	Neuroscience Correlate	Psychological Effect
Ramdoot Atulit Baldhama	Manipura (Solar Plexus) seat of willpower and transformation	“Atulit Bala” limitless prana shakti, courage, resilience	Prefrontal cortex (executive control, purpose-driven action) balanced with sympathetic	Enhances agency, confidence, resilience under stress
	Anahata (Heart) devotion and surrender	“Ramdoot” messenger of Rama, aligning action with bhakti	Vagal tone regulation, parasympathetic grounding	Cultivates humility, compassion, and service
Anjani-Putra Pawansut Naama	Mooladhara (Root) maternal grounding	“Anjani-Putra” emotional inheritance, nurturing	Limbic system regulation (emotional balance)	Provides security, emotional regulation
	Vishuddhi (Throat) and Ajna (Third Eye) breath and consciousness	“Pawansut” son of wind, mastery of prana through breath	Respiratory/cortical coupling, vagus nerve pathways	Breath mastery means clarity, focus, reduced anxiety



Practically, Pawansut highlights that Pranayama is more than physical exercise—it is a discipline for mastering the mind and attaining higher consciousness. Just as wind unsettles when uncontrolled, the mind fluctuates when undisciplined. Through practice, this vital force becomes a powerful instrument for transformation and spiritual realization.

Summary

In practice, daily recitation of these words serves as a reminder of devotion, strength, and transformation. They act as a call to action, a source of comfort, and a beacon of hope for those striving to walk the path of righteousness, courage, and love.

In our next episode, we will provide a detailed discussion on the third chaupai of the Sri Hanuman Chalisa.

About the Author

Dr. Chandrashekhar Mayanil – Chicago, USA

Dr. Chandra Shekhar Mayanil is an educator, author, and neuroscientist. Before retirement, he was a Professor and Director of the Pediatric Neurosurgery Research Program at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago, holding the Eleanor Clarke Research Scholar chair in Developmental Neurobiology for over 15 years. He and his colleagues conducted groundbreaking research on brain and spinal cord development and pediatric brain tumors. Dr. Mayanil has been offering guidance to the Balsanskar Varga students to impart the timeless wisdom of Yogic practices through the lens of modern neuroscience.

Vedant Bhaskar Initiative Overview

Bal Sanskar Varg (Value-education classes)

Cultivating a noble generation begins with the Sanskar (values) nurtured in childhood. 'Bal Sanskar Varga' serves as far more than a classroom—it is a sacred space where the timeless values of the Sanatana Vaidika tradition are gently imprinted upon the developing minds of our youth.

Language is the heartbeat of our culture and the most effective vessel for passing down our Indian heritage. Therefore, our classes focus heavily on the Marathi language, teaching children how to read, write, and converse fluently. Alongside language, we provide a holistic immersion into our culture. Children discover the profound reasons behind our festivals, draw inspiration from our rich history and Saints, and actively practice Yogasanas, Surya Namaskar, and collective Stotra chanting. Through all of this, the eternal values and rational thought gifted to us by our Rishis are imparted to the new generation through a modern, scientific lens. With this pure objective at its heart, Bal Sanskar Varga has been active for the past 12 years.



Section: Initiatives

Vedant Bhaskar Activities

Sau. Mrunal Bujone



The four months from December 2025 to March 2026 were an extraordinary time of spiritual experience for all of us in the Vedantabhaskar Sadhak Pariwar. We wish to keep alive the blissful moments we experienced. With heartfelt gratitude, we like to offer this seva, performed by us through the grace of our revered Guru, at His holy feet. This reflection is a humble attempt to revisit a few cherished memories from that auspicious period.

Vedant Bhaskar: Shree Dattajayanti Utsav 2025

Under the sacred resolve of the Sadguru, the blessings of the Saints, and the guidance of P. Shree MangeshDada and A. Sau. SonaliTai Phadke, the Bay Area (California) witnessed the profoundly devotional celebration of “Vedant Bhaskar – Shree Dattajayanti Utsav 2025.” This year marked a significant milestone, completing 15 years of uninterrupted tradition since its inception in 2010. The festivities commenced in an auspicious manner on November 28. Through a range of spiritual endeavors like Daily Shree Guru Charitra Parayana (narrative summaries), Upasana (various forms of worship, Balopasana (children’s devotional sessions), Chintan Abhyas (reflective studies), and kirtans elevated the celebrations to a remarkable spiritual height. Adhering to the annual tradition, P. Mangesh Dada and numerous seekers (sadhaks)



performed individual Shri Gurucharitra Parayan. To ensure that all sincere seekers could partake in the merit of this Sacred reading, P. MangeshDada illuminated the Kathasar each day. His daily discourses clarified the grace-filled narratives of the Shri Gurucharitra, unraveling the profound knowledge and the subtle inner meanings woven within the text.

A distinctive highlight of this year's Utsav was the Naradiya Kirtan presented by the young Kirtankar, Haribhaktparayan Shantanu Tumbade (age 22). His profound dedication to preserving the Kirtan tradition while pursuing higher education abroad evoked a deep sense of joy and admiration among the seekers.

The Balopasana on November 30 radiated a unique and divine joy. The students of the Balsanskar class presented a deeply touching play depicting the illustrious life of Swami Vivekananda. Sau. Smita Walvekar authored the narrative script and provided direction and narration with remarkable clarity and profound impact. Every scene portrayed by the children resonated with grace and spiritual fervor.

In the culturally complex landscape of America, amidst demanding academic schedules, the team executed this event with exemplary serenity, patience, and love. Their commitment to nurturing our heritage deserves the deepest respect. Adhering to our annual tradition, the day of Dattajayanti featured a profound Kirtan on the birth of Lord Dattatreya by H.B.P. Sau. SonaliTai Phadke. In the Purvarang (first part), In the Purvarang (first part) of her discourse, she selected a renowned abhang by Samarth Ramdas Swami: "Trividha taap haraka he Guru paay" ("The Guru's feet dispel the threefold suffering").

Even while residing across the seven seas, she demonstrated how we can serve our Sadguru

through body, speech, and mind (Tan-Man-Dhan). She emphasized that we must cherish the Sadhana bestowed by the Guru throughout our lives, accepting Shri Guruvakya (the Guru's word) as our ultimate guiding authority. Through various padas, ovis, and Sacred narratives, she impressed these truths upon the hearts of the listeners.

In keeping with the saying, "The right to speak belongs only to one who has truly lived the Truth; mere words do not suffice — the speaker must be established in righteous conduct and direct experience," her Kirtan was not just verbal eloquence, but flowed from speech refined and authenticated by lived spiritual insight. It was deeply moving and filled with genuine spiritual wisdom. From the eldest members to the youngest children, everyone present was completely lost in the divine joy of the Kirtan.

In the Uttarrang (second part), she narrated the Sacred story of Lord Datta's birth, bringing the Kirtan to a powerful conclusion by beautifully weaving it back to the initial abhang. Thus, she offered this Kirtan-seva at the Lotus Feet of the Sadguru. The celebration culminated in the traditional rituals of 'Nhani', 'Palna', 'Aukshan', and the 'Aarti' of Shri Dattaguru.

MangalNidhi:

Under the guidance of P. Dada, the righteous offering we make in the present times is itself a kind of "Vaishvadeva Yajna," through which our wealth is purified.

With this pure intention, every year on the occasion of Shri DattaJayanti Utsav, we consciously uphold our social responsibility. We extend our support to organizations that work with noble objectives and sincere dedication toward righteous causes (Dharmakarya) with a pure motive. The funds that are collected for this purpose are referred to as "MangalNidhi."



Temple History:

Establishment: Following the divine command of P. Kurtkoti Shankaracharya, P. Tai Maharaj founded this temple in Ambapeth, Amravati.

Legacy: Following the departure of P. Tai Maharaj, the temple's activities and its profound sanctity have continued to flourish under the capable leadership of P.P. Mandatai.

Restoration (Jirnoddhar): This Sacred structure is 91 years old. Recently, the temple underwent a complete Kaya-kalpa (renewal). This restoration from the laying of the foundation to the installation of the Kalash adhered strictly to Shastrot (scripturally prescribed) procedures.

Vedant Bhaskar: Harmony Among Traditions

For personal spiritual evolution, one's own Sampradaya and Guru-Parampara remain foundational and indispensable.

However, on a collective level, when we unite as the custodians of Vedic Hindu Sanatan Culture, the necessity of the current era becomes clear: as P.P. Kaka guides us, the boundaries of individual traditions must not become barriers. We must cultivate a profound awareness that the ultimate destination of every path is identical.

By embracing this fundamental principle, the Vedant Bhaskar Sadhak family participates, with a spirit of selfless service, profound faith, and heartfelt harmony, in various Sacred celebrations, including the "Shailagaman Yatra Utsav" and "Shri Gajanan Maharaj Prakat Din." This tradition of working together, translated into conscious action, remains the true foundational strength behind the institution's noble endeavors.

Shri Shailagaman Yatra Utsav 2026:

On January 31 and February 1, 2026, the Shaktibrahmashram: Shri Shailagaman Yatra Utsav unfolded within a vibrant and spiritually charged atmosphere.

The inaugural session commenced precisely at 9:00 a.m. with the Shri Dattamala Aavartan. Following this, in the presence of P. Shri MangeshDada Phadke and Sau. SonaliTai, the Gayatri Havan was performed strictly according to Shastrot procedures.

The morning session featured an engaging dialogue-style Prashnottari (Question & Answer) with P. MangeshDada. Seekers presented their doubts with great sincerity, and Dada responded with insights that were both practical and firmly rooted in Vedantic understanding.

In the evening, the Bhajan Seva featured meaningful compositions by P.P. Narayan Maharaj and P.P. Shriram Maharaj, sung with profound devotion.

On the second day, the Sadguru Pujan and the Paduka Pujan of P.P. Shri Shriram Maharaj was performed with deep devotion.

Following the Padya Puja, P. MangeshDada honored the tradition of the Shri Shailagaman Yatra, established in 1972 by P.P. Narayan Maharaj—and offered guidance and blessings to the assembled seekers.

In accordance with the teachings of Sadguru P.P. Doctor Kaka, the boundaries of language, region, and sect were transcended, and inspired by the Vedic call 'कृण्वन्तो विश्वमार्यम्' "Krunvanto Vishwamaryam" ("Let us inspire righteousness across the entire world"), the ashirvachans, discussions, and dialogues were conducted in Marathi, Hindi, and English. This multilingual approach ensured meaningful participation for the



youth, for children growing up abroad, and for seekers from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Shri Gajanan Maharaj Prakat Din: Kirtan Seva

On the auspicious occasion of Shri Gajanan Maharaj Prakat Din, Shri Gajanan Seva (Bay Area, California) organized a Kirtan Seva by H.B.P. Sau. Sonali Tai Phadke at the Shri Gajanan Maharaj Temple in San Jose. The atmosphere resonated with profound devotion. In the Uttarrang (latter part), Tai unfolded the Sacred episodes of Maharaj's divine life. As she described the celestial moment of His first appearance in Shegaon on the Magh Vadya Saptami tithi, the entire gathering felt transported to that historic and holy moment.

Tai further elucidated selected narratives from the Shri Gajanan Vijay, powerfully conveying Maharaj's extraordinary spiritual prowess and His boundless compassion for His devotees. Finally, with a resounding jayghosh of Maharaj's name, this auspicious Kirtan Seva reached its fulfillment. This auspicious festival concluded with the nectarine kirtan-seva of H.B.P. Sau. Sonali Tai Phadke. She offered a Vedanta-rich exposition on Sant Eknath Maharaj's abhang "Ananya sharan righa prabhula" ("Take exclusive refuge in the Lord"), and in the second half, beautifully narrated the episodes from Shri Guru Charitra describing Shri Nrusimha Saraswati Swami Maharaj's stay at Ganagapur.

Gopal-kala: The Spiritual Fulfillment of the Festival - The conclusion of the Shri Gajanan Maharaj Prakat Din celebration was also marked by a Gopal-kala kirtan by H.B.P. Sau. Sonali Tai Phadke. The special beauty of this kirtan was the graceful blending of both the Varkari and Naradiya kirtan styles. This distinctive presentation style is the signature hallmark of

Sonali Tai's familial kirtan tradition. While listening to the divine childhood leelas of Bhagwan and the scene of Gopal-kala, people felt as if Gokul itself had come alive before their eyes. At the conclusion of the kirtan, the Dahi Handi was ceremonially broken and the gopal kala prasad was joyfully distributed, bringing this auspicious festival to a close in the spirit that "with the kala, all is now brought to blessed completion."

On Sunday, February 22nd, a Kirtan by H.B.P. Sau. Sonali Tai Phadke was organized by the Brihan Maharashtra Mandal Meditation and Self-Care group. Making effective use of technology, this Kirtan was presented remotely from the West Coast, primarily for listeners on the East Coast.

In the latter half, in honour of the 750th year of Dnyaneshwar Mauli's birth, she narrated the extraordinary life of his unparalleled devotee, the great blind saint Shri Gulabrao Maharaj. Listening to how this child, who lost his eyesight in the ninth month, went on, purely by the power of his divine intellect, to author 130 works and to be regarded as Dnyaneshwar Mauli's very "daughter," it felt as though history itself had come alive through Tai's flowing narration. The story of the redemption of Hirabai, a courtesan, was especially moving and touched every heart.

Through her kirtan, Tai seeks to narrate the lives of saints, to bring to seekers the biographies of those who made towering contributions in the spiritual field yet remain relatively unknown, and to awaken devotion through abhang-based contemplation on spiritual principles. Above all, she impresses upon listeners, through every kirtan, the fundamental truth that kirtan is not meant for performance, but for darshan.



P.P. Sadgurudas Maharaj – Heartfelt Tribute (श्रद्धांजली)

On the occasion of Magh Vadya Navami (Das Navami), dated February 11, 2026, Dharmabhaskar P.P. Sadgurudas Maharaj attained to the Divine abode of Guru Dattatreya. On behalf of the Vedant Bhaskar Sanstha and the entire P.P. Doctor Kaka Parivar, we offer our heartfelt and soulful tribute in his memory. 🙏

Once a renowned Shivkathakar (proponent of Shivaji Maharaj's history), Shri Vijayrao Deshmukh found spiritual fulfillment as “Shri Sadgurudas Maharaj” through the sacred association and grace of Sadguru P.P. Shri Vishnudas Maharaj. His life stands as a shining beacon of light within the Datta Sampradaya. A large family of graced seekers, more than four hundred worship centres established in India and abroad, a rich legacy of deeply researched historical and spiritual literature, and thousands of discourses, all bear practical witness to the vastness of his spiritual work.

Sadguru P.P. Dr. Kaka and Sadgurudas Maharaj shared a close, affectionate bond. We, seekers in America too, received his love and blessings on various occasions. Observing the modern approach to spiritual work in America, his profound remark - "Traditional values, Modern methods," has become an eternal guiding principle for the Vedant Bhaskar organization.

By a divine coincidence, his article and an overview of his work was included in the previous (December 2025) issue of Vedant Bhaskar newsletter, on the occasion of the Shri DattaJayanti. Upon viewing the digital edition of this issue, he spontaneously shared his heartfelt appreciation: “I was immensely delighted to read the high-quality articles in 'Vedant Bhaskar'. The text on science and spirituality, the presentation of profound Vedantic thoughts in simple language, and the updates on the spiritual work thriving in America under the blessings of P.P. Kaka are truly commendable. I pray at the lotus feet of Lord Dattatreya, that the flag of Dharma carried forward by P.P. Kaka’s spiritual successor, Shri MangeshRao Phadke, continues to fly ever higher in America!” Truly, a Saint's blessings are a priceless treasure!

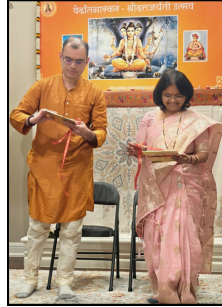
Once again, our heartfelt and soulful tribute at the holy feet of P.P. Sadgurudas Maharaj. May the work of the ‘Guru Mandir family’ continue to grow and flourish evermore, always guided by his profound vision. This is our earnest prayer at the feet of Shri Dattatreya. 🙏



Highlights



Shri Dattajayanti - Kirtan Seva



Newsletter - Publication
Shree. Mihir Joshi & Sau. Mrunal Bujone



Daily Discourse on Shri Gurucharitra



Balopasana



Youth Kirtankar
H.B.P. Shantanu Tumbade



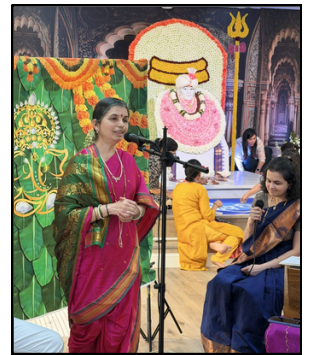
Depicting life-story of
Swami Vivekananda



Shloka Recitation



Gajanan Maharaj Prakat Din
Gopalkala Kirtan



Gajanan Maharaj Prakat Din
Inaugural Kirtan



USA, Bay Area - Sadhaka Family



Balopasana Lead - Sau. Smita Walvekar



Pujya Swami GovindDev Giri Maharaj

Master of Sectarian Harmony

Life and Work: A Brief Overview

Ancestral Lineage: He was born into a Dadhich Brahmin family that migrated from Rajasthan to Maharashtra about 150 years ago. For seven generations, family has preserved the sacred tradition of narrating Shrimad Bhagavata Purana.

Birth and Early Life: Born in 1949 in Belapur, Maharashtra. His pre-monastic name was Acharya Kishor Vyas. His father, the late Pandit Madangopalji Vyas, and mother, Pujya Gulabdevi, deeply influenced his early spiritual formation.

Education: After schooling in Belapur, he completed his college education at Rev. Pandurangshastri Athavale's 'Tattvajnana Vidyapeeth' (Thane), and subsequently earned his 'Acharya' degree from the Varanaseya Sanskrit Vishwavidyalaya, Kashi.

Guru Lineage: Initiated into spiritual practice by Shankaracharya Rev. Swami Jayendra Saraswati of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, he later embraced monastic order on April 30, 2006 (Akshaya Tritiya) under Mahamandaleshwar Rev. Swami Satyamitrinand Giri in Haridwar. Upon initiation, he received the name 'Acharya Swami Govind Dev Giri'.

Spiritual Discourses: Starting his Gita discourses at age 15 and Bhagavat Kathas at 17, he has successfully completed more than 2,500 Jnana Yajnas to date.

Subjects of Discourses: Shrimad Bhagavata, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Upanishads, Yoga Vasistha, Devi Bhagavata, Shiva Purana, Bhagavad Gita, Dnyaneshwari, Dasbodh, Sant literature, Shankara Vedanta, Sri Ramakrishna & Swami Vivekananda, and Indian management philosophy.

Languages of Expression: He delivers discourses in Sanskrit, Hindi, Marathi, English, Marwari, and Gujarati.

Global Outreach: Spiritual programs conducted across India, Nepal, the United States, Canada, England, Australia, Singapore, Thailand, Mauritius, Myanmar, Bhutan, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Germany, Indonesia, and Cambodia.

Philanthropy: Every offering he receives is fully dedicated to Dharmakarya and social service through various trusts.

Multifaceted Initiatives

Gita Parivar: Founded in 1986 to conduct 'Bal Sanskar' centers and camps, it now runs 350 weekly centers in 16 states and has organized over 600 children's camps and 40 volunteer training camps. Through learngeeta.com (started in 2011), it delivers daily online Gita classes to over 1.3 million students in 13 languages across 18 countries.

Maharshi Vedavyasa Pratishthan: Founded in 1990, it runs 38 Veda Vidyalayas, aids other Vedic schools, hosts study camps, honors Acharyas, and provides both pensions for elderly scholars and scholarships for students.

Sant Shri Jnaneshwar Gurukul (Est. 2000): Conducts Gita Sadhana camps, publishes/preserves Saint literature, and provides student ashrams, including a branch in Toronto, Canada. Established 'Samarth Ramdas Swami Sadhak Niwas' at Shri Kshetra Dehu (Sant Tukaram Maharaj's sacred site) offering traditional Gurukul education for Varkari students.

National Coordination: He continuously unites saints of all sects nationwide, creates public awareness regarding socio-national issues, and actively awakens the spirit of Rashtradharm.

National Responsibilities: Treasurer of the Ayodhya Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust and Vice President of the Mathura Shri Krishna Janmabhoomi Trust.

Annual Awards: Inspired by his vision, several awards including the Maharshi Vedavyas, Sant Shri Jnaneshwar, Swami Vivekananda, and Dharmaseva Prasad, are presented annually.

Published Books: Hindi – 54, Marathi – 65, English – 5

Awards Received: Notable honors - Shri Golwalkar Guruji Janakalyan (RSS), Swami Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Rashtriya Gaurav (Kanchi Peetham), Sant Jnanoba-Tukoba (Maharashtra Govt), Jeevan Sadhana Gaurav (Pune Univ.), Jijamata Vidwat Gaurav (Chhatrapati Seva Pratishthan), Sanskrit-Sadhana-Shikhar Samman (Rajasthan Govt), etc.

He has also been conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Literature (D.Litt.) by four universities.