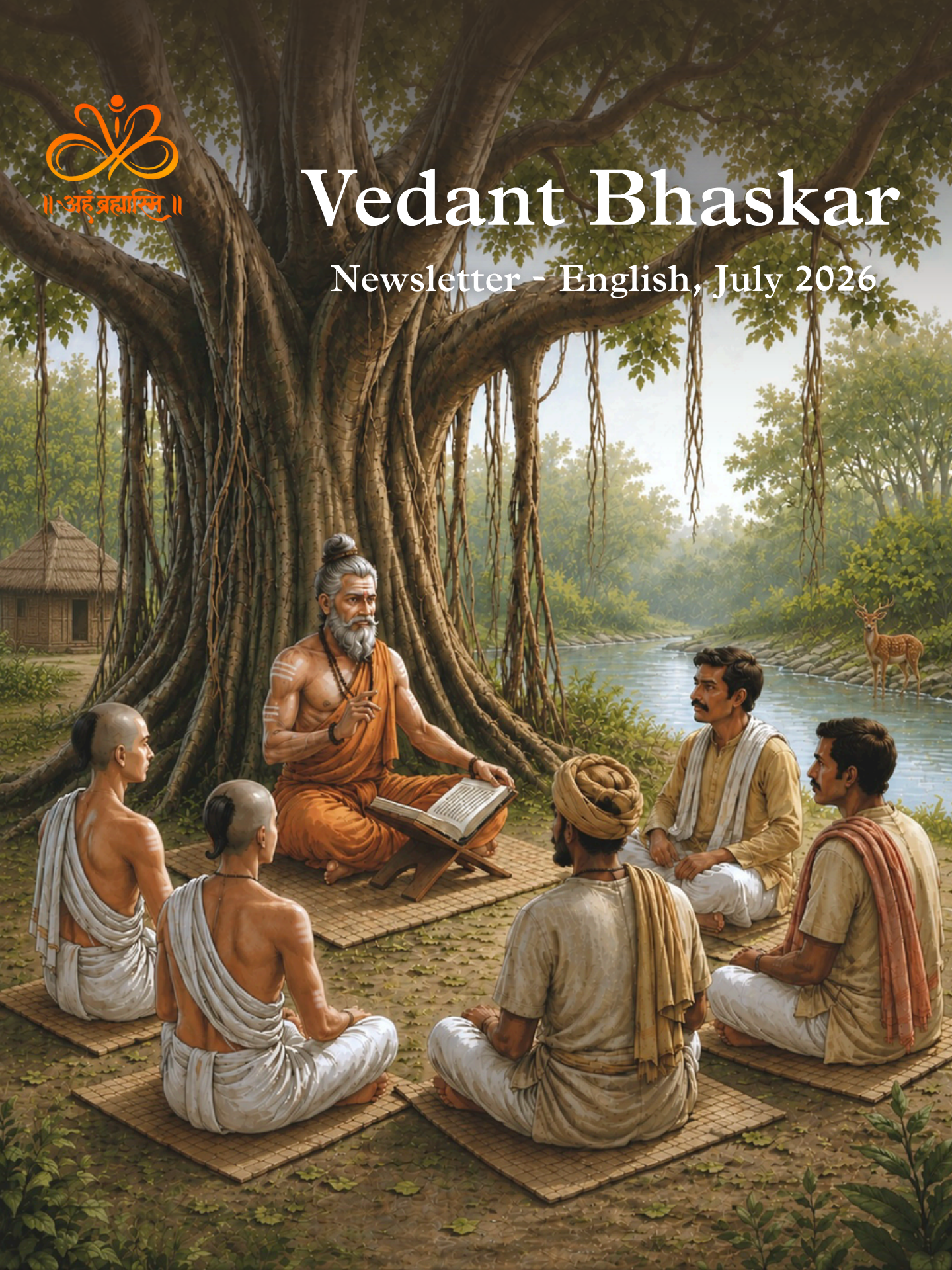




# Vedant Bhaskar

Newsletter - English, July 2026







आतां सदरू वर्णवेना । जेथें माया स्पर्शो सकेना ।  
ते स्वरूप मज अज्ञाना । काय कळें ॥

# 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 Vaidik 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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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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# Editorial

॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

आतां हृदय हें आपुलें । चौफाळूनियां भलें ।  
वरी बैसऊं पाडलें । श्रीगुरुंची ॥ Dnyaneshwari 15.1 ॥

There is no attainment of Knowledge without Sri Guru. Making our heart - now freed from impurities (Mala) and restlessness (Vikshepa) - into a sacred pedestal, let us seat the lotus feet of Sri Guru upon it! The lotus feet are the very symbol of one's True Self (Swaroopa).

By the grace of the Supreme Lord and the blessings of sages and holy personages, the quarterly journal of the Vedanta Bhaskar organization has completed one year on the sacred day of Sri Guru Purnima! On this auspicious occasion, the second quarterly issue of the year 2026-and the fifth issue overall-is being published, which is a matter of immense joy for the entire community of seekers.

A prominent feature of this issue is the inclusion of the Vedant Bhaskar organization's new logo, which was recently unveiled on the auspicious occasion of Shri Ram Navami. Being a delightful synthesis of tradition and modernity, the Saguna (manifest Divine) and the Nirguna (unmanifest Reality), as well as profound thought and aesthetic beauty, this logo is not merely a design but a true symbol of Vedant Bhaskar organization's core mission and purpose! To a thoughtful observer, it reflects many deep dimensions. Some of its key elements are as follows:

- 'Aham Brahmasmi' (I am Brahman) - The pinnacle Mahavakya of the Vedas that encapsulates the essence of the Advaita doctrine.
- 'Om' (ॐ) - the sacred monosyllable (Pranava) signifying the Supreme Reality (Parabrahman).
- The Infinity symbol - representing the Infinite, eternal principle (ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥ - That is Infinite, This is Infinite; from That Infinite, This Infinite proceeds. Realizing the infinitude of the Infinite, the Infinite alone remains).
- Saffron and gold hues - symbolizing the radiance of knowledge and dispassion (Vairagya).
- A Harmonious Union: An exquisite blend of symbols of the Nirguna (Formless) and a meditating seeker in the Saguna (Form) adorned with sacred mark (Gandha).
- 'VB' - the English abbreviation of the organization's name, Vedant Bhaskar.

We believe that this emblem, which introduces a new identity for the Vedant Bhaskar organization, will attract seekers worldwide. The response received after the unveiling of the emblem has proven this belief to be justified.

As always, this quarterly journal is adorned with diverse spiritual contemplations that steer a seeker's (Sadhaka's) thoughts - and consequently, their actions - towards eternal and constructive well-being. 'One who lacks a clear calculation of what is to be achieved and at what cost, attempts to achieve power, prestige, wealth, fame, and the like, at the cost of the Bliss of the Self (Atmananda).' Serving as a sharp, Gita-rooted eye-opener for the seeker is the final article in the 'Adhyatma and Life' series by Sadguru P.P. Dr. Shrikrishna D. Deshmukh.

The Sadguru not only bestows the legacy of knowledge upon a worthy, qualified disciple but also commands him to carry forward that tradition of Knowledge. Sustaining this system of imparting knowledge uninterruptedly in the world is a task inherent in the divine plan itself. Narrating the fascinating and enlightening story of the Guru-disciple pair of Shrimad Adi Shankaracharya and Totakacharya within this glorious tradition is the article 'Shrimad Adi Shankaracharya - Totakacharya' by P.P. MandaTai.

How does one perceive the Bhadra (sanctity and auspiciousness) in things that are 'beyond my control'? When the quality of purity (Sattvaguna) is nourished within the inner instrument (Antahkarana), the discernment (Viveka) born of this Sattva truly awakens the eyes of wisdom within the senses as well, leading them to automatically choose the auspicious. Unraveling this practice-oriented insight of the Peace Invocation (Shanti Mantra) is Shri. Mangesh Phadke's article on the Upanishadic hymn, the 'Shri Ganapati Atharvashirsha'.

The Supreme Lord has entrusted the science of spirituality to a distinct sacred institution known as Shri Sadguru. Providing a brief introduction to the work of the great luminaries who form a highly celebrated Guru-disciple pair in this lineage is the article 'Shri Paramahansa Parivrajakacharya Shri Govinda Bhagavatpada - Shri Guru and Shrimat Adi Shankaracharya - Disciple' by revered Mule Shastri.

Tracing the yogic science and modern neuroscience behind the hymn 'Hanuman Chalisa' in a manner that will resonate with the younger generation is the article by respected Dr. Mayanil. Vedanta is the ultimate pinnacle of Vaidik contemplation. Serving as an introduction to this profoundly radiant Vedantic literature-incomparable among all the world's literature-is the article 'Upanishads' by P.P. Swami Govinddev Giri Maharaj.

Along with these spiritual articles, a beautiful and deeply symbolic cover page, befitting the glory of Guru-disciple tradition, adds to the grace of this issue. 'सदाशिव (नारायण) समारंभां शंकराचार्यमध्यमाम् । अस्मदाचार्यपर्यतां वंदे गुरुपरंपराम् ॥' Reverently bowing to the unbroken lineage of Gurus (Guru-parampara) originating from Lord Sadashiva and Narayana down to our present-day Sadguru, a humble endeavor has been made in this issue-through its back cover and a map of the Digvijaya Yatra-to shed light on the extraordinary incarnate mission of Bhagavatpujyapada Shrimad Adi Shankaracharya, the reviver of Arya Sanatana Vaidik Dharma.



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 Shruti'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.

॥ जय जय रघुवीर समर्थ ॥

- Shri Mangesh Phadke  
Ashadha Purnima, Shalivahana Shaka 1948  
Wednesday, July 29, 2026, Shri Guru Purnima  
Bay Area, California, USA

# Section: The Quest for Lasting Happiness

## Adhyatma and Life (Part 5)

P.P. Dr. Shrikrishna D. Deshmukh

### Service to Humanity

We previously made the statement, 'Whatever happens when the individual soul (Jiva) becomes one with the Self (Atman) should be called happiness,' and left that thread hanging. Now, if we reflect upon it, the relationship between spirituality and life will become clear. We have examined three paths of practice: Knowledge (Jnana), Devotion (Bhakti), and Meditation (Dhyana). Within each of these paths lies a precise mechanism for the individual self to unite with the true Self. If happiness is the ultimate goal of life, and if pure, independent, unconditioned, and everlasting happiness is realized through the experiential wisdom of spiritual science (Adhyatmashastra), then their bond must be recognized as unbreakable. Because spirituality offers a radically transformed perspective on viewing and experiencing both joy

and sorrow - providing a framework for living an uninterrupted life of bliss - spirituality must be considered indispensable for human life.

Pure Bliss (Ananda) is as if the uncompromising insistence of spirituality. Its firm demand is a bliss that remains completely independent of the body and external circumstances. Liberation from rebirth is merely a secondary and negative aspect of spirituality. Making the life one has been given truly blissful is its primary and positive aspect. Spirituality is an entirely subjective, first-person science in which the body and the world possess only relative value and serve strictly as fields of duty (Kartavya).

The millions of people who gather to experience the science of spirituality do so solely to study this subjective science, to transcend the body and the world for themselves, and to master the science and art of a blissful life! If they engage in social



service, it is only as a part of that spiritual science. Once the service is complete, the people served become secondary. This is because in 'शिवभावे जीवसेवा' - serving the living being (Jiva) with the attitude of serving the Divine (Shiva) - Shiva is primary, the server is secondary, and the living being (Jiva) to be served becomes tertiary! The reason is that the beings to be served are many, the service-oriented server is but a single individual, and Shiva is-or ought to be-the ultimate goal. Those who are served, are Shiva only in principle; in reality, they are bound souls. The server is also bound, but is seeking liberation, whereas Shiva is eternally free. When one observes these so-called 'Shivas' who, after receiving service, constantly expect more, criticize the server, and blame him for any inadequacies in the provisions of the service, it does not take long to realize their pseudo-divinity. In this process, the devotee of Shiva constantly receives rude shocks. If the seeker serves out of pity, then Shiva becomes pitiful, the server becomes the merciful one, and the service becomes an act of pity, not a spiritual discipline (Sadhana). Therefore, service, which should be a matter of duty and divine command, will only become a spiritual discipline for the purification of the mind (Chittashuddhi) if it is performed with a desireless intellect (Nishkama Buddhi), abandoning the sense of doership (Kartrutvabhava), and strictly as a divine mandate.

जे का रंजले गांजले त्यासी म्हणे जो आपुले ।

तोचि साधू ओळखावा देव तेथेची जाणावा ॥

"He who embraces the afflicted and the tormented as his own -know him alone as a Saint, and realize that God dwells right there." (Tukaram Gatha, Jog 201). The service implied in this famous Abhanga is that of a saint who has already attained

Self-realization (Atmanubhav). Saints like Samarth Ramdas and Sant Tukaram Maharaj first completed their contemplation of the Self (Atma-upasana) before engaging in society's spiritual guidance (Lokopasana) and social integration (Lokasangraha). While they were undertaking their spiritual practice at places like Takali and Bhandara, we do not hear of them running any schools or hospitals. There are no records of them organizing free food camps or distributing clothes. According to the science of spirituality, all these are classified as philanthropic (Purta Karmas). One should certainly perform them as a part of one's duty desirelessly. However, they cannot constitute internal spiritual means (Antarang Sadhana).

The emphasis on social service (Lokaseva) is partly a result of the influence that Christian missionaries had on superficial Hindus while propagating their religion in India. Because this concept of service aligns so well with communist and socialist political ideologies, it captivated those groups as well. Consequently, practicing spirituality without engaging in social service came to be viewed almost as a crime! Within the duties prescribed for the householder stage, Ishta (personal spiritual duties) and Poorta (public welfare duties) are clearly outlined. Creating and maintaining gardens, temples, water reservoirs, free food kitchens, and public shelters constitutes the core of Purta Dharma. In accordance with the changing times, one must certainly include hospitals, schools for the hearing and speech-impaired, centers for the disabled, and charitable student hostels under Poorta karma. However, all of this falls strictly under the duty of a householder. Swami Vivekananda, alongside his immense social service, never abandoned his





personal practice of meditation, devotional singing (Bhajan), and holy company (Satsang). Samarth Ramdas also advises the very same:

**कांहीं गलबला कांहीं निवळ । ऐसा कंठीत जावा काळ ॥**

(Spend your time partly in the bustle of worldly activity, and partly in pure quietude. (Dasbodh 19.8.29)

Social service is the "bustle," whereas spiritual practice (Sadhana) like meditation is the "quietude." The reason for articulating all of this in such detail and clarity is that an individual habituated to perpetual activity is prone to mistaking work done in the name of public service as the absolute be-all and end-all of spiritual practice, easily falling into a convenient conviction. Genuine seekers of liberation must remain vigilantly guarded against this trap. As for pseudo-spiritualists, let them act according to their own notions.

The composite of the blissful Atman (Kutastha Chaitanya), the intellect (Buddhi), and the light of Consciousness reflected within the intellect (Chidabhasa) should be understood as the individual soul ('Jiva'). Scriptural masters devised this conceptual framework as a pedagogical construct to translate Vedantic philosophy into practical spiritual discipline and to illuminate the inner mechanics occurring during meditative practice. In this framework:

1. The Self (Atman) – is the light of knowledge, self-luminous, and eternal.
2. The Intellect (Buddhi) – is a pure principle formed from the fire element (Tejas) and the quality of purity (Sattva Guna). It has the capacity to receive the light of the Self and pervades the entire body.
3. The Reflected Consciousness (Chidabhasa) – Consciousness as conditioned by or relative to the

intellect. The moment the intellect dissolves, it merges into its true nature as the Atman, and its separate identity is sublated (Badhita) through supreme self-knowledge.

These are the three components. When the intellect (Buddhi) dissolves into the state of Samadhi through any authentic spiritual discipline mentioned earlier, the reflected consciousness (Chidabhasa) merges into its source, becoming one with the Self (Atmarupa). Because the Atman is inherently of the nature of absolute bliss, in that very instant, one directly experiences its innate blissfulness - which is truly the experience of one's own blissful nature. If this impression (Samskara) is continually reinforced, an unyielding pull toward that divine bliss settles within, and the craving for all other worldly pleasures progressively fades away.

When the craving for other worldly pleasures diminishes, the zest for life does not decrease in the slightest. On the contrary, a life desperately starving for pleasure is no life at all. A life focused on extracting pleasures from the world is devoid of real meaning; there is no true contentment in an anxious and restless existence. The notion that 'progress lies in perpetual discontent, and progress alone is life' is merely an attempt to rationalize inner discontentment. Yet, progress can certainly take place without remaining discontent-because if the pursuit of a goal is undertaken with a sense of duty, it can be carried out entirely free from discontent. Attaining a goal is not always within human control. If a goal is not reached, only discontent remains [when one is attached to the outcome]. In contrast, when a goal is pursued with a spirit of duty, there remains the profound satisfaction of having fulfilled one's obligation with all one's strength. For example, a doctor's goal is



to cure a patient. If the doctor treats the patient with an anxious, outcome-obsessed mindset and the patient dies, only discontent will remain. But if the treatment is administered with a pure sense of duty, the abiding satisfaction of having fulfilled one's duty remains intact.

In the shaping of the modern human mind, much thought is given to two attitudes: positive and negative. If a rationalistic attitude is considered at all, there is a tendency to categorize it as negative. Due to this way of thinking, losing sight of the limits of reality and living under the illusion of positive thinking, even great athletes take performance-enhancing drugs to show the world their so-called progress. It is precisely because the money earned within the limits of reality falls short of their desires that people launch into these so-called positive attempts to amass wealth through illicit means.

When the highly unrealistic on-screen lives of movie stars become the goal of 'positive thinking', young minds lose their grip on reality, and this very oblivious state can destroy their lives. A reckless philosophy like, 'A single moment of love is enough, even if it brings a shower of death,' easily seduces such young minds. Elevating dreams and fantasies to the status of a goal cannot be a sign of positive thinking. In advertisements, we see pictures of a handsome, clean-shaven young man living with extreme swagger, accompanied by the caption: 'He gets what he wants.' Consequently, through distorted 'positive thinking,' this superficial swagger comes to be idolized as a life goal! In due course, many such 'positive thoughts' receive a resounding slap from objective reality. The athlete caught using drugs is disqualified, bringing disgrace upon his nation. When a corrupt individual is caught red-handed,

his entire family is forced to live in humiliation with their heads hung low.

If one idolizes the lives of movie stars, marital life is shattered. Addictions are acquired merely for the sake of 'style,' and life is simply cast adrift to the winds. However, the unconditional happiness of spirituality—which is Pure Bliss (Ananda)—protects a person from all these traps. It helps one live an aesthetically rich, meaningful, deeply contented, blissful, and fearless life. All the saints lived precisely this way. Many harbor the misconception that a spiritual life must be bland, dull, cold, and pessimistic; yet there is no greater misunderstanding than this. Does angst, agitation, and perpetual weeping add true flavor to life? Does envy and hatred cure its blandness? Does the poisonous juice of ridicule, slander, and backbiting enhance life's taste? Is living foolishly, voluptuously, recklessly, and with a butterfly-like flitting mindset true aesthetic appreciation? Should reining in life's chaotic, unnecessary speed be labeled 'coldness'? Does the fulfillment of life lie in a fear-ridden existence? The true nature of such an illumined life becomes illuminated when one examines a beautiful abhanga by Sant Tukaram Maharaj, who represents the epitome of sainthood.

पिकलिया सेंद कडुपण गेलें । तैसें आम्हां केलें पांडुरंगें ॥ १ ॥

काम क्रोध लोभ निमाले ठायींचि । सर्व आनंदाची सृष्टि जाली ॥ २ ॥

आठव नाठव गेले भावाभाव । झाला स्वयमेव पांडुरंग ॥ ३ ॥

तुका म्हणे भाग्य या नांवें म्हणीजे । संसारी जन्मिजे याचि लागीं ॥ ४ ॥

(तु. गाथा जोग ३२४२)

He says: 'When I was bound like an ordinary human being, I was like an unripe gourd (Walook)-bitter, sour, astringent, and pungent. But when that same gourd ripens, its bitterness vanishes and it turns sweet. Similarly, through continuous devotion (Bhajana) to Panduranga, I



have matured and become sweet. This means that inner impurities such as lust, anger, greed, jealousy, hatred, and fear have been destroyed at their very source. For me, the entire creation is overflowing with Pure Bliss (Ananda). Even the memories from the period of spiritual practice-'I am not the body, I am the Supreme Reality (Brahman)''-have dissolved. The seeker's dual notions born of ignorance-whether the world exists as an absolute reality or as an illusion-have completely vanished. Both the world and I have merged into the form of Vitthal. Life in this world is meaningful only if one attains such supreme fortune!" This is not merely Tukaram Maharaj's teaching; it is his direct, lived experience.

Where is the 'negativism' in rejecting all sorrows and embracing pure joy? Anyone who has witnessed the aesthetic refinement in the hymns composed by Shrimat Adi Shankaracharya could never call the saints devoid of refined taste. Anyone who has savored the sweetness of Shri Dnyaneshwar Maharaj's compositions, which are rich in poetic flavors and literary ornaments, could never accuse the saints of lacking an aesthetic sense. It is only those who reduce aesthetic appreciation to bodily indulgence-confining it to pleasures of the senses, vanity, intoxication, and the like-who will find the saints dry and unappreciative. They never realize that a true appreciation of beauty can exist far beyond dance, music, and drama. According to the Shruti declaration, रसो वै सः (तैत्ति. उप. २.७.१) - "He is indeed the Essence" (रसो वै सः, Taittiriya Upanishad 2.7.1), that essence in the form of Pure Existence, Pure Consciousness, and Pure Bliss (Sat-Chit-Ananda) completely pervades this entire creation of sentient and insentient beings. Those who taste that ever-fresh nectar are the true

connoisseurs! This supreme aesthetic fulfillment is not bound by the limitations that arise from a lack of resources, weakness of the senses, old age, worldly constraints, and other such factors.

Generally, in the lives of all human beings, the fear of 'what will happen, how things will turn out?' frequently surfaces. At times, it completely overwhelms them. There are three primary causes of fear: physical suffering, the blows dealt by the world, and the soul's trajectory after death. Everyone tries to overcome this fear in their own way. Certain physical sufferings, like illnesses, can be cured with treatment. Some of the blows dealt by the world can be repelled, and others can be endured. One can imagine shaping a favorable afterlife through virtuous deeds (Punya). However, in all three situations, the underlying feeling of fear persists. The science of spirituality (Adhyatma Shastra) reflects on these sorrows in the following way-

1. Physical Suffering (Adhyatmik Taap): Take, for example, a chronic headache caused by conditions like migraine or trigeminal neuralgia, which recurs despite medication. Because such physical distress is born of past karmic momentum (Prarabdha), it cannot always be evaded physically. However, even when the physical cause of pain cannot be eliminated, the psychological experience of suffering can be entirely transcended. How is that? Due to the ignorance-rooted notion that 'I am the body,' the suffering associated with the body gets linked to the true 'I,' and as a result, the 'I' becomes miserable. Through the dedicated practice of spiritual science, one experiences that 'I am not the body, but the Supreme Reality (Brahman).' Consequently, the pain remains localized at the physical level, and even when experienced by the



senses, the unshakeable conviction abides: 'This pain is not Mine.' Totapuri, the Vedanta guru of the revered Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, would enter the state of Samadhi at the very premonition of a stomach ache, thereby never letting that pain be experienced at all. Sant Eknath Maharaj says:

एका जनार्दनी भोग प्रारब्धाचा । हरिकृपे त्याचा नाश झाला ॥  
(Eka, surrendered to Janardan, says: The experiences brought by destiny were destroyed by the grace of Lord Hari.)

Divine grace does not magically erase Prarabdha, nor does it eliminate the physical sensation itself; rather, it dissolves the Jiva's identification with the resulting pleasure and pain. Is the spiritual science that enables such freedom not indispensable for a blissful life?

2. The Blows of the World – Lightning strikes, earthquakes, diseases, business losses, heartbreak, insults, defeats, and so on, constitute the blows of the world. In accordance with past karmic momentum (Prarabdha), everyone encounters such strikes at one point or another. An ordinary person assumes that the anguish, agony, feelings of revenge, and other such sorrows caused by these blows are inevitable. Indeed, these are the very themes of countless stories and novels. However, as long as the illusion that the world is inherently real (Jagat-Satyatva-Bhrama) persists, these sorrows and the resulting fear of the world will not be destroyed. Spiritual science tells us that the world is illusory (Mithya), projected (Kalpit), and a product of Maya (Mayik). When this realization settles firmly into conviction through steady contemplative practice (Abhyasa), the blows delivered by the world are also recognized as illusory, projected, and devoid of absolute reality. Consequently, their power to cause inner

suffering is permanently neutralized. Saint Shri Tukobaraya says:

कोणी वंदा कोणी निंदा । आमुचा स्वहिताचा धंदा ॥

(Let people praise or blame, my business is my own spiritual well-being). Worldly blows consist of both pleasure and pain. Calling pleasure a 'blow' might sound strange at first glance! Yet, from the perspective of one living an unconditioned, blissful life, both pleasure and pain are relative to external objects and the world, rendering them equally illusory. We have already seen that unless the mind is calm and steady, the reflected consciousness (Chidabhasa) cannot merge into its source, the Atman. Whether stirred by pleasure or pain, the mind gets churned to some degree, making it restless and unstable. Consequently, the process of Chidabhasa merging into the Self is disrupted, blocking the direct experience of inner bliss (Atmananda). It is precisely with this view that the Bhagavad Gita says:

सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ ॥

Treating alike pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat (Gita 2.38). One who lacks a clear calculation of what is to be achieved and at what cost, attempts to achieve power, prestige, wealth, fame, and the like, at the cost of the Bliss of the Self (Atmananda). All these worldly matters are bound by Destiny (Prarabdha). We receive them to varying degrees as a mere byproduct of performing our duties, but they can never be the ultimate goal. Since they come to us anyway without any extra effort, we should not obsess over them. In other words, we should pay the price by letting them go and thus secure the ultimate reward-the bliss of the Self.

3. The Journey After Death – A genuine seeker of liberation (Mumukshu) should not even entertain





thoughts about the post-death journey attained by the individual soul (Jiva) due to its desires (Vasanas). Such thoughts undermine the very aspiration for liberation (Moksha). While one is sincerely engaged in scripturally pure spiritual practice (Sadhana), any intruding thought about the post-death journey only blunts that practice and weakens one's self-confidence. There is no point in speculating about the celestial realms, the punishments meted out by Yama and other deities, and the paths leading to those realms-since all these matters are established solely on the authority of the scriptures (Shastras). One need not get bogged down in whether to 'believe' or 'disbelieve' in them either. After death, the path to be taken, the body to be acquired, the timeframe, and the final destination-absolutely none of this is in the hands of the individual soul (Jiva). Because this trajectory operates like a pre-charted transit, having detailed knowledge of it-or lacking it-makes zero practical difference. By abandoning all such distractions and focusing single-mindedly on liberation through spiritual discipline, the soul

attains freedom here and now-and the question of post-death journeys simply dissolves. Consequently, the fear of afflictions caused by cosmic or supernatural forces (Adhidaivik Tapa) also vanishes. When reflecting upon the relationship between human life and spirituality, the true nature of both must be fully understood. A holistic view of life must be taken, and a comprehensive examination of spirituality must be formulated. It is obvious that achieving this within the limits of a brief essay is not possible. I am fully aware that brief explanations, particularly when discussing the science of spirituality, often give rise to many new questions. Similarly, it is evident that every single facet of this highly complex human life has not been addressed here. Spirituality must be examined after casting aside all distorted and perverse notions rooted in superstition. Rather than evaluating human life solely through political, social, and economic lenses, the true intent of this text is to study the relationship of spiritual science with the total, integrated personal existence of the individual.

#### About the Author:

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Param Pujya Kaka is a doctor by profession. For many years, he served tirelessly as a physician in Murgud. At the age of 52, 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 remarkable clarity and a serene candor. He has never entertained the narrowness of caste, religion, or creed. He gently clears the common misconceptions about 'spirituality' and 'philosophy' and guides people to uncover true nature of Paramartha. His work has been ongoing for the last 4 decades. He authored numerous spiritual texts for various publishing houses and 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.



# The Guru and Disciple - Shri Adi Shankaracharya and Totakacharya

P. P. Mandatai Gandhe

सदाशिव (नारायण) समारंभां शंकराचार्यमध्यमाम् ।  
अस्मदाचार्यपर्यन्तां वंदे गुरुपरंपराम् ॥

(I bow to the unbroken lineage of Masters (Guru Parampara), which originated with Lord Sadashiv (or Shri Narayana), has Shri Adi Shankaracharya at its center, and extends down to my own Guru.) The extraordinary sages and enlightened masters who have graced this world, past and present, possess immensely glorious lineages of Guru and disciple (Guru-Parampara and Shishya-Parampara). When a true, realized Guru finds a worthy disciple, they do not merely pass down the heritage of supreme knowledge; they also command the disciple to carry the tradition of wisdom (Vidya-Sampradaya) forward. Sustaining this unbroken system of imparting knowledge in the world is a part of the divine design itself. There are many such noble lineages of knowledge in the world. For now, let us explore the glorious lineage of Sri Adi Shankaracharya. Because knowledge flows continuously across generations like an undisturbed stream, no flaw or distortion ever taints that wisdom.

The Guru lineage of Shri Adi Shankaracharya is as follows: Narayana, Brahma, Vasishta, Shakti, Parashara, Vyasa, Shuka, Gaudapadacharya, Govindapadacharya, and Sri Adi Shankaracharya. His four principal disciples are Padmapadacharya, Hastamalakacharya, Sureshwaracharya, and Totakacharya.

It is India's great fortune to possess the radiant treasure of Advaita knowledge. It is through this supreme wisdom that India earns its status as the World Teacher. Today, however, researchers in several foreign nations are studying this knowledge with even greater faith, rigor, and scholarly devotion than we Indians ourselves exhibit. Let us harbor the earnest hope that a day will not come when we are forced to re-learn our own heritage from them! Indian Advaita philosophy and its illumined scholars remain indisputable causes for India's eternal glory and pride.

This is a humble attempt to paint a word-picture to draw our attention to the glorious Guru-disciple pair of Shrimat Adi Shankaracharya and Totakacharya from this sacred lineage. It is a deeply moving story. Who was this Totaka? Where did he meet Acharya? How did he attain him as his Sadguru? Exploring all of this is immensely captivating and highly enlightening. Let us now immerse ourselves in this tale!

The Shankaracharya was born in Kaladi (Kerala). In due course, he set out towards the banks of the Narmada to meet his Sadguru. His route passed through the village of Sringeri, or Shringagiri. Situated on the banks of the Tungabhadra river and adorned with lush greenery, Sringeri was a picturesque village. The Acharya was deeply drawn to this village as an ideal sanctuary for Vedantic study. In due time, he established a monastic seat (Matha) and center of



learning (Jnana-peetha) here. Sringeri was largely inhabited by learned Brahmins. Among them was a Brahmin family named 'Giri,' which included a fifteen- or sixteen-year-old youth named 'Ananda Giri,' or simply 'Giri.'

The boy was handsome, gentle, and of noble character, yet he was completely unlettered. The Acharya, on the other hand, relied on his Daivi Sampada (divine wealth) as his true capital. This divine wealth consisted of unparalleled erudition, world-conquering eloquence, the blazing light of true knowledge, a radiant personality, and a handsome form. Wielding this extraordinary spiritual capital, he had journeyed across Northern India. Using debate as his weapon, he defeated non-Vaidik philosophies and restored the disrupted order of the eternal Vaidik Dharma. Later, accompanied by hundreds of disciples, he set forth on a spiritual conquest (Digvijaya) of the South. Upon arriving in Sringeri, he remained there for an extended period, dedicating his time to impart Vedantic teachings to his disciples and the numerous earnest seekers gathered there.

The Vedantic discourses were held every morning. Among all the listeners, the young man Giri would attend daily by rule, arriving exactly on time to sit in the first row in front of the Acharya. He had no grasp of the complex scholarly lessons, yet he took profound joy simply in gazing at the Acharya and abiding in his presence. The Acharya, too, developed a deep affection for Giri. In time, with Acharya's permission, Giri dedicated himself entirely to his personal service—washing his garments, fetching water, sweeping the premises, and attending to every chore tirelessly. What more could be required to earn the Sadguru's grace? Nothing else held any attraction for him. One day, his day of fortune dawned, and his entire life was

completely transformed. His daily routine in the holy presence of the Shri Guru was as follows:

सोडियला सारा विषयांचा संग । गुरुपदी भाव जडला अभंग ॥ धृ. ॥  
 वस्त्रेही धुवावी पाणी ही भरावे । संमार्जन गुरुंच्या अंगणी करावे ।  
 शुध्द होत चालले त्याचे अंतरंग ॥ गुरुपदी.. ॥ १ ॥  
 श्रवणात बैसे कळो न कळो वा । आचार्याचा प्रीतिपात्र तोचि ठरावा ।  
 लोह परिसस्पर्शाचा निकट ये प्रसंग ॥ गुरुपदी... ॥ २ ॥

He severed all attachment to sensory objects; an unwavering, unbreakable devotion anchored at the Guru's feet. Washing clothes, and fetching water; Sweeping the courtyard of the Guru. Through this selfless service, his inner psyche (Antahkarana) was continuously purified...at the Guru's feet. (1) He sat attentively in every scriptural discourse (Shravana), whether he comprehended the words or not; thus he became the chosen recipient of Acharya's deep affection. The moment of the iron touching the philosopher's stone (Paris-sparsha) drew ever nearer.... at the Guru's feet. (2)

One morning, Giri went to the Tungabhadra to wash Acharya's clothes. It was morning time. He waded into the river and became completely engrossed in the water. He forgot that the time for the lesson had passed. The listeners said to Acharya, 'Let the lesson begin.' Acharya replied, 'Let us wait until Giri arrives.' After some time, the listeners spoke again: 'He does not understand a single word anyway. His presence or absence makes no difference, but we are being delayed!'. This did not sit well with Acharya. He resolved in his mind, 'I shall show them the power of the Guru's grace and Giri's spiritual qualification (Adhikar).' Acharya instantly remembered Giri and made a resolve (Sankalpa): 'Let him abide in the light, having become the light himself.' And lo and behold, what a marvel occurred!

Giri was standing bent in the water, holding Acharya's garments. In that very posture, he



entered Samadhi. After a long time, Acharya brought him out of the state of Samadhi. He returned to body consciousness. He realized he was late for the lesson. He hastily wrung out the clothes and set off. But now, Giri was completely transformed, inside and out. For him, this world no longer existed in its physical form, but was real in the form of its underlying substratum (Adhishtana). Pure Bliss (Ananda) could no longer be contained within his heart. He had dissolved entirely, becoming a wave of bliss within the infinite ocean of bliss. He realized that this Blissful state was attained purely through Acharya's grace.

How should he express his gratitude to Acharya and how should he praise him? This was the question before him. Poetic inspiration dawned on him. Verses (Shlokas) extolling the Acharya began to flow spontaneously from his lips. The fourth line of every verse is, 'भव शंकर देशिक मे शरणम्।' (O Master Shankara, you are my refuge).

Humming this deeply emotional, meaningful, and flawless composition in the 'Totaka' meter, Giri approached the place of the Vedantic discourse.

All the listeners were astonished: 'How can this unlettered boy compose and recite such excellent Sanskrit poetry?' How did he become so radiant, peaceful, and content? They realized it themselves: 'This is all the alchemy of the Shri Guru's grace.' That day, Acharya made Giri himself conduct the lesson. In that moment, everyone's ego regarding their own erudition completely melted away.

Along with Acharya, everyone congratulated and praised him. Acharya embraced him tightly, symbolizing the non-dual oneness of the individual self (Jiva) and Supreme Consciousness (Shiva). Later, initiating him into Sannyasa, he named him 'Totakacharya'. (presumably because he composed the praise of the Acharya in the 'Totaka' meter). Eventually, the Acharya appointed Totakacharya as the first Shankaracharya of the Jyotishpeeth at Badrinath.

**Glory to the great Acharyas.**

**‘The Guru is Lord, both mother and sire, Besides the Guru, what stands any higher?’**

**About the Author:**

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Param Pujya Mandatai is a mathematics teacher by profession and 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. She has also composed numerous devotional bhajans. Pujya Manda Tai has been the inspiration behind Vedant Bhaskar. Under her revered guidance, the organization undertakes various spiritual initiatives and programs.





## Shri Ganapati Atharvashirsha (Part 3)

P. Shri. Mangesh Phadke

This is the third offering in our series of Upanishadic reflections on the beloved hymn, 'Shri Ganapati Atharvashirsha'! The first two issues discussed the perspective through which one should contemplate this hymn to fulfill its intended objectives. Without this deeper vision, one can easily find countless books that provide a mere literal meaning of the verses.

Since the Atharvashirsha is fundamentally an 'Upanishad', we explored the etymology of this very word in the previous issue. Thereafter, as we began our contemplation on the Atharvashirsha, we reflected on the profound objective of the 'Shanti Mantra' (Peace Invocation) and briefly considered its first verse. In this article, let us complete our reflection on this Shanti Mantra.

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवाः । भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ।  
स्थिरैर्द्वैस्तुष्टुवांसस्तनूभिः । व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः ॥

Anvayārtha (Word-by-word translation): 'Devah' ~ 'O Gods!'; 'Karnebhih bhadram shrunuyama' ~ may our ears hear only that which is auspicious and beneficial; 'Akshabhih bhadram pashyema' ~ may I be blessed to see only pure, auspicious, and uplifting sights with my eyes; 'Yajatraah' ~ We who perform yajana, meaning we the worshippers; 'Sthiraih angaih' ~ With a healthy, disease-free body that has absolute steadiness and vitality; 'Tushtuvamsastanoobhih' ~ continuously praising You with pleasing, reverential words and being in Your divine service; 'Yat aayuh' ~ whatever life span we have been graciously granted; 'Devahitam' ~ for the Gods, or for the ultimate attainment of the Divine; 'Vyashema' ~ may we spend or live in this very manner.

Since this is a peace invocation (Shanti Mantra), noble intentions are expressed through phrases like 'may we do', 'may we see', and so on. Its deeper, underlying spirit is: "Let us all strive for this together". However, will merely expressing a desire to see the auspicious or simply chanting this peace prayer (no matter how beautifully recited, even with a subtle pride of flawless pronunciation) truly achieve the goal? Will this happen effortlessly through the grace of Shri Ganesha and just by relying on that grace? Or will I need to consciously exercise my free will of active karma (Kriyamana Karma) to stay away from the inauspicious, in order to see or hear that which is auspicious? Such 'first-person singular' and 'sadhana-oriented' reflection has always been emphasized by my Sadguru for attaining true spiritual benefit. Otherwise, the study of scriptures remains merely bookish knowledge. This is called Applied Paramārtha!

The Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, the Brahma Sutras (the Prasthanatrayi), and similar texts are, as it were, the 'Fundamental Science,' whereas the effort to integrate scriptural principles into daily life is the 'Applied Science'-known as Sadhanashastra (the art of putting scriptural wisdom into practice). Such application is absolutely indispensable for direct realization. Otherwise, through Atharvashirsha recitals, I will spend my entire life merely telling Lord Ganapati, "You are this, You are that (त्वमेव प्रत्यक्षं...)", while I myself will continue to remain exactly as I have been for years-ignorant, sorrowful, distressed, and afflicted by impurities!



Therefore, as a seeker (Sadhak) or a devotee, especially in this Kali Yuga, I will accomplish my purpose only by distancing myself from the inauspicious. It is to these genuine efforts that the blessings of Shri Gajanana will surely grant success! Mere prayer is not enough. Spiritual success is attained only by those who carefully organize their life by - consistently remaining attentive daily (to their goal), practicing perseverance, and keeping rigorous vigilance (over their senses). Hence, Samarth Ramdas Swami advise:

**'सावध साक्षेपी आणि दक्ष । तयास तत्काळचि मोक्ष ।  
इतरांस तें अलक्ष । लक्षिलें नवचे ॥ दास. ८.६.४४ ॥'**

(One who is alert, diligent, and vigilant attains liberation instantly; for others, it remains unperceivable and beyond reach) Even though the reward is 'instant liberation', a monumental condition has been set for it. Conversely, if we live a chaotic and undisciplined life-blindly following wherever the senses lead without any discrimination-this cannot be achieved merely by chanting the Shanti Patha or reciting repetitions of the Atharvashirsha. Engaging in such righteous reflection is the true study of the Atharvashirsha!

In the previous issue, we explored in detail how to choose Bhadra (the auspicious or pure) in matters that are 'within my control'. Today, let us examine in detail how to perceive Bhadra in things that are 'out of my control'.

In daily practical life, especially when facing things beyond my control, one principle must be remembered forever: 'merely seeing is different from truly perceiving!' Countless events beyond my control keep unfolding around us-being seen, being heard, and so on. How to 'perceive' (select and discern) the 'auspicious' (Mangal) within whatever is seen and heard-that is the true

spiritual purport (Bhavartha) of this peace mantra!

To bring the contemplation of the Peace Mantra down to the level of daily practice, one can apply 'discernment' (Viveka) across every spectrum-right from the practical level to the spiritual level.

Let us take a simple example to understand this discernment at a practical level: Suppose I am hosting an event, and one of my invited acquaintances fails to show up. Often, my immediate reaction to such a trivial event is intense; I instantly resolve never to attend their events in the future and effectively write them off. However, if I exercise caution and employ discernment here, I can find Bhadra even in this situation. I can decide to change my perspective and think, 'Perhaps an unforeseen difficulty may have prevented them from coming.' I take the initiative to call and check on them. Later, I may discover that their child was unwell, and despite their sincere wish, they could not attend. Had I failed to practice this discernment, my heart would have remained deeply agitated. Consequently, when I sit for the Atharvashirsha recitals, or for chanting and meditation, my spiritual practice gets sidelined, and my mind remains completely entangled in thoughts of that person's absence. If I spend each day gathering such 'nuggets of bitterness,' is there any hope for the final days of my life to be sweet and blissful?

This simple example illustrates how choosing Bhadra at a practical level allows me to avoid negative thoughts and beautifully preserve the tranquility and inner purity of my mind, thereby nurturing loving relationships with everyone. Otherwise, misunderstandings can arise over such trivial matters, and relationships become distant for a lifetime.



On a spiritual level, the discernment (Viveka) of my intellect should become so firm that-as the fruit of my meritorious deeds (Punya Karma)-my mind (Antahkarana) becomes so completely filled with Sattva Guna and so pure, that the senses spontaneously choose that which is auspicious (Bhadra). This is the ultimate ideal!

The path to this ideal passes through the realm of the fourfold disciplines (Sadhana Chatushtaya): Discernment (Viveka), Dispassion (Vairagya), the sixfold inner treasure (Shama - restraint of mind, Dama - restraint of the senses, Uparama - cessation of worldly desires, Shraddha - clear-sighted faith, Samadhi - equanimity, Titiksha - spiritual forbearance), and the intense desire for liberation (Mumukshutva).

'Viveka' is the very first step, yet this is precisely where I stumble. 'Viveka' simply means 'thoughtful reflection' or inquiry (Vichara)! But I love doing absolutely everything except inquiry. I readily engage in Atharvashirsha recitals, Ashtavinayak pilgrimages, Sola Somvar vows, and ritualistic fasting but when the core purpose behind these rituals is forgotten, they end up as mere mechanical activities. And the rule is: 'The greater the focus on outer physical activity, the lesser the inner capacity for contemplation!'

In spiritual life (Paramartha), the ultimate objective is the cessation of ignorance (Ajnananivritti). The consequence of ignorance is the delusion (Avichara) of believing in the 'ultimate reality of the world' (Jagat-Satyatva) and identifying with being the 'doer and experiencer' (Kartritva-Bhoktritva).

Therefore, delusion must be countered through reflective inquiry (Vichara) alone! Hence, my Sadguru says, 'Thoughtful inquiry (Vichara) is the supreme spiritual discipline (Sadhana).'

Because our capacity for contemplation is weak, we often dislike doing it. Yet, once one begins to reflect, progress unfolds step-by-step: initially, one realizes a mistake only after making it; later, one becomes alert while the mistake is occurring; and ultimately, the mistake ceases to happen altogether!"

Initially, discernment (Viveka) must be exercised with the aid of the intellect, which carries an element of deliberate effort. However, for a spiritual seeker endowed with the Fourfold Disciplines (Sadhana Chatushtaya), this discernment becomes so effortless and natural that the intellect is no longer required! The senses spontaneously choose whatever is auspicious (Bhadra). When such a state is reached, the true purpose of the Peace Mantra (Shanti Patha) is realized!

Describing this state in the fourteenth chapter of the Dnyaneshwari, Dnyaneshwar Mauli beautifully proclaims:

सर्वेन्द्रियांच्या अंगणीं। विवेक करी राबणी।  
साचचि करचरणीं। होती डोळे ॥ १४.२०७ ॥

The essence of this verse is: When the inner instrument is fully nourished and saturated with Sattvaguna (inner purity), the resulting discernment (Viveka) toils tirelessly, as it were, in the courtyards of all the senses. Mauli says 'saachachi' meaning 'truly'-what happens is that 'even the hands and feet literally develop the eyes of discernment.' It is as if the senses themselves have grown these 'eyes', enabling them to intuitively know what is auspicious (Bhadra) and what is inauspicious (Abhadra).

In this state, one no longer needs the intellect to decide whether something should be done or not, seen or not, or read or not. Discernment regarding



the objects of the senses becomes so profoundly effortless that it gets ingrained into the very nature of the senses-like a spiritual muscle memory.

This is exactly sought in the peace invocation:

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवाः । भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ।  
(Om, O Gods, may we hear with our ears what is auspicious; may we see with our eyes what is auspicious.)

Clarifying this point further, Mauli adds:

नाङ्कर्णे तें कानचि वाळी । न पहाणें तें दिठीचि गाळी ।  
अवाच्य तें टाळी । जीभचि गा ॥ १४.२१० ॥

Meaning: The ears themselves refuse what should not be heard; vision itself filters out what should not be seen; and the tongue itself shuns what is unfit to be spoken.

This is the ideal spiritual state of discernment (Viveka), wherein the choice between the Self (Atman) and the non-Self (Anatman), the essential and the non-essential, the eternal and the transient, and the auspicious and the inauspicious becomes an effortless, living reality.

In my pursuit of spirituality, however, I constantly slip off track. Only after spending time watching a YouTube video do I realize that the subject had absolutely no relevance to my life. Not only was that time entirely wasted, but the 'debris' I cram into my mind inevitably rears its head exactly when I sit down for my spiritual practice. During the rest of the day, our hectic schedules simply don't give such mental clutter a chance to surface. Consequently, my mind turns into an unregulated resthouse (Dharmashala), where any stray thought can walk in, create as much chaos as it pleases, and leave when its time is up.

Tech companies in Silicon Valley are pouring their intellect, money, and time into ensuring that we become addicted to their videos, games, and other offerings. They actively study what product

modifications will trigger a chemical called dopamine in the viewer's brain, creating a sensation of pleasure and instilling a persistent craving for their content. They are going the extra mile to take away as much time as possible from us, and we easily get carried away, without knowing. We think social media is free, but I am paying in terms of time and mindshare.

Currently, there is an explosion of information, and most of the information comes with its own expiry date! Today, I find myself reading a fifty-page newspaper packed with a massive amount of information, but all of it carries an expiry date of just twenty-four hours. In just one day, all that information becomes completely stale.

If you acquire information, it is going to be processed-because that is the very function of the brain. We have been endowed with a 'database' called memory and a 'CPU' called thought. Now the question is: if that is what the CPU is built for, shouldn't I be feeding it the right information? That 'right information' consists of the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, Dnyaneshwari, Dasbodh, Gatha, and similar sacred texts. Then, thoughts of these teachings naturally arise, leading to deep, spontaneous contemplation on them. One naturally desires to read them and listen to them. Effortless discernment (Viveka) is the spiritual ideal, yet the reality is that I fail to exercise it even through deliberate intellectual effort! For lack of discernment, I have turned my life into a chaotic mess-and yet I still consider myself a spiritual seeker. The challenges confronting today's spiritual seeker in this modern age have multiplied drastically. Most of the instruments of outward distraction (Bahirmukhata) bombarding us today did not even exist 15 to 20 years ago!

How do the senses exercise discernment

Embrace reflections that nurture the realization 'I am Brahman,' and relinquish those that hinder the experience of this truth.



(Viveka)? Generally, instructions are issued to the senses by the brain. However, modern science shows that every cell possesses decision-making capability-there is local intelligence. For instance, if you touch a pot of hot milk, don't you snatch your hand back in a split second? (Neurons in the spinal cord react before the signal even reaches the brain).

Similarly, if an action is practiced continuously, the right decision happens effortlessly, without any conscious thought. For instance, today's generation can type effortlessly on their phones without even looking at the keyboard while talking to someone. Or, many people, while driving, can smoothly apply the brakes at the right time or shift gears without actively thinking about it. It becomes one's second nature. This is what we call 'discernment exercised by the senses!'

When an inner instrument (Antahkarana) that has mastered spiritual discernment in this manner is filled with such profound purity, even coins placed under his mattress by Narendranath as a test cause Shri Ramakrishna physical pain. Swami Vivekananda tested his Sadguru in many ways, reasoning, "This 'Mahatma' claims that he never touches wealth, so let his inner state be tested." Shri Ramakrishna's mind possessed such exquisite purity and his life was so utterly renounced, that contact with money-even separated by a mattress-stung him physically.

The subsequent invocation in the Shanti Patha is: स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवांसस्तनूभिः । व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः ॥ - 'May our lifespan be spent with a healthy, disease-free body that has absolute steadiness and vitality, constantly singing the praises and offering service to the Divine!' Having first expressed the desire for the 'health of the inner instrument'-which means the quality of purity (Sattva) and discernment

(Viveka)-the aspiration for physical health is now articulated here. The core reason behind this is to dedicate the precious lifespan granted to us by the Supreme Lord Ganesha back into His own praise and service. Here, 'praise' refers to singing the Lord's glory (Bhajan), continuous divine contemplation (Anusandhan), service (Seva), remembrance (Smaran), chanting the divine name (Namasmaraṇ), meditation (Dhyana), and so on. To accomplish all this, the prayer asks, 'Grant me a healthy body.' One must be able to sit cross-legged for an hour to chant the divine name or meditate. Nowadays, many people are in such a state that they simply cannot sit without the support of a chair!

Life (this body) is 'given' by God, because I have no freedom or choice over whether to be born, when, where, or into whose womb. If there is a Giver, there must also be One who takes it back, and the One who gave life is the One who reclaims it. He did not consult me when giving it, yet we somehow expect Him to consult us before taking it away!

Everyone wants an extended lifespan - and for what? Merely for sensory pleasures (Vishayabhoga)! When asking the One who gave it to extend our life, we do not even ask, "If You extend it, grant it at least for Your devotion!" Lord Ganesha says, "I gave you a human life, yet you use it solely for sensory enjoyment like non-human creatures; therefore, in your next birth, I shall place you in those very species! I gave you speech so you would chant My Name, didn't I? Yet leaving that aside, you waste your time in meaningless chatter. Thus, in your next birth, you have no need for a human form!" The next birth is inevitable, but it will not be human!

Regarding this immense treasure of a human birth





that I have attained, Shrimat Adi Shankaracharya enlightens us in the 'Vivekachudamani':

दुर्लभं त्रयमेवैतद्देवानुग्रहेतुकम् ।  
मनुष्यत्वं मुमुक्षुत्वं महापुरुषसंश्रयः ॥ ३ ॥

Meaning: These three things are incredibly rare and are obtained only through the grace of the Divine: a human birth, an intense longing for liberation, and the protective shelter of a great sage established in the Supreme Reality (Brahman).

Having attained such exceptionally rare gifts, how I should utilize them is expressed in this final phrase: 'व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः।' (May our entire lifespan be spent in service of the Divine!). In summary, through the first verse of this Shanti Mantra, a prayer is made that by the grace of

Lord Gajanan, my allotted life span (Jivan-yajna) may be fulfilled while discerning the auspicious (Bhadra). This is in accordance with Dnyaneshwar Mauli's guidance:

विधी ते पाळीत । निषेधा ते गाळीत ।  
मज्ज देऊनि जाळीत । कर्मफळे ॥ ज्ञा १२.७७ ॥

(Observing the righteous injunctions, casting aside the prohibitions, and offering the fruits of all actions unto Me to burn them away. Dnyaneshwari 12.77). Because this Peace Mantra seeks to bestow upon me this precious gift of discernment (Viveka), it ought to be recited with deep comprehension and inner assimilation of its meaning! Our contemplation on the first Shanti Mantra concludes here. In the next issue, we will reflect upon the subsequent Shanti Mantra.

॥ Shri Sadgurunath Maharaj Ki Jai ॥

### About the Author

P. Shri. Mangesh Phadke, Bay Area, California, USA

P. Shri. Mangesh Phadke is originally from the Vidarbha region of India. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science and an MBA in Marketing. In spite of spending 30+ years in a materialistically oriented country like America, he has lived his life with purity in accordance with sacred scriptures. At the age of 50, he retired from his high-ranking Vice President position to dedicate his life to the Sadguru's mission. Since then, this sacred offering of supreme knowledge, spreading pure Advaita Vedanta and fostering harmony among various traditions and sects by recognizing the Sadguru as the sole universal Truth has been continuously ongoing. He delivers discourses all over the world providing personal guidance to spiritual seekers in multiple languages including Marathi, Hindi, and English. A vast library of various discourses are available on [@vastusiddhiH](#) YouTube channel.

Sadguru P. P. Dr. Kaka has ritually consecrated P. Shri. Mangesh Phadke as his spiritual successor.



# Shri P. P. Shri Govinda Pujiyapada and Shrimat Adi Shankaracharya

Shraddheya Shri. Mule Shastri

Along with the creation of the universe, the Supreme Self (Paramatman) created the Sanatana Vaidik Dharma for the ultimate welfare of the soul (Jiva) embodied in a human form. Every soul in a human body is qualified to attain this welfare. In this context, the word 'welfare' means the true experiential knowledge of the original nature of the human soul. This is also referred to as Self-knowledge (Atmajnana), knowledge of the Supreme Reality (Brahma-Jnana), knowledge of one's true nature (Swarupa-Jnana), and so on. Even though all humans are inherently qualified for Self-knowledge, its actual attainment is entirely governed by the spiritual science of the Absolute (Brahma-Vidya). And Brahnavidya must be learned. This very discipline is known as the science of the Self (Adhyatma-Vidya). It is the king of all sciences. The Supreme Lord (Paramatman) has entrusted this knowledge under the authority of a sovereign, independent institution. This divine system or institution is known as the Shri Sadguru. As per the injunction of the Upanishads - "तत् विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभि गच्छेत" (To realize That, one must approach a Guru). The Mundak Upanishad has established this as an absolute rule. Any embodied human soul who develops a deep yearning for their ultimate welfare must surrender to the Shri Guru. The Bhagavad Gita also imparts this very teaching: "तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया" (Know that by prostration, inquiry, and service - Gita 4.34). In accordance with this, the Vaidik era sages

set aside one day every year specifically for the worship, contemplation, and service of the Shri Sadguru. That day is the full moon (Purnima) of the Ashadha month. This very day is also called 'Guru Purnima'.

According to the Vaidik tradition, Self-knowledge (Atma-Jnana) is inherently rooted in the grace and guidance of the Guru. Therefore, since Vaidik times, the monumental and sacred task of preserving the tradition of imparting this knowledge of the Supreme Reality (Brahman) has been carried out by numerous legendary Guru-disciple pairs. One of the most renowned Guru-disciple pairs in this lineage is Shri Paramahansa Parivrajacharya Govinda Bhagavatpujiyapada (the Guru) and Shrimat Adi Shankaracharya (the disciple).

This article was written on the occasion of the Guru Pujan ceremony on Ashadh Shukla Purnima, Shaka 1937, honoring the Most Revered Dr. Shrikrishna D. Deshmukh, fondly known as Dr. Kaka, who gracefully adorns the exalted title of the Sadguru. It is humbly offered at his lotus feet.

Shri Govindacharya was the revered Sadguru of Shrimat Adi Shankaracharya. This era dates back approximately twelve hundred years. Although detailed information about Shri Govindacharya is unavailable, it is known that he was the disciple of Shri Gaudapadacharya, who hailed from the Gauda region (present-day West Bengal). Shri Gaudapadacharya was the first to present the



non-dualistic principle of Vedanta (the doctrine of non-origination - Ajatavada) to the thinkers of the world. He authored two hundred explanatory verses (Karikas) on the Mandukya Upanishad, which are quite renowned. These Karikas have attained an exalted position in Vaidik literature. Profound declarations such as "मायामात्रमिदं द्वैतं अद्वैतं परमार्थतः" (This duality is merely an illusion, non-duality is the Ultimate Truth) and "न कश्चित् जायते जीवः" (No Jiva is ever born) propound the non-dual doctrine of Vedantic philosophy. Shri Govindacharya was the disciple of such a high spiritual authority. Later, Shri Govindacharya instructed his own disciple, Adi Shankaracharya, to proclaim this very non-dualistic principle of Vedanta to the entire world. Obeying his revered Guru's command, Adi Shankaracharya authored commentaries on the three foundational texts (Prasthanatrayi) and introduced Advaita Vedanta to the whole world. Shri Govindacharya attained Samadhi at Omkar Mandhata (present-day Omkareshwar). Even today, on the way to the Shri Omkareshwar temple along the banks of the Narmada river, his Samadhi remains accessible for devotees for Darshan.

He imparted the teachings of Advaita philosophy to the revered Adi Shankaracharya, thereby accepted the mantle of his Guru, and awakened within him the direct, experiential realization of the ultimate truth: 'जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः' (The individual Jiva is nothing but Brahman itself). Adi Shankaracharya stayed with his Guru for some time to firmly establish in this Self-knowledge.

Later, following his revered Guru's command, he resided in sacred places like Varanasi, Joshimath, and Badrikedar. There, he authored dialectical commentaries (Bhashya) on the Prasthanatrayi-comprising the Brahma Sutras, the Upanishads,

and the Bhagavad Gita-refuting contrary views and clearly establishing the truth. As a result, Vaidik philosophy, which was on the verge of fading away, was once again firmly established before the world. He systematically refuted all the objections raised by thinkers of other philosophical schools against the principles of Non-dualism (Advaita), keeping the flag of Advaita Vaidik literature flying high. Bowing down with deep humility to this great luminary who shaped Adi Shankaracharya and restored the order of the fragmented Vaidik tradition, let us now reflect upon the life and sacred mission of his legendary disciple, Shrimat Adi Shankaracharya.

Shrimat Adi Shankaracharya was born in the village of Kaladi, situated near the port of Cochin in the state of Kerala. A family of Yajurvedi Brahmins resided in this village. The entire family was devoted to Lord Shiva. It was in this very family that Shankaracharya was born around twelve hundred years ago. Shankaracharya's father was an ardent devotee of Lord Shiva. Pleased by his devotion, Lord Shiva graced him with a divine vision, blessing him with the boon of an exceptionally virtuous and gifted son. Accordingly, after some time, a son was born into this family. This son is none other than our revered Adi Shankaracharya. The boy was named Shankar. His mother loved him deeply. Since he was her only child, her maternal affection and attachment towards him were exceptionally strong.

Right from his early childhood, everyone began to recognize Shankara's extraordinary intellect. Later, while Shankara was still young, his father passed away. Following his father's death, Shankara's Vratabandha (the ritual of Upanayana) was performed. Blessed with a



brilliant intellect, by the age of eight, Shankara had already studied and mastered the Vedas, the Upanishads, and other Vaidik literature. His mother wished for him to marry and enter the householder's stage of life (Grihasthashrama). However, a profound spirit of dispassion (Vairagya) had taken firm root in Shankara's heart from an early age.

Born by the grace of Lord Shiva, he was already receiving profound inner signs of the monumental mission that was destined to be accomplished through him. As a result, an intense dispassion (Vairagya) awoke in his heart, and he expressed his desire to his mother to embrace renunciation (Sannyasa). However, his mother refused to accept this. With his father no longer alive and her only son talking about renunciation, the mother became deeply worried. Consequently, Shankara orchestrated a divine play (Leela). One day, when Shankara and his mother went to the river, he suddenly cried out loudly for her, saying that a crocodile had caught his leg and was refusing to let go. He told her, 'It will release my leg only if you give me permission to take up renunciation; otherwise, it will not.' Left with no choice, the mother reluctantly granted him permission to embrace renunciation just to save her son's life. Before departing to take Sannyasa (monk), Shankara gave a solemn promise to his mother: "I will return to perform your last rites after your death." Later, after he had embraced renunciation, when his mother passed away, he fulfilled his promise by returning to his native village to perform her final rites.

Shankar now set out on foot to travel across India. He came straight to Omkareshwar. While on his way to Lord Omkareshwar, he saw an ascetic yogi in a cave. This yogi was none other than his

Sadguru, Shri Govindacharya. Shri Govindacharya accepted Shankar as his disciple, formally initiated him into the monastic order (Sannyasa), and instructed him to perform spiritual austerities (Tapas). Accordingly, Shankar stayed with his Guru, studying the scriptures (Vedanta) and performing austerities. Afterward, he sought his Sadguru's command for his future mission. Shri Govindacharya instructed him to travel across India and write commentaries on the foundational texts of Vedanta, known as the Prasthanatrayi—namely the Brahma Sutras, the Upanishads, and the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita. Obeying his Guru's command, Shankar authored the commentaries on the Prasthanatrayi. This writing was primarily completed at holy pilgrimage sites like Varanasi, Joshimath, and Badrinath. From this point onward, Shri Shankar came to be known as Shri Shankaracharya. For the fulfillment of this grand mission, Lord Shiva extended his original lifespan of 16 years to 32 years. It is recorded in his biography that his commentaries on the Prasthanatrayi received the blessings and formal validation of Sage Veda Vyasa.

Subsequently, he established four monastic centers (Mathas) across the four directions of India. He founded the Jagannath Puri Matha in the East, the Dwarka Matha in the West, the Joshimath near Badrikedar in the North, and the Rameshwaram Matha in the South, appointing his chief disciples as the presiding Acharyas over them. By hoisting the flag of the Sanatana Vaidik Dharma in these four sacred abodes (Dhamas), he reversed the decline that had befallen the Vaidik religion. Before he undertook this work, Buddhism held significant sway over the Vaidik culture in India because it enjoyed royal



patronage. Armed with the sheer power of his brilliant intellect, Adi Shankaracharya defeated the proponents of Buddhism, Jainism, Dualism (Dvaita), and other philosophical schools in debate, firmly establishing the Non-dualistic philosophy (Advaita) upheld by Vedanta. He thus brought to complete fulfillment the mission of establishing Advaita initiated by his Paramaguru (Guru's Guru), Shri Gaudapadacharya. On account of these monumental accomplishments, humanity universally recognized him as 'Adi Shankaracharya.' (the first Shankaracharya). After authoring such profound literature-including commentaries on the Prasthanatrayi (the three foundational texts of Vedanta), numerous hymns (Stotras), and devotional compositions for various deities-and formulating the Panchayatana system of worship, he attained Samadhi at Kedareshwar at the young age of 32 - though some hold differing views, suggesting his Samadhi took place elsewhere.

The entire body of Shri Adi Shankaracharya's works on Vaidik literature advocates the philosophy of Non-dualism (Advaita) through the doctrine of Superimposition (Adhyasavada). Today, this very commentary is accepted as the

ultimate authority (Pramana). Through rigorous logical reasoning, he systematically addressed and refuted all other philosophical schools-including Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Poorva Mimamsa, Yoga, Samkhya, Buddhism, and Jainism-proving that these doctrines were unsustainable. He established before the entire world the final conclusion of Vedantic philosophy and the Upanishads as the supreme authority, upheld by scriptural declarations such as "ब्रह्मसत्यं जगन्मिथ्या जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः" ("Brahman alone is real, the world is illusory, and the individual soul is non-different from Brahman"), "सर्वं खलु इदं ब्रह्म" ("All this is indeed Brahman"), and "आत्मैवेदं सर्वम्" ("The Self alone is all this"). Had Shri Adi Shankaracharya not incarnated to establish this Vedantic philosophy, our society today would have drifted under the influence of an entirely different ideology.

Thus, a concise overview of the life and sacred mission of the Satguru of such a supreme luminary, as well as that of the Acharya himself, has been presented here along with their biographies. Offering humble prostrations at their lotus feet, I conclude this article here.

### About the Author

#### Shraddheya Shri. Mule Shastri

Shraddheya Shri. 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. Shri. 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 Shri Gopalkrishna Temple. By the grace of destiny, he was guided by Pujya Mandatai Gandhe and Pujya Dr. Kaka. Under their guidance, Shri. 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.





# The Upanishads

P. Swami GovindDev Giri Maharaj

All of our Upanishadic literature is known as Vedanta, because the Bhagavad Gita and the Brahma Sutras are also fundamentally rooted in the Upanishads. Vedanta is the ultimate pinnacle of Vaidik philosophy. In its entirety, this Vedantic literature possesses an incomparable beauty that stands unmatched among all the literatures of the world. We Indians must recognize the significance of this Vedantic literature. All the Acharyas of our land have accepted the Vedanta Shastra as the ultimate authority. Even while authoring commentaries on the Vedas or citing Vaidik references, the revered Adi Shankaracharya accords a secondary status to the ritualistic (Karma Kanda) and worship-oriented (Upasana Kanda) sections, placing supreme importance instead on the Upanishads.

Even the Western philosopher Schopenhauer was deeply captivated by the study of the Upanishads. Fundamentally, Schopenhauer was a profoundly pessimistic philosopher. He used to say, "If the youth truly want to find happiness in this world, they should end their lives while still young. It is a great blessing for life to end in one's youth, because this world is a prison, and we are here merely to suffer our punishment. Those who die young are truly blessed." Yet, when this philosopher, so famous for his pessimism, read the German translation of the Upanishads, he became absolutely obsessed with them. He began studying the Upanishads day and night. He himself wrote, "There is only one book next to my bed, and that is the Upanishads. I do not go to sleep at night without reading them. There is no

study higher than that of the Upanishads. They are the solace of my life and they shall be the solace of my death."

The literature of the Upanishads is so powerful that it breathed new vitality into a deeply pessimistic man like Schopenhauer. Ultimately, he was compelled to declare, "Young people, if you have read my books, forget everything and dedicate yourselves to the study of the Upanishads"

One may naturally ask: What is the ultimate purpose of such brilliantly radiant Vedantic literature? What is its methodology? In fact, its purpose becomes evident from the very name 'Upanishad'. The syllables Upa + Ni + Sad collectively mean sitting besides one's Guru to comprehend the profound spiritual truth with unwavering devotion. Apart from this, the word Upanishad has another meaning. In 'Upa + Ni + Sad', the root syllable 'Sad' yields three distinct meanings. The first meaning is to destroy, the second is to attain, and the third is to loosen. Thus, Upanishad signifies the complete destruction of ignorance (Ajnana), the attainment of absolute knowledge (Jnana), and the loosening of the worldly bondage (Samsara). The literature whose study brings about these three transformative outcomes is called an 'Upanishad'. At this point, it is essential to note another point: even relatively recent texts whose study fulfills these three aforementioned processes can rightfully be called an Upanishad. For example, the late revered Mama Dandekar used to refer to Tukaram Maharaj's Gatha as the 'Tukopanishad'.



It is indeed an Upanishad given by Tukoba, for it destroys ignorance (Ajnana), brings about the attainment of knowledge (Jnana), and loosens the bonds of worldly attachment (Samsara). Therefore, this Vaidik Knowledge is found not only in the texts formally known as the Vedas, but in all texts that perform the very function of the Vedas. This designation applies to all texts that awaken such spiritual sentiments within our minds. Nevertheless, in this series of articles, we will focus exclusively on those texts that are traditionally known as Vedanta.

We have seen that Vedanta literature is the supreme expression of the profound wisdom of Indian sages. From ancient times to the present day, countless individuals have contemplated the Upanishads. Indeed, one will not find a single Acharya who has not deeply reflected upon the Vedantic texts. The Seers (saints) may perhaps not have formally studied the Upanishads; yet, their literature bears the unmistakable influence either of the Upanishads themselves or of texts written on their foundation. Our entire nation has continuously partaken of the nectar of this divine Upanishadic thought. When undertaking the study of Vedanta, the concept of 'Adhikara', meaning one's qualification or eligibility, is of utmost importance. A person who possesses ability to discern between the Self and the non-Self (Atmanatma Viveka), who is endowed with the sixfold wealth of inner discipline beginning with tranquility and self-restraint (Shama-Dama-adi Shatsampatti), and who holds an intense desire for liberation (Mumukshutva), is truly qualified to study Vedanta. Here, however, we are going to consider the study of Vedanta through the framework of the ultimate goals of human endeavor (Purushartha).

Just as the concept of the Vedanta is ancient in our land, the philosophy of Purushartha is equally ancient. The grand palace of our Indian civilization rests upon sixteen foundational pillars: four aims of human life (Purushartha), four social classes (Varna), four stages of life (Ashram), and four paths of attaining Divine union (Yog).

The four Purushartha are: Righteous Order (Dharma), Wealth/Prosperity (Artha), Fulfillment of Desire (Kama), and Liberation (Moksha).

The four Varna are: the Seekers of Supreme Truth (Brahmin), the Protectors and Administrators (Kshatriya), the Sustainer of Commerce (Vaishya), and the Foundational Servers (Shudra).

The four Ashrams are: the Disciplined Student (Brahmacharya), the Householder (Grihastha), the Retiree/hermit (Vanaprastha), and the Renunciate (Sannyasa).

The four Yog are: the Path of Selfless Action (Karma), the Path of Devotion (Bhakti), the Path of Knowledge (Jnana), and the Path of Meditation (Rajayoga).

Such a vast cultural edifice that is firmly established upon sixteen perfectly designed pillars cannot be found anywhere else on the face of the earth. This is the supreme wealth of our nation. This intellectual treasure of ours, stands absolutely supreme.

India may perhaps have to seek financial loans due to a lack of material wealth; however, our cultural treasure of wisdom is so invaluable that the entire world will have to learn it from India. India does not need to borrow this spiritual thought from any other nation in the world. Swami Vivekananda used to say, "This Vedantic wisdom of the East exists in India in a truly unparalleled form, and no



other nation in the world possesses this treasure. Therefore, India has absolutely no need to import any such intellectual wealth."

This is why Annie Besant used to say, "Alas, India

already possesses everything; yet the Indian people do not engage in deep, fundamental reflection upon it!"

### About the Author

#### Pujya Swami GovindDev Giri Maharaj:

Pujya Swamiji 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 Mahamandaleshwar 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.

### Vedant Bhaskar Initiatives – Overview

#### Bal Sanskar Varg

The values instilled during childhood play a vital role in shaping a cultured and responsible generation. Bal Sanskar Varg is not merely a center for learning; it is a sacred platform dedicated to nurturing in children the life values rooted in the Sanatana Vaidik tradition. Language is one of the strongest means of passing Indian culture and the Sanatana Vaidik tradition to the next generation—it is the very bond that connects them to their cultural roots. Therefore, along with teaching Marathi reading, writing, and conversation, the classes introduce children to Indian festivals and traditions, their meaning and proper observance, Indian history, great personalities and saints, yoga, Surya Namaskar, and collective recitation of stotras. The timeless values handed down by our Rishis and sages are also explained to the younger generation through logical reasoning and a modern scientific perspective. With this sincere purpose, Bal Sanskar Varg has been serving the community for the past 12 years. Contact: [contact@vedantbhaskar.org](mailto:contact@vedantbhaskar.org)

## Parmarthik 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.

### Inner Spiritual Practices

Since the disciplines of Shravana (listening), Manana (reflection), and Nididhyasana (meditative assimilation) have a direct utility in attaining the knowledge of the oneness of Brahman and Atman (Brahmatmaikya-jnana), they are considered internal (Antaranga) and direct (Pratyaksha) means (Sadhanas). However, the analytical investigation and clarification of the terms 'Tat' and 'Tvam' (Tat-Tvam Padartha Shodhana) constitutes the most intimate (Atyantanta Antaranga) means of all.

Regarding the direct means (Pratyaksha Sadhana) to Self-realization (Atmanubhava), the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad provides reasoned guidance: Because love for all non-Self entities (such as husband, wife, children, wealth, property, and so on) exists merely as an instrument for love of the Self (Atmapriti), love for these external objects is secondary (Gauni), derivative, or transitory - whereas love for the Self (Atmapriti) is the primary and supreme love (Mukhya Priti).

Therefore-आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यः । Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (2.4.5)

Meaning: 'The Self alone is truly worthy of realization; it must be made the ultimate object of realization - the absolute focal point of our experience.'

The practice: First, hearing the truth from an enlightened Master and the sacred scriptures (Shravana); next, logically reflecting on it through rational inquiry (Manana); and finally, with the intellect anchored in the firm conviction of the truth, engaging in deep, unbroken contemplation on it (Nididhyasana). When these three spiritual practices unify, complementing one another, and reach absolute perfection, only then does the real, experiential knowledge of the oneness of the Jiva and the Brahman manifest within the inner instrument (Antahkarana).

### Shravana (Shrotavyah, Spiritual Listening)

The systematic inquiry into Vedantic statements according to scriptural methods (using the six defining marks or indicators, or Shadlinga) to firmly determine their ultimate purport is called 'Shravana'.

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Deeply trusting what the Divine has ordained for us is for our ultimate good, and remaining unshakenly absorbed in worship accordingly is Sadhana.



Through this, the seeker's defect of 'Pramana-Asambhavana' (the doubt regarding the validity and authority of the scriptures) is eliminated. The process of Shravana consists of three forms or categories: Apatatah (preliminary/cursory), Angi (primary/principal), and Anga (subordinate/auxiliary) Shravana.

**1. Apatatah Shravana (Preliminary Listening)** - The word 'apatatah' means at first glance or at a preliminary level. Listening to the sacred scriptures in the company of enlightened masters, with faith and devotion, is called 'apatatah shravana'. This listening brings about the theoretical (or indirect) knowledge of the oneness of the Brahman and the Atman. Before this listening, one feels that it is 'impossible' for the Jiva to be or become one with the Brahman. After this listening, however, that feeling comes to an end.

**2. Angi Shravana (Principal Listening)** - 'Angi' means the principal or the main; it is the ultimate goal for which all other actions are performed. The listening to the Mahavakyas (great Upanishadic declarations) such as 'Tat Tvam Asi' (That Thou Art) directly from Sri Guru with deep reverence-undertaken by a disciple endowed with the fourfold qualifications (Sadhana-Chatushtaya-Sampanna) and free from mental obstacles like doubt (Samsaya) and misconception (Viparyaya)-is called 'Angi Shravana'. This encompasses a complete and definitive determination of the core purport (Tatparya-Nishchaya) of the Upanishads. Through this principal listening centered on the Mahavakya, the indirect knowledge (Paroksha-Jnana) previously gained during preliminary listening (Apatatah Shravana) is recalled, dissolving the veil of ignorance (Avarana-Nivritti) and giving rise to the direct realization of the oneness of Brahman and Atman (Brahmatmaikya-Jnana) within the mind (Chitta). In this context, Mauli Dnyaneshwar Maharaj says:

कानावचनाचिये भेटी । सरिसाचि पै किरीटी ।  
वस्तु होऊनि उठी । कवण एकु जो ॥ ज्ञाने. १८.९८९ ॥

(The moment the sacred word of the Guru meets the ear of the disciple, O Arjuna (Kiriti), a rare seeker instantly awakens as the Ultimate Reality (Vastu) itself! - Dnyaneshwari 18.989)

When a truly qualified disciple surrenders completely to a compassionate (Dayalu) Sadguru who is well-versed in the scriptures (Shrotriya) and firmly established in Brahman (Brahmanishtha), the moment the Mahavakya imparted by the Guru reaches the listener's ear, the direct experience of 'Aham Brahmasmi' (I am Brahman) dawns, bestowing the state of absolute identity with Brahman (Brahma-sthiti). This indeed is Jivanmukti (liberation while living). Such is the supreme glory of Angi Shravana.

**3. Anga Shravana (Supportive Listening)** - Anga means subordinate, secondary, a limb, or an instrumental means (Sadhana) employed to accomplish the primary goal (Angi). For a disciple whose spiritual eligibility (Adhikara) has not yet fully matured, direct, self-realizing knowledge of the oneness of Brahman and Atman (Brahmatmaikya-Jnana) does not dawn immediately upon hearing the Mahavakyas such as 'Tat Tvam Asi'. The repeated listening accompanied by systematic,





logical investigation, undertaken specifically to eliminate obstacles like doubts and misconceptions that block this knowledge, is called 'Anga Shravana'. Through this auxiliary listening, all spiritual obstacles are progressively dissolved in due course, culminating in firm, unwavering knowledge of Brahmatmaikya.

Adi Shankaracharya has clearly explained the limitations of mere listening in his commentary (Bhashya): "न अन्यथा श्रवणमात्रेण" (Realization does not occur through mere dry listening). If listening is not accompanied with reflection (Manana) and deep meditation (Nididhyasana), it remains merely an 'Anga' (an isolated limb). It cannot be holistic. (यदा एकत्वम् एतानि उपगतानि तदा सम्यग्दर्शनम् ब्रह्म-एकत्व-विषयम् प्रसीदति। - Only when these three disciplines (Shravana, Manana, and Nididhyasana) converge into unified harmony does the true, perfect vision of the oneness of Brahman shine forth in clarity.



### Paramarthik Wordsearch\*

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | N | A | M | A | H | S | T | H | A | U | H | R | A | I |
| O | A | A | R | T | R | K | S | U | K | M | M | H | A | H |
| S | V | A | R | U | P | A | N | U | B | H | U | T | I | V |
| O | A | S | R | H | K | A | T | T | A | M | A | U | U | S |
| A | H | T | R | A | Y | H | S | K | A | L | A | U | A | A |
| H | S | O | M | A | M | T | I | M | Y | A | M | M | A | V |
| T | V | A | M | A | V | A | H | R | I | D | M | U | S | T |
| R | T | H | H | M | L | S | S | U | T | O | P | H | A | U |
| A | T | S | P | B | T | T | M | A | H | K | U | H | T | H |
| Y | A | S | N | K | A | N | R | A | K | H | S | T | H | S |
| H | T | T | A | H | H | D | C | T | U | A | H | K | R | K |
| C | M | A | H | O | M | M | I | R | A | A | T | A | A | U |
| A | A | H | T | L | A | R | O | H | U | C | M | O | V | M |
| V | H | R | U | T | T | R | M | T | C | D | T | H | T | U |
| P | U | R | U | S | H | A | R | T | H | A | M | H | M | M |

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

1. The ultimate goal of human life.
2. The Self's light reflected in the intellect, merging back into the Self in Samadhi.
3. The deeper meaning beyond a word's apparent meaning.
4. Delusion arising from anger when desire is obstructed, as described in Bhagavad Gita Chapter 2.
5. An intense desire for Moksha.
6. The ancient Indian framework of Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha.
7. A poetic meter composed by Anandagiri, from which the name "Totakacharya" arose.
8. Withdrawing the mind from external objects and turning inward.
9. Worshiping for worldly gain which is considered spiritually inferior.
10. The direct or literal meaning of a word or statement.

## 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

<https://en.vedantbhaskar.org/literature/>

## Section: Youth Forum

### Shree Hanuman Chalisa for the Present Generation (Part 5)

Dr. Shekhar Mayanil (Neuroscientist)

In that last episode #4, we discussed “Ramdoot Atulit Baldhama, Anjani-Putra Pawansut Naama”, which encapsulated the multidimensional significance of Hanuman ji. These titles portray him as the divine messenger of Shri Ram, the embodiment of immeasurable strength, and the child of both human devotion and divine grace.

In this episode we will discuss the following Chaupai

महावीर बिक्रम बजरंगी । कुमति निवार सुमति के संगी ॥

Mahabir Bikram Bajarangi, Kumati Nivar Sumati Ke Sangi.

Mahabir (महावीर), Sanskrit: महा (maha) means great, वीर (vira) means hero, courageous one. Meaning, the great hero; one of immense valor and strength.

Bikram (विक्रम), Sanskrit: विक्रम (vikrama) means prowess, courage, bold action. Root: vi(apart, special) + krama (step, stride). Meaning, mighty,

valiant, one who takes bold steps; also connotes heroic deeds and moral courage. Bikram also represents force without aggression.

Bajarangi (बजरंगी), Sanskrit: वज्र (vajra) means thunderbolt, अङ्ग (anga) means limb, body. Bajarangi therefore points to a body which is radiant, and powerful, like a thunderbolt, symbolizing indestructible strength. Bajarangi also suggests a nervous system that is resilient, grounded, and able to bear intensity without fracturing.

Kumati (कुमति), in Sanskrit: कु (ku) means bad, मति (mati) means mind, intellect. Kumatican be understood as maladaptive thought patterns such as doubt, shame, compulsive fear, anger, or mental fragmentation, bad intellect, negative thoughts, distorted cognition.

Nivar (निवार), in Sanskrit: निवार (nivarana) means to remove, dispel, drive away. Meaning, remover, dispeller, one who eliminates.



Kumati nivar means remover of bad or clouded intellect.

Sumati (सुमति), in Sanskrit: सु (su) means good, मति (mati) means mind, intellect. Meaning, good intellect, wisdom, discernment, benevolent or wise mind.

Sangi (संगी), in Sanskrit: संगी (sangi) means companion, associate, one who is always with.

Sumati ke sangi then means that repeated remembrance of Hanuman ji trains the mind to stay in the company of wisdom, much like repeated practice strengthens one neural pathway over another.

The word's meaning is fairly simple, and it means, "Oh! Hanuman ji, you are a great hero, mighty as the thunderbolt, the remover of wrong thinking and are the companion of the good and wise.

Despite its simplicity, this chaupai extols Hanuman ji as the embodiment of supreme strength and courage, whose presence dispels negativity and aligns the devotee with wisdom and right discernment. It positions Hanuman ji not only as a protector but as a force that transforms the mind, guiding it from maladaptive patterns (kumati) to clarity and insight (sumati).

Referring to Hanuman ji as "Mahabeer Bikram Bajarangi," this chaupai represents a call to awaken these qualities within ourselves: "Let the heroic, thunderbolt-like strength inside me dispel confusion and help me maintain wisdom and steady intellect."

#### **Yogic Neuroscience reflections on Hanuman ji as a force of inner transformation**

Examining the verse Mahabir Bikram Bajarangi, Kumati Nivar Sumati Ke Sangi from a Yogic Neuroscience perspective reframes it as an instructional guide for optimizing neural function rather than merely a devotional chant.

In this context, Hanuman is viewed as a symbol of the fully developed human nervous system.

Mahabir Bikram Bajarangi is the neuro-biological powerhouse describing the physical and energetic state of a highly integrated brain and body.

Mahabir and Bikram illustrate the equilibrium between the Prefrontal Cortex, which is associated with metacognitive intelligence, and the Amygdala, known for its role in triggering fear responses.

In the context of Yogic Neuroscience, the designation "Great Hero" pertains to individuals demonstrating advanced emotional regulation. Although the Amygdala initiates fear, a "Mahabir" brain exhibits a well-developed Prefrontal Cortex that effectively moderates such impulses. This reflects "valor," defined by neurobiological proficiency in managing fear rather than its mere absence.

Viewed through the lens of Yogic Neuroscience, the term Bajarangi refers to the Vagus Nerve and the Myelin Sheath. Proper myelin sheath covering on the Vagus Nerve ensures efficient signal transmission. Comparable to how a diamond serves as a highly effective conductor of heat due to its structure, a Bajarangi nervous system denotes high neural plasticity and efficient signal transmission. Individuals with nerves described as "strong as a thunderbolt" demonstrate significant resilience to cortisol mediated stress and exhibit a robust parasympathetic response.

Kumati Nivar, is the eraser of neural noise. Our brains are often cluttered with "Kumati," which refers to old, negative intellect, cognitive distortions, or wrong thinking, maladaptive neural pathways (anxiety, self-doubt, bias). In Neuroscience this mechanism of Kumati Nivar is called "Synaptic Pruning".



What is Synaptic Pruning? Synaptic pruning is a crucial, activity-driven process in the brain that eliminates weak or unused neural connections, following the principle "use it or lose it", to boost efficiency. This process reaches its peak during early childhood and adolescence, ultimately reducing about half of an infant's synapses by adulthood. It streamlines brain architecture by reinforcing important circuits and removing unnecessary ones, all shaped by experience and neuroplasticity. While it has not been conclusively established, some believe that improper synaptic pruning may contribute to the development of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in children.

The "Nivar" is the process of removal. In Yogic Neuroscience, Hanuman ji (as the breath/Prana) acts as the catalyst for Long-Term Depression (LTD), the process of weakening the connections of negative thoughts.

What is Long-term depression (LTD)?

If synapses simply continued to increase in strength as a result of Long-Term Potentiation (LTP), characterized as persistent strengthening of synapses based on recent patterns of activity, involved in learning and memory, eventually they would reach some level of maximum efficiency, making it difficult to encode new information. Thus, to make synaptic strengthening useful, other processes must selectively weaken specific sets of synapses. Long-term depression (LTD) is such a process.

What is a synapse? A synapse is the essential junction characterized by a microscopic gap between two neurons or between a neuron and a muscle or gland. It serves as the site where nerve impulses are conveyed through either chemical or

electrical signals. The synapse functions as a communication interface, whereby electrical action potentials are transformed into chemical neurotransmitters that traverse the synaptic cleft and bind to receptors on the target cell.

LTD is a neurophysiological mechanism characterized by a sustained, activity-dependent reduction in synaptic efficacy between neurons. Contrasting with Long-Term Potentiation (LTP), LTD serves to refine or recalibrate synaptic connections. This prevents saturation and supports critical processes such as memory formation, motor learning, and overall synaptic plasticity. By focusing on Hanuman ji, one is essentially "starving" the neural circuits of negative rumination, allowing those toxic connections to wither away.

Sumati Ke Sangi refers to Hanuman ji as a figure who embodies the spirit of wisdom. The term Sumati means "righteous intellect" or a mental state characterized by heightened cognition. When we say "Sumati ke Sangi," it suggests that Hanuman ji, seen as the disciplined mind or breath, is always present alongside wisdom. On a neurological level, this represents the cultivation of Gamma waves, which are associated with "Ah ha" moments of insight and a sense of universal awareness.

We are not only eliminating negative neuronal patterns, but we're also reinforcing positive ones. Acting as a "Sangi" (companion) to Sumati means engaging in Cognitive Reframing. Cognitive reframing involves consciously training the brain to establish default neural pathways that promote clarity, empathy, and logical reasoning, rather than relying on instinctive survival responses. All these neural pathways make Sri Hanuman ji Maharaj as a force of inner





transformation and a symbol of the fully developed human nervous system.

#### Summary

The chaupai "Mahabir Bikram Bajarangi, Kumati Nivar Sumati Ke Sangi" is a profound encapsulation of the yogic and neuropsychological journey from negativity and maladaptive patterns (Kumati) to wisdom, discernment, and resilience (Sumati). Through its symbolic, sonic, and semantic format, the verse operates as a multi-level healing protocol, thereby activating strength within, regulating limbic and autonomic systems, and fostering neuroplasticity and cognitive/emotional integration. Empirical evidence from neuroscience and clinical studies (Goel and Gupta 2014; Pathak, 2024; Shobha 2024;) supports its efficacy in reducing stress,

enhancing emotional regulation, and promoting holistic well-being. As both a devotional hymn and a vibrational technology, the chaupai offers a practical and accessible tool for personal transformation, trauma healing, and the cultivation of inner wisdom. When integrated with breath, posture, and meditative awareness, it serves as a bridge between ancient yogic wisdom and contemporary neuroscience, illuminating a pathway to radiant, unbreakable coherence of mind, body, and spirit. In our next episode, we will provide a detailed discussion on the sixth chaupai of the Shri Hanuman Chalisa ("Kanchan varan viraj subesa, kanan kundal kunchit kesa"). So, stay tuned for the next edition.

#### 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 – Mangal Nidhi (Unconditional Giving)

Your financial support for the work of Vedant Bhaskar is deeply valued. Donations to the organization are tax-deductible in the United States.



# Section: Initiatives

## Vedant Bhaskar Activities

Sau. Mrunal Bujone

This is a retrospective of the activities undertaken by the 'Vedanta Bhaskar' organization during the period of Shaka 1948-from Chaitra to Jyeshtha, corresponding to March 2026 to June 2026. The 'Activity Report' featured in every issue is not merely a summary of past events. Rather, the intention behind it is to facilitate the recollection and contemplation of the moments experienced through the company of saints, collective worship, and Kirtan, and to provide support to one's spiritual practice (Sadhana).



### Unveiling of the Logo

Following a successful one-and-a-half-year journey of the 'Vedanta Bhaskar' organization-established by the grace of God and the auspicious resolve of Shri Sadguru-the official logo of the organization was unveiled on the holy occasion of Shri Ram Navami, March 26, 2026. This logo is not merely a technical design, but a living reflection of the organization's work, mission, and core philosophy.

### 2026 - First Quarterly Upasana

On Sunday, March 29, 2026, this year's first quarterly Upasana was held with immense devotion in a sacred atmosphere in Fremont, California. The profound truth of Samarth Ramdas's words, "One is truly blessed in this world by the name of Rama..." was distinctly experienced throughout the entire ceremony.

The Upasana began with the chanting of the divine name (Namasmaraṇa). The thirteen-



syllable mantra, "Shri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram," was chosen for this chanting. The serene state of the inner instrument (Antahkarana Vritti), achieved through this practice, proved to be a highly favorable foundation for listening to the subsequent reflections (Chintan Shravan).

The seekers' practice of reflection and study (Chintan-Abhyas) is a vital component of every quarterly Upasana. Continuous emphasis is placed on ensuring that seekers have absolute clarity regarding why we fundamentally perform Upasana. Presenting these reflections openly is a natural part of this process;

तुझे रूप चित्ती राहो मुखी तुझे नाम ।  
देह प्रपंचाचा दास सुखे करो काम ॥

"May Your form remain in my mind, and Your name on my lips. Let this body, a servant of the world, joyfully perform its duties."

In accordance with these words of the saints, seekers gain the direct experience that contemplation can effortlessly continue even while fulfilling worldly responsibilities. Hence, one is convinced that contemplation is not merely a subject for intellectual discussion, but a practice to be lived. This is the fundamental purpose of the practice of contemplation. It is the shared experience of all that the specific ovi or shloka given to each seeker perfectly complements their personal spiritual practice (Sadhana).

This time, the following ovis from the ninth chapter of the Dnyaneshwari were given to the seekers for contemplative practice. We pray at the feet of the Sadguru that on this occasion, the reader-seekers may also read these ovis and contemplate upon them.

तैसा हृदयामध्ये मी राम । असता सर्व सुखाचा आराम ।  
की भ्रंतासी काम । विषयांवरी ॥ ज्ञा.९.६० ॥

Meaning: Even though I, Ram-the resting place

of all joy-dwell right within the heart, the deluded ones still crave sense objects. (9.60)

तैसी अहंमतेचिये लवडसवडी । मातें न पवतीचि बापुडीं ।  
म्हणोनि जन्ममरणाचिये दुथडीं । डहुळितें ठेलीं ॥ ज्ञा.९.६२ ॥

Meaning: Thus, entangled in the frantic pursuit of 'I' and 'mine' (ego and attachment), these poor souls fail to reach Me. Consequently, they remain tossed about between the two banks of birth and death. (9.62)

स्वर्गा पुण्यात्मकें पापें येइजे । पापात्मकें पापें नरका जाइजे ।  
मग मातें जेणें पाविजे । तें शुद्ध पुण्य ॥ ज्ञा.९.३१६ ॥

Meaning: Through sin in the form of merit, one attains heaven; through sin in the form of sin, one attains hell. But that by which one attains Me is pure merit. (9.316)

Through these three ovis, the message conveyed is that without giving up the contemplation of sense objects, ego, and attachment, one cannot encounter the Supreme Lord (Atmaram) seated in the heart. Therefore, one must embrace the path of desireless devotion (Nishkama Bhakti), which is pure merit.

### Vedanta Bhaskar Sanstha - April 2026 Discourse and Kirtan Tour

In April 2026, 'Vedanta Bhaskar' organized a tour of spiritual discourses (Pravachan) and devotional discourses (Kirtan) in the Connecticut and New Jersey areas. The audience's experience was profoundly enriched by the scripturally grounded yet accessible exposition of Revered (Pu.) Mangeshdada Phadke, alongside the devotionally vibrant Kirtan of H.B.P. Sou. SonaliTai Phadke. Seekers received impactful guidance on how to attain the ultimate spiritual reality (Paramartha) while still engaging in worldly life (Prapancha).

This spiritual offering of knowledge (Jnana



Yajna) commenced on April 4th in Brookfield, Connecticut, with a discourse on selected verses from the ninth chapter of the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita. Revered Mangeshdada unfolded the profound, mystical principles of the Rajavidya-Rajaguhya Yoga in an exceptionally simple and engaging style.



Brookfield, CT – Ch. 9 Bhagavad Gita Selected Verses

Following this, on April 5th, a discourse and Q&A session on the Shri Ganapati Atharvashirsha took place in Middletown, Connecticut. On the highly auspicious occasion of Sankashti Chaturthi, profound insights were shared on how to view this Ganesha Vidya beyond mere recitation, exploring its deeper Upanishadic significance. The Q&A session successfully resolved the doubts of many spiritual seekers.

In the subsequent Naradiya Kirtan delivered by H.B.P. Sou. Sonali Tai, a profound philosophical reflection was presented on Sant Tukaram Maharaj's abhanga, 'भक्त ऐसे जाणा जे देही उदास' (Recognize true devotees as those who are detached from body-consciousness). Audience was overwhelmed with devotion upon hearing the contextually relevant tale of Bhagavati Shabari.

On April 6th, a discourse in English on the topic of "Naam Sadhana" (The Spiritual Practice of the Divine Name) was held in Lexington,



Middletown, CT – Naradiya Kirtan

Massachusetts. Venerable Mangeshdada very effectively expounded upon the significance of remembering the divine name (Naamsmaran) and the profound heights of spiritual practice (Sadhana) attained through it. An interactive Q&A session further enriched the program.



Lexington, MA – Nama Sadhana  
(Discourse in English)

On April 7th, at the same venue, a discourse was delivered on 'Shri Gajanan Vijay', the biographical text composed by the saint-poet Dasganu Maharaj. Alongside narrating episodes that impart spiritual wisdom (Paramartha), the deeper, implied meaning (Lakshyarth) of the mantra 'गण गण गणत बोते' (Gan Gan Ganat Bote) was elucidated.



Middletown, CT – Shri Ganapati Atharvashirsha





Lexington, MA – Shri Gajanan Vijay

Following this, a series of diverse programs took place in the New Jersey area between April 10th and 12th. On April 10th, a discourse titled "What is Paramartha (Spirituality)?" was held in Plainsboro. The true essence of spirituality, along with why and how one should practice it in today's modern age, was explained in simple and accessible language.



Plainsboro, NJ – What Is Paramartha?

On April 11th, a discourse on Shuddhagnyan (Pure Knowledge) was conducted in Cranbury. The subtlety of spiritual knowledge from the Shuddhagnyan sub-chapter (Samas) of the Dasbodh was presented to the audience in a manner that was simple yet scripturally precise. Simultaneously, the supreme greatness of the Sadguru in this spiritual journey was underscored. On April 12th, Marathi Vishwa New Jersey organized a discourse on Manobodh in Cranbury. Samarth Ramdas Swami's Manobodh is a concise yet immensely profound and comprehensive composition of 205 verses, encompassing the three

sections of spiritual evolution (Trikanatmak-Karma, Upasana, and Jnana). In this discourse, the core significance (Marmikata) of spiritual practice was unfolded for seekers across all levels of spiritual qualification (Adhikara).

Subsequently, a Q&A session resolved the remaining doubts of the seekers. On the evening of the same day, a traditional Naradiya Kirtan was performed in Lyndhurst. Through the exposition of the abhang 'घेई घेई माझे वाचे' (Ghei Ghei Mazhe Vache), the paramount importance of remembering the divine name was firmly established. The narrative (Akhyani) of the Gajendra Moksha highlighted the profound truth that God-realization (Bhagavatprapti) is achieved through devotion to the divine name, unwavering faith in the Lord, and absolute surrender (Ananya Sharanagati).



Cranbury, NJ - Manobodh



New Jersey - MarathiVishwa Board





Throughout this entire journey, the spontaneous participation, genuine inquisitiveness, and deep devotional fervor of the seekers were witnessed at every location. This uninterrupted stream of self-reflection awakened a renewed inspiration in the inner being (Antahkaran) of many.



NJ Vitthal Mandir – Naradiya Kirtan



NJ Vitthal Mandir – Presenting a Memento to the Kirtankar

### Vedant Bhaskar Seva Initiative: RAFT

It is a profound teaching of our culture that we owe a debt to the society in which we live. To help repay this societal debt alongside our spiritual upliftment, the 'Vedant Bhaskar' organization regularly brings forth suitable opportunities. Seizing one such golden opportunity, a special service initiative was successfully organized on June 6, 2026, at RAFT (Resource Area For Teaching) to express gratitude toward teachers, who form the very backbone of our society. This service initiative was conducted with immense enthusiasm and exemplary discipline from

9:30 AM to 12:30 PM at the RAFT center in San Jose. The RAFT organization works with the purpose of assisting teachers with hands-on and practical learning in the classroom. To offer our humble contribution to this noble cause, our volunteers visited the center and enthusiastically assisted in assembling various educational kits. This initiative also successfully fulfilled the dual purpose of instilling a spirit of selfless service in our children from a young age and providing entire families with the pure joy of working together.

Notably, more than 25 volunteers, ranging in age from 12 to 72 years, participated in this initiative. Through this event, the spirit of service residing in everyone's heart was beautifully manifested into tangible action.





# Jagadguru Adi Shankaracharya The Digvijaya Yatra



Jagadguru Adi Shankaracharya undertook an extensive journey on foot across Bharat with the mission of re-establishing Advaita Vedanta and the Arya Sanatana Vaidik Hindu Dharma. This journey is known as the "Digvijaya Yatra." To convey the vast scope of this journey, the map highlights the names of the major places visited by Adi Shankaracharya during his travels.



॥ Shri Ram Jay Ram Jay Jay Ram ॥



Illustrator: Chi. Advait Phadke, student of the Bal Sanskar Varg



## Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.





## Highlights



Swami Sarvpriyanand - Resident Minister  
The Vedanta Society of New York



P. P. Swami Bhoomananda –  
Chinmaya Mission, North America



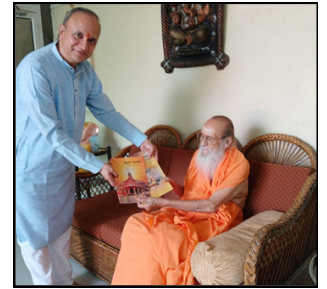
‘Savyasachi’ – A Serene Morning



Vedant Bhaskar Quarterly – Publication Release  
Mr. Vivek Walvekar & Mrs. Mrudul Deshpande



Mr. Mihir Joshi – Appointed as Associate  
Editor of Vedant Bhaskar Quarterly



P. P. Swami Swaroopananda  
Saraswati – Phulgaon



Plainsboro, NJ - Inquisitive Spiritual Seeker



A Cherished Moment  
Pujya Mangeshdada &  
Respected Sonalитай



Brookfield, CT - Audience & Volunteers



Middletown, CT - Audience & Volunteers



Lexington, MA - Audience





## Bhagvadpujyapada Shrimat Adi Shankaracharya

At eight, a master of the four Vedas; at twelve, learned in all scriptures; at sixteen, author of the profound Commentaries; and at thirty-two, the sage returned to his divine abode.

### Life and Mission - A Concise Overview

**Birth and Early Life:** Born in 509 BCE (Yudhishtira Shaka 2631) on Vaishakha Shukla Panchami, in the village of Kaladi, situated on the banks of the Poorna river in Kerala. His father was Shivaguru and his mother was Aryamba. In accordance with the divine plan expounded in the Kurma Purana, this extraordinary incarnation manifested through the divine resolve of Lord Shiva.

**Early Brilliance and Upanayana:** Endowed with an extraordinarily sharp intellect, young Shankara demonstrated such profound wisdom that his Upanayana (sacred thread ceremony) was performed when he was just five years old. By the mere age of eight, he achieved complete mastery over all four Vedas (Ashtavarshe Chaturvedi).

**Attainment of the Sadguru and Sannyasa Initiation:** He formally received Sannyasa Diksha (initiation into monkhood) from the most revered Shri Govinda Bhagavatpada at Omkar Mandhata on the banks of the Narmada.

**Composition of Treatises and Commentaries:** Following his Guru's command, by the age of sixteen he authored his world-renowned commentaries (Bhashyas) on the Prasthanatrayi—the Upanishads, Brahma Sutras, and Shrimad Bhagavad Gita. He also composed numerous foundational introductory treatises (Prakarana Granthas), including Vivekachudamani, Upadeshasahasri, Atmabodha, Aparokshanubhuti, Dashashloki, Shatashloki, Vakyavritti, Panchikarana, Prabodhasudhakar, and Tattvabodha. In Varanasi, Maharshi Veda Vyasa himself bestowed his divine blessings and validation upon these commentaries.

**Composition of Devotional Hymns (Stotras):** He composed a vast array of Stotras reflecting an exquisite harmony of devotional principles, deep emotion, lyrical grace, musical rhythm, and exalted poetic imagination. By seamlessly infusing Nirguna (formless) Vedantic philosophy into inherently Saguna (form-attributed) devotional hymns, he permanently rooted the 'essence of Vedanta' in the popular consciousness.

**Advent of Panchayatana Puja:** To dissolve sectarian divisions among the devotees of various deities in contemporary society and to establish the core Vedic truth that all deities ultimately signify the one supreme Brahman, he instituted the unified Panchayatana Puja system of worship.

**Chief Disciples:** Exalted chief disciples (Patta-shishyas) including Chitsukhacharya (Vishnusharma), Padmapadacharya (Sadananda), Sureshwaracharya (Mandana Mishra), and Totakacharya (Giri).

**Propagation of Advaita Vedanta and Triumphant Tour (Digvijaya):** He revived Sanatana Vedic Dharma by refuting non-Vedic doctrines—specifically Buddhist and Jain philosophies—across the entire Indian subcontinent. Accepting the challenge of opening the unopened Southern Gate of the Sarvajna Peetha (Throne of Omniscience) in Srinagar, Kashmir, he successfully ascended it on the sheer strength of the Advaita philosophy.

**Establishment of Four Dharmapithas:** Established four main Dharmapithas (Mathas or monastic centers) in the four directions of the country –

- West: Dwarka - Shri Kalika Peetham (Presiding Acharya: Padmapadacharya)
- East: Jagannath Puri - Shri Govardhan Peetham (Presiding Acharya: Hastamalakacharya)
- North: Badrinath - Shri Jyotir Peetham (Presiding Acharya: Totakacharya)
- South: Sringeri - Shri Sharada Peetham (Presiding Acharya: Sureshwaracharya)

**A Sublime Wonder:** Astonishing intellect, extraordinary memory, maturity of thought, unfathomable depth of knowledge, a deeply insightful and visionary genius, complete dispassion (Vairagya), aesthetic refinement, formidable skill in debate, resolute self-confidence, complete mastery over Bhakti, Yoga, Tantra, and Vedanta, effortless skill in poetic composition, and an exalted richness of imagination.

**Mahaparinirvana (Sacred Departure):** At the young age of just thirty-two, having completed the organizational work of propagating Advaita philosophy, he departed for the divine realm.