

Twelve-foot *mūrti* for Adi Shankaracharya at Kedarnath



Bhubaneswar/Uttarakhand: Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled a 12-foot *mūrti* of Adi Guru Shankaracharya at Kedarnath on 5th November 2021. Modi offered prayers at the temple before unveiling the 35-tonne statue, work on which began in 2019. He also inaugurated a plethora of projects, including the rebuilt *samādhi* (resting place) of Shankaracharya. The *samādhi* suffered heavy damage during the 2013 deluge near the Mandakini, a tributary of the Ganga, in Rudraprayag

district. The eighth-century seer Shankaracharya had attained *Mokṣa* at Kedarnath. The events were streamed live at the 12 Jyotirlingas, four Shankaracharya monasteries, his birthplace, and several prominent temples in India.

“You all are witness to the inauguration of Adi Shankaracharya samadhi here today. His devotees are present here in spirit. All mutts and Jyotirlingas in the country are connected with us today,” PM Modi said.

Sri Vishweshwara Tirtha Swamiji conferred Padma Vibhushan posthumously

Bhubaneswar/New Delhi: Sri Vishwaprasanna Theertha Swamiji of Sri Pejavar Matha, Udupi, received the prestigious Padma Vibhushan award, announced for his senior Sri Vishweshwara Theertha Swamiji, at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi.

Sri Vishweshwara Theertha Swamiji attained *Mahāsamādhi* on December 29, 2019. The 88-year-old was conferred the Padma Vibhushan award posthumously for his service in the field of spiritualism.

The seer was born on April 27, 1931, the second child of Sri Narayanacharya and Srimati Kamalamma, in a Madhwa-Shivalli Brahmin family. He was

ordained with sainthood at the age of eight and transformed himself into a knowledgeable and erudite scholar of Vedanta and the Shastras.

The seer ran many schools and colleges in Udupi and across the state of Karnataka. Sri Vishweshwara Theertha was against the practice of untouchability. He had taken a lead role in organizing ‘Dharma Sansad’ in Udupi in 2017. He was also among the religious heads to be in the forefront of the Ram Janmabhoomi movement and was a vocal proponent for the construction of a Ram temple at Ayodhya.



Char Dham closes for winter



Bhubaneswar/Uttarakhand: As the winter is here, the devotees from across the country are refrained from going on a pilgrimage to Gangotri, Yamunotri and Kedarnath. The portals will remain shut for the next six months,

as informed by Uttarakhand Char Dham Devasthanam Management Board recently.

The circuit of four ancient pilgrimage sites in Uttarakhand, including Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath are referred to as ‘Char Dham’. Rajesh Semwal, Gangotri Mandir Samiti co-secretary informed the portals of the Gangotri shrine closed on 5th November 2021 at 11.45 am after priests performed religious rituals. The Utsav Doli (palanquin) of Maa Ganga of the Gangotri shrine left for her winter home at Mukhba village. This year, Gangotri had recorded more than 32,948 pilgrims amid Covid-related curbs and restrictions.

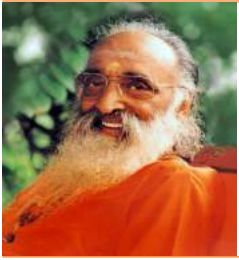
Meanwhile it was informed by the board member, Dr Harish Gaur, that the doors of the *Tṛtīya* (third) Kedar Shri Tungnath Temple were

closed on 30th October and *Dvītiya* (second) Kedar Shri Madmaheshwar Temple on 22nd November for winter. Shri Madmaheshwar fair closed on 25th November.

The Char Dham Yatra began on 18th September this year after the Nainital High Court on 16th September lifted the ban on Char Dham Yatra and only allowed fully vaccinated visitors with a mandatory COVID-19 negative report for the annual pilgrimage.

Earlier board members had informed that on 5th November Shri Gangotri Dham was shut down followed by Kedarnath and Yamunotri on 6th November. Doors to Badrinath were closed on 20th November.

EDITORIAL



“A successful man is one who can lay a firm foundation with the bricks that others throw at him.”

Swami Chinmayananda



“Every war first takes place in one’s mind and only later, outside.”

Swami Dayananda Saraswati



“Dedication is a state of mind where one gives up all wishes, does not make a decision for oneself and simply does the work that is given.”

Swami Ananda Saraswati

Was Jesus really born on 25th December ?

Christmas is widely celebrated across the world during 25th December as the birth day of Jesus, who the Christian religion regards as the son of God. But was Jesus really born on 25th December? No one knows for sure on what day Christ was born. Dionysus Exiguus, a sixth-century monk, was the first to date Jesus Christ’s birth on December 25th, A.D. 1. Researchers have speculated that the Roman Catholic Church chose Dec. 25 because it ties in with the winter solstice and Saturnalia, a festival dedicated to the Roman deity for Agriculture, Saturn, and which began on December 17 and ended December 25. This allowed the Church to co-opt this popular Pagan festival, as well as the winter celebration of other Pagan religions, by choosing this day to celebrate Jesus’ birthday, according to scholar Ignacio L. Götz in his book “Jesus the Jew: Reality, Politics, and Myth-A Personal Encounter”.

According to popular website christianity.com, “Cultures around the Mediterranean and across Europe observed feasts on or around 25th December, marking the winter solstice. The Jews had a festival of lights. Germans had a yule festival. Celtic legends connected the solstice with Balder, the Scandinavian Sun God who was struck down by a mistletoe arrow. At the Pagan festival of Saturnalia, Romans feasted and gave gifts to the poor. Drinking was closely connected with these Pagan feasts. According to author William Walsh, as published in 1970 book, The Story of Santa Claus, the Christian decision to use 25th December as the global holiday to celebrate the birth of Jesus came about as a way to hopefully convert Pagans to Christianity. It was seen as a compromise between opposing beliefs.

Some scholars believe that Jesus was born between 6 B.C. and 4 B.C., based on the biblical story of King Herod the Great. As per the Biblical story, in an attempt to kill Jesus, the king allegedly ordered the death of all male infants under the age of two who lived in the vicinity of Bethlehem, an event known as the Massacre of the Innocents, shortly before his death in 4 B.C. However, historians disagree about Herod’s actual year of death, and many have argued that the mass infanticide is nothing

more than a legend.

Other scholars have attempted to correlate the “Star of Bethlehem,” which supposedly heralded Jesus’ birth, with actual astronomical events to pinpoint his birth year. For example, in a 1991 article in the Quarterly Journal of the Royal Astronomical Society, astronomer Colin Humphreys proposed that the fabled star was actually a slow-moving comet, which Chinese observers recorded in 5 B.C. However, Humphreys’ theory has since been debunked. The month of Jesus’ birth has also been a point of debate, with one theory suggesting that the Star of Bethlehem may have been Venus and Jupiter coming together to form a bright light in the sky, a rare event that occurred in June of 2 B.C. Another possibility is a similar conjunction between Saturn and Jupiter, which occurred in October of 7 B.C.

One large plot point in the story of Jesus’ birth is the presence of shepherds watching over their flocks. This is clearly outlined in the Bible at Luke 2:7-8, and is such a prominent part of the story, it has been featured in Christmas songs, according to the United Church of God. Multiple sources, including books “Celebrations: The Complete Book of American Holidays” and “The Interpreter’s One-Volume Commentary” commented that the weather would not have permitted Shepherds to be tending to their flocks at the end of December. Instead, this implies Jesus was born during a warmer month.

A number of Pagan customs became associated with Christmas. Christian stories replaced the heathen tales, but the practices hung on. Candles continued to be lit. Kissing under the mistletoe remained common in Scandinavian countries. Around the thirteenth century, Christians added Christmas carol singing to Christmas celebrations.

Christmas Tree celebrations

Decorating Christmas trees started in Germany in the 16th century. Some built Christmas pyramids of wood and decorated them with evergreens and candles if wood was scarce. Long before the advent of Christianity, plants and trees that remained green all year had

a special meaning for people in the winter. In many countries it was believed that evergreens would keep away witches, ghosts, evil spirits, and illness. In the Northern hemisphere, the shortest day and longest night of the year falls on December 21 or December 22 and is called the winter solstice. Many ancient people believed that the Sun was a God and that winter came every year because the Sun God had become sick and weak. They celebrated the solstice because it meant that at last the Sun God would begin to get well. Evergreen boughs reminded them of all the green plants that would grow again when the Sun God was strong and summer would return.

The ancient Egyptians worshipped a god called Ra, who had the head of a hawk and wore the sun as a blazing disk in his crown. At the solstice, when Ra began to recover from his illness, the Egyptians filled their homes with green palm rushes, which symbolized for them the triumph of life over death. Early Romans marked the solstice with a feast called Saturnalia in honor of Saturn, the god of agriculture and decorated their homes and temples with evergreen boughs. In Northern Europe, the mysterious Druids, the priests of the ancient Celts, also decorated their temples with evergreen boughs as a symbol of everlasting life. The fierce Vikings in Scandinavia thought that evergreens were the special plant of the sun god, Balder.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, most Americans refused to adopt the Christmas tree tradition because they believed it to be attached to Pagan beliefs. The tradition was therefore mostly contained to Germany until the late 1700s and early 1800s. The Puritans of New England upheld especially strict views of Christmas in America, and people were severely punished if they celebrated or decorated in any way. They believed the holiday was so sacred that a church service was the only appropriate way to celebrate. This solemn American observance of Christmas continued until Irish and German immigrants began to settle in America and established their own traditions despite the Puritan rule.

Guest Editor: Gautham Kumar

Hindu group files complaint on UPenn over 'anti-Hindu' conference



Bhubaneswar: A prominent Hindu American group on Wednesday filed a complaint with the US Department of Education Office of Civil Rights against the prestigious University of Pennsylvania for its part in co-sponsoring the Dismantling Global Hindutva (DGH) conference, which it alleged was anti-Hindu.

In a complaint to the Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights Suzanne Goldberg and Deputy Assistant Secretary for Enforcement Randolph Wills, the Hindu American Foundation (HAF) asked the Office of Civil Rights to investigate and determine whether the University of Pennsylvania and its Department of South Asia Studies, South Asia Center created a hostile environment for students and faculty of Indian and Hindu descent, and whether the same entities and individuals misused any federal funds.

Organised by several groups, many of whom are known for their anti-India stand, the Dismantling Global Hindutva was held virtually around 11th September and was sponsored and co-sponsored by several American universities.

HAF in its complaint has asked if the university misused any federal fund by planning, sponsoring, hosting, and/or participating in a one-sided conference about India and Hindus which promoted negative stereotypes, slurs, and distorted facts; and developing and promoting a 'harassment field manual' that promotes negative stereotypes, slurs, and distorted facts about Hindus, and specifically targets Hindu students for censure and marginalisation in violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008.

US Congress recognises religious significance of Diwali



Bhubaneswar: Indian-American Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi has introduced a resolution in the U.S. Congress recognising the religious and historical significance of Diwali, the festival of lights.

"For Sikhs, Jains, and my Hindus here in the United States and across the world, Diwali is a time for gratitude as well as a celebration of the triumph of light over darkness and good over evil," Mr. Krishnamoorthi said after he introduced the resolution in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Recognising the historical and religious significance of Diwali, the resolution expresses its deepest respect for Indian-Americans and the Indian diaspora throughout the world on this significant occasion, he said.

"In celebrating another Diwali during the pandemic, I hope that we begin to see light overcome the darkness in the world. I want to wish a safe and happy Diwali to all the families gathering with their loved ones to light lamps in their homes and to pray for good health and peace for all people," Mr. Krishnamoorthi said.

Rajan Zed to read verses from the Vedas for Baha'i event in Nevada

Bhubaneswar: As a remarkable interfaith gesture, Hindu statesman Rajan Zed delivered a prayer from ancient Sanskrit scriptures at an event to commemorate "The Centenary of the Ascension of Abdu'l-Baha", head of the Baha'i Faith from 1892 to 1921, in Reno (Nevada) on November 28.

Zed, who is President of Universal Society of Hinduism, recited from Rig-Veda, world's oldest extant scripture; besides lines from Upanishads and Bhagavad-Gita (Song of the Lord), both ancient Hindu scriptures. He started and ended the prayer

with "Om", the mystical syllable containing the universe, which in Hinduism is used to introduce and conclude religious works. After Sanskrit delivery, Rajan Zed read the English interpretation of the prayers.

Zed, a global Hindu and interfaith leader, has been bestowed with World Interfaith Leader Award. He is a Senior Fellow on the Advisory Board of The Interfaith Peace Project. Currently there are about three million Hindus in USA. The Baha'i Faith is established in more than 100,000 localities in virtually every country around the world.



The CEO's visit

Based on the book "Perennial Wisdom through Stories" by Swami Ananda Saraswati

A CEO was in the city for business. He was reminded of his old friend – a Swamiji – who had an Ashram in the city. Many, many years ago in his youth, he and the Swami were both students of Vedanta. After a few years of study while Swamiji continued his Vedantic studies, the CEO wanted to get back to material life. Slowly but surely, the CEO worked his way through the corporate ladder and was today the top official in one of the leading companies in the country.

Since a considerable amount of time had flown by, the CEO felt it was better to seek an appointment before visiting. He sent his driver with his business card and asked him to request Swamiji's time. The Swamiji looked at the business card and said "Please tell your CEO that this is not the right place for him". The driver hurried back and communicated what was told. Hearing this the CEO burst out laughing. He took the business card and struck out everything else other than his name – the CEO title, the firm's name etc. He gave it back to the driver and asked him to request appointment again.

Swamiji saw the edited card and exclaimed – Ah! my friend has come. It's been such a long time! Saying this he stood up and started walking towards the entrance. The driver ran out to inform the CEO – who, was already on his way to the Ashram. Two friends greeted each other as the sun was rising on the sky.



One should not visit a Guru to show-off one's self, but to see the true nature of one's self.

Compiled by Anantha Padmanabhan

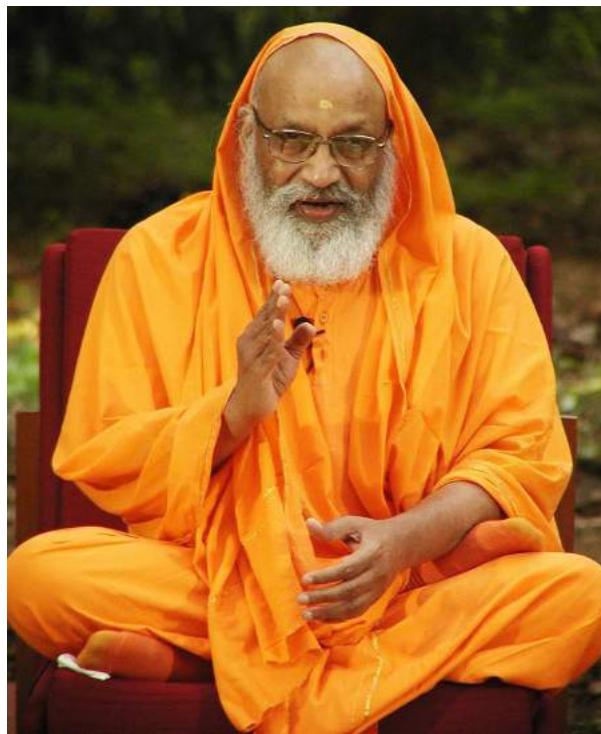
The Value of Values

Seeing the Value of a Value

amānitvam is a value. *amānitvam* comes from the Sanskrit word '*Mānaḥ*' means self-respect, self-esteem, extending to conceit or haughtiness. Thus, *mānaḥ* means an exaggerated opinion about oneself. *Mānaḥ* does not imply that one is without qualifications but rather that whatever qualifications one has, loom large in one's mind as worthy of respect and regard from others. The one who has *mānaḥ* is a *mānī*. The addition of '*tvam*' to *mānī* creates the abstract noun *mānitvam*, which stands for essence of the quality – that is, for exaggerated self respectfulness or self-worshipfulness. The prefix '*a*' negates the meaning of the word; so, *amānitvam* indicates the absence of self-worshipfulness.

A simple, factual self-respectfulness is not a harmful quality of mind; in fact, it is a good quality. A problem arises only when self-respectfulness is exaggerated into self-worshipfulness. When self-respect becomes self-conceit - exaggerated - it does not just undesirably affect my attitude toward myself, but it manifests in my demand upon others to show me the respect that I feel is my due. When I demand respect from others, I invite many disturbances into my mind. Demanded respect rarely will be given to me upon my terms, if at all. The person upon whom I make such a demand may not respond or, he may, suffering from his own *mānitvam*, respond with hostility

or by making a demand upon me for greater respect. The result can be mutual hurt, friction between us, troubled minds.



Life Expression Comes from Value Structure

What causes me to make a demand for respect upon others? The cause is not found in my solid respect for my own qualifications although qualifications I may indeed have in good measure; but the cause is found in a deep, underlying doubt in my mind about my own qualifications. When I am completely certain that I have, in full measure, the qualifications

that I claim, I have no need to demand from others respect for those qualifications. No matter how strange or polysyllabic my name is, I don't demand respect from others for my ability to spell my name. In fact, commendation for this skill would be insulting. I take for granted this ability and do not concern myself with it.

Mānitvam arises because I am doubtful about my qualifications. I do not seem to accept myself as one who is qualified. The demand upon others for recognition shows that I need some support so that I can feel that I am somebody. This demand comes from an inner sense of emptiness, a lack of readiness to accept myself as I am because I secretly fear that what I am is not good enough. Although I assert my qualifications, I am really all too conscious of my limitations and am afraid to acknowledge limitations or have them recognized by others. I do not want a response from others to my limitations but only to my qualifications and, not just to my qualifications but to my qualifications in the glorified light in which I view them.

Demand for Respect Leads to Hurt

People give respect to others for various reasons. Sometimes respect is given solely because the person to whom the expression is made is in a position of power. In such cases if the position comes to an end, so does the respect. Other times respect is given because there is some genuine appreciation of qualities in the other person. However, respect voluntarily given is subject to

Grand Launch of Visvamitra Foundation, India



Visvamitra Foundation was inaugurated on 14th November 2021 by Swami Ananda Saraswati at Bhubaneswar in Odisha. The members of the foundation were present at the Inauguration ceremony. Everyone greeted Swamiji with bouquets. Swamiji introduced Shilajit, an Ayurvedic medicine by Visvamitra Foundation.



Little known facts about Shilajit

Shilajit is one of the wonder medicines of Ayurveda. It is a mineral that oozes out from the rocks of the great Himalayan mountains during the warm summer. Shilajit is a Sanskrit word, meaning “Conqueror of mountains and thus destroyer of weakness”. As per Ayurveda it is known by many names - *śilajatu*, *śaileya*, *adrya*, *girija*, *aśmaja*, *dhātuja*, *aśmajatuka*, *śailaja* and *aśmasambhava*:

शिलाजतुनि शैलेयमद्र्यं गिरिजमश्मजम्।

धातुजमश्मजतुकं शैलजं चाश्मसम्भवम्॥

References from Ayurveda

This wonder mineral and its medicinal properties are described in multiple ancient

Ayurvedic texts. *Sūsruta Samhitā* states “A gelatinous substance that is secreted from the side of the mountains when they have become heated by the rays of the sun in the months of Jyaishta (May-June) and Ashadha (June-July). This substance is what is known as *śilajatu* and it cures all disorders of the body”. *Rasa Kāmadhenu* states “In the summer (May-July) when the Himalayan mountain rock is heated up, six types of gum-resin come out”:

ग्रीष्मातितप्ता गिरयो जतुतुल्यं वमन्ति यत्।
हेमादिषड्धातुमयं प्रोच्यते तच्छिलाजतु॥

Shilajit is a blackish-brown extract, obtained from the steep rocks of the Himalayas at altitudes between 1000 and 5000 meters in

Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Kashmir and Arunachal Pradesh.

Health benefits of this panacea

Caraka Samhitā states that there is no curable disease in the universe, which is not effectively cured by Shilajit when it is administered at the appropriate time, in combination with suitable drugs and by adopting the prescribed method. Shilajit is an excellent rejuvenator for the body. It is known to aid a wide range of body functions stating from cardiovascular problems (such as hypertension, anemia), Nervous problems, Obesity, Arthritis, urinary tract issues to sexual disorders. It is known to be effective against Diabetes and even critical problems such as Cancer and Alzheimers.

The Value of Values (Contd.)

the whim of the giver – what he finds convenient to give one day may be too much the next. Also, the giver may cease his respectfulness if it is not returned to him in kind. If he, too, has an ego that requires extravagant support he may find it deflating to extend to another without return in kind – so he stops. A relationship in which there is such a mutual demand for respect is likely to become a tug-of-war all the time. ‘Hurt’ is the usual end result of the demand for respect.

‘Hurt’ based on ‘Bloated Ego’

Hurt is possible only when there is a ‘bloated ego’ – pride. Any form of hurt if analyzed, is found to be only pride, inflated ego. Inflated ego is disproportionate, excessive significance attached to what I know, what I feel, what I possess, what I do, how I look. With this overemphasis on a ‘knower-doer-I’ comes the expectation of a certain response from others recognizing my importance-seeing me as I want to be seen. When that response does not come, and then comes hurt. A hurt, deflated ego tends to spend a lot of time planning how to teach the one who brought about the hurt a lesson.

Based on the book “The Value of Values” by Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati

And, since a prideful ego picks up a lot of hurts, the list of those to be taught a lesson is likely to be long. For such a person, sitting quietly in meditation is not possible. In the firmament of the mind of one with a hurt ego the luminaries are all the people who caused the hurt; it is upon them he dwells in meditation.

‘Hurt’ is always a Monkey’s Wound

There is a proverb which says a wounded heart is like a monkey’s wound- it does not heal but only gets reopened. A hurt mind may seem to be healed and then a sudden shadow crosses the face as the hurt is called back to memory and the hurt reopens. Like clouds before the sun, gloom closes in. There is no time for Vedanta in the mind of a person who is always nursing hurts; and one who demands respect accumulates many hurts to nurse.

Qualifications Should Speak for Themselves

It is fine to have abilities and to use them; but abilities should be allowed to speak for themselves. My attitude towards my accomplishments should be like a flowering bush towards its blossoms. In the city or in

the wilderness, seen or unseen, praised or unpraised, the bush puts forth its blooms. No publicity circulars are sent out to announce the blooming. Whether appreciated by someone or not, the blossoms come forth, colorful and fragrant. The bush simply blooms because it is meant to bloom. It asks no respect and claims no glory. It blooms because bloom it must. And this is the way I should be about my gifts and skills. These abilities seem to have come with me – why, I do not know. I should simply use them as well as I can because that seems to be what I am supposed to do. People who have a value for these particular abilities may give me some respect for them if circumstances are right for them to do so. People who have no value for these particular abilities no doubt, will ignore them. Neither attitude should make any difference to me. I should let my actions themselves command respect from those who are able and willing to extend it but I should never demand respect.

Compiled by Karthik Sundaram

Dear Readers, this section is aimed at a simple and refreshing way to learn and recollect some of the interesting aspects of 'Hinduism' through a series of 10 trivia questions covering diverse aspects of the religion such as Philosophy, Religious Literature & Puranas to name a few.

1. When our ancestors (*Pitr's*) are unhappy, which God should be worshipped and pleased to make them happy?

- (a) Lord Shiva (b) Lord Surya
(c) Lord Vishnu (d) Lord Shani

2. For up to one year from the day of death, where does the deceased (*Pretātmā*) actually reside?

- (a) Right shoulder of the *Kartā* (doer of final rights)
(b) House of the *Kartā*
(c) Left shoulder of the *Kartā*
(d) In *PitrLoka*

3. As per '*Varnāśrama Dharmā*', which stage is dedicated to *Jñānam* (Knowledge) to come out of all worldly attachments?

- (a) *Grhasthāśrama* (b) *Vānaprasthāśrama*
(c) *Brahmacarya* (d) *Sanyāsāśrama*

4. In every scripture, the verse called '*Mangalācaranam*' is in the praise of who?

- (a) Mother of the writer of the scripture
(b) Writer of the scripture himself
(c) Father of the writer of the scripture
(d) Guru of the writer of this scripture

5. Which of these divine rivers flowing in the Indian territory stands for Austerity or *Tapas* as per our tradition?

- (a) Narmada (b) Ganges
(c) Yamuna (d) Sutlej

6. Which of these verses is considered a '*Mahāvākya*'?

- (a) *Vyasociṣṭam jagat sarvam* (b) *Tat tvam asi*
(c) *Brahma jñānam auśadham* (d) *aham saccidānandoham*

7. The powerful presence of which planet in your horoscope, would make one more ignorant or excessively be in a state of *Tamoguna*?



- (a) *Ketu* (Moon descending node) (b) *Rāhu* (Moon descending node)
(c) *Śani* (Saturn) (d) *Guru* (Jupiter)

8. Which of the *āsana*'s in Patanjali yoga, would help in removing ones attachment to his or her *Vāsana*'s (impressions)?

- (a) *Paścimottānasana* (b) *Śavāsana*
(c) *Nāḍi Śuddhi* (d) *Cakrāsana*

9. When the Pandavas took *Agyatvas*, who among was in disguise as a cook named '*Ballaba*'?

- (a) Arjuna (b) Bhima
(c) Nakula (d) Yudhishtra

10. Which of the disciples of Sri Adisankaracharya was the first head of the consecrated *Govardhana Mata* in Puri?

- (a) *Padmapādācārya* (b) *Totakācārya*
(c) *Sureśvarācārya* (d) *Hastāmalakācārya*

For answers please look into the last page of this edition!!!

Compiled by Karthik Ganesan

Online classes @ Yoga Vidya Gurukulam

Are you seeking to know your inner-Self?
Do you want to make this life more meaningful?

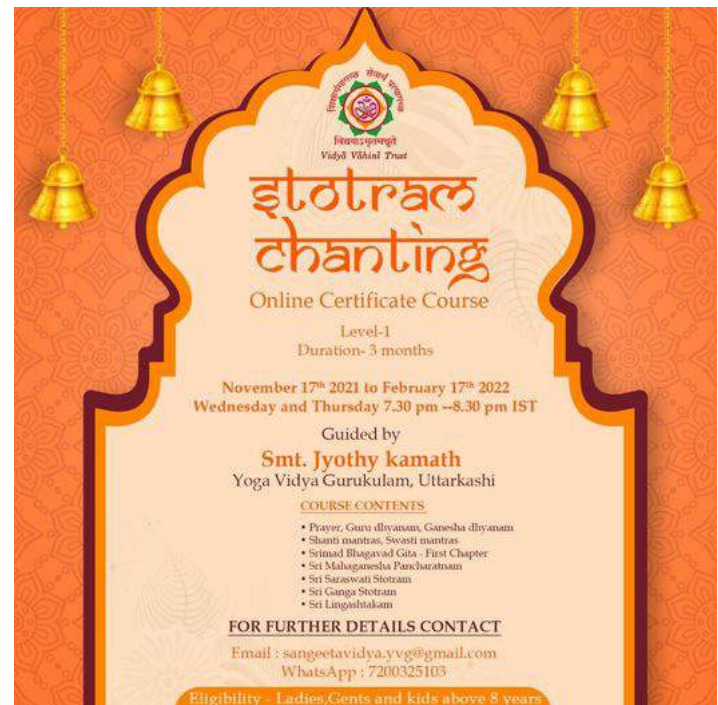


Register for the online *Vedānta* classes conducted by Yoga Vidya Gurukulam. Learn directly from our Guru

Swami Ananda Saraswati



For registrations email vvtrust@gmail.com
Our team will respond back with the details



इतोरल चान्तिंग
Online Certificate Course
Level-1
Duration- 3 months
November 17th 2021 to February 17th 2022
Wednesday and Thursday 7.30 pm --8.30 pm IST
Guided by
Smt. Jyothy kamath
Yoga Vidya Gurukulam, Uttarkashi
COURSE CONTENTS:
• Prayer, Guru dhyānam, Gāṇeśha dhyānam
• Shanti mantras, Svasti mantras
• Śrimad Bhagavad Gīta - First Chapter
• Sri Mahāganeśha Pancharātram
• Sri Saraswati Stotram
• Sri Ganga Stotram
• Sri Lingāshīlām
FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT
Email : sangeetavidya.yvg@gmail.com
WhatsApp : 7200325103
Eligibility - Ladies, Gents and kids above 8 years



Karthik Sundaram

Management Consultant

Core Member - Yoga Vidya International

How did you get introduced to Yoga and Vedanta?

As a child I used to have a certain natural affinity to Vedanta. I used to read a lot of books when I was young. When I was in my 7th or 8th grade, I remember that I started reading books on philosophy in Tamil. One of my grandfathers had a vast collection and I remember reading Bhagavad Gita, Ramana Maharishi, Swami Vivekananda and Osho. Although I did not understand them very well, they made an impact. Later during my teenage years, I started attending public discourses on Vedanta conducted by a group that had a connection with Swami Chinmayananda. That helped me gain more insights into Vedanta. I started reading a lot about Vedanta during that time.

I was also initiated into *Gāyatrī mantra* when I was young. Through *Sandhyavandana*, I came to learn and practice *Prāṇāyāma* and *Japa* every day. That was my introduction to Yoga.

When and how did you first come to know about Swamiji?

It was God's grace. I feel very grateful to a friend of mine who introduced me to Swamiji. It was back in 2004 when I first met Swamiji. In hindsight, I feel that the introduction happened at a crucial time. I was getting attracted to a lot of Neo-Vedanta and did not have the capacity to understand its shortcomings. I was even thinking of joining one of them.

When I first met Swamiji, I got instantly attracted. His presence was both commanding and compassionate. Swamiji dispelled many notions of mine that came from my exposure to Neo-Vedanta. For instance, Swamiji always used to emphasise on lifestyle before knowledge. He always used to say that without a proper lifestyle, one cannot appreciate Vedanta. He also never compromised on culture and tradition. He never owned his teaching and always used to emphasise on the Guru Parampara. It created a different impact in me and my interest in Neo-Vedanta dropped off quite instantly.

How Vedantic teaching is helping you in your personal life?

Vedanta has and is helping me understand myself. It has helped me understand where I have gone wrong, and where I continue to go wrong.



Tell us about your experiences in transcribing Swamiji's teachings. How does it help you in your learning?

I have found Swamiji's teachings to be simple yet profound. One has to be fully tuned to Swamiji to understand his words. Swamiji never uses flowery language in his teaching. It is filled with a lot of personal anecdotes that are very easy to remember. Having had the opportunity to transcribe many of his talks and classes, I was able to dwell and contemplate on the teaching. It helped to assimilate the knowledge more deeply.

Please share your experience on working with Swamiji on his "ghost experience" book.

I remember in 2005-2006 talking to Swamiji about Brian Weiss's "Many Lives, Many Masters". It was a famous book with interesting stories on past lives. Swamiji said that he had had more profound experiences with people after they die. In the next years, he started sharing a number of experiences from his childhood that were extremely interesting. It was then the idea for a "ghost book" was born. The book aims to reflect



on the nature of life after death. It will cover different paranormal experiences of Swamiji beginning from his childhood. It presents the readers with an insight into a plane of existence that is so close yet so far. It will remove the taboo associated with the topic and create a sense of empathy and understanding that it deserves.

The book was supposed to be completed many years ago. It has been a long pending assignment for me personally. I aim to complete it before the end of this year.

What are your future plans in writing?

I would like to complete the books that I committed to. That is my first priority. Secondly, I am keen on writing books based on Swamiji's teachings that can have popular appeal. In one of Swamiji's online classes on Bhagavad Gita, he talks extensively about how one can manage his superiors at the workplace. He uses the characters in Mahabharata as an example to illustrate his approach. This will have great value for many youngsters. As a fresh employee, I have struggled to understand my superiors. To be honest, I struggle even till date. So it's my conviction that a book that gives guidance on people management will be of great value.

I aim to discover more such topics from Swamiji's teachings and with God's grace, complete many more books in the future. *Namaste*



Chapter I

अर्जुन उवाच ।

सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये रथं स्थापय मेऽच्युत ॥ २१ ॥

यावदेतान्निरीक्षेऽहं योद्धुकामानवस्थितान् ।

कैर्मया सह योद्धव्यमस्मिन् रणसमुद्यमे ॥ २२ ॥

arjuna uvāca.

senayorubhayormadhye ratham sthāpaya me'cyuta.21

yāvadetanirīkṣe'ham yoddhukāmānavasthitān.

kairmayā saha yoddhavyamasmin raṇasamudyame..22



The name of Dhritarashtra comes up repeatedly in Chapter 1 of Gita. When the ego of your boss is to be satisfied, always you have to talk and present yourself related to the boss. If you are smart enough while talking to your boss you also need to talk about those things which will create fear in your boss. Everytime here Sanjaya says son of Dhritarashtra, which means, “Son of Yourself”. He says, son of you while praising, son of you also to create fear. You need to have a stable mind to praise and

also to point out the limitations of your boss. Generally people either praise or criticize but they don't point out the limitations. In previous verses, the word Kaurava was used. Now Sanjaya, the minister does not use the word Kaurava but he uses the word, your son. Now, the fight is between your sons and your brother Pandu's sons. You need to remind your boss about where he/she is wrong. The more you carefully point out the mistakes, the more your boss will start listening to it.

In *Varṇa vyavastha* (which is translated as a caste system), the main focus was dharma. Dharma refers to a way of living while respecting yourself, Karma and the situation. The one who predominantly does studies, teaches and helps spread the knowledge are called *Brāhmanas*. *Kṣatriyas* protect dharma by rewarding those who are abiding by karma and punishing those who are trying to destroy dharma. Those who earn money and do business by keeping with Dharma are called *Vaiśyas*. Those who were serving were called as *Śūdra*. In war, there was dharma. In the Mahabharata war, once sunsets there cannot be any fight.

When this war happens, now there is also a fear factor. Sanjaya very carefully says that Hanuman is being seated on the flag of the chariot. Hanuman lived a few thousand years ago prior to this war and is believed to be one of the chiranjeevi who is still alive. Hanuman is not that easy to defeat. If Hanuman is being

seated on the flag of the chariot that means the chariot will always be protected. If the chariot is protected, that means war results will support them and there is no doubt in it.

When you go to a boss, you need to have a clear picture of everything. The problem is neither you know the product nor you have any idea about the product but you are called as Product manager or project manager. When you have a clear picture of the project and you talk in such a way that you are giving just information, not pouring out your frustration, not expressing your insecurity. The important aspect is you have to just give the pros and cons. When you leave the organization or you leave one particular job and go to another job in the same organization how would you transfer your knowledge to the next? You would never talk unnecessarily. You have to talk to your boss in the same manner.

Here Arjuna is a typical aspirator. Arjuna in this stage has got arrogance and thinks that he is the boss. He forgets that Lord Krishna is not only elder to him but also has a lot of powers. More than that he has made Lord Krishna to become his charioteer. Arjuna says, “I need to see everybody who has come to fight. I want to see my opponent. So take the chariot”. He is an arrogant aspirant who has seen all success and has shared all the successful resources but has not seen the limitations of it.

Compiled by Pranesh Rangan

Swamiji inspiring Italian youth - November 2019



Answers to Our 'Hinduism' & 'Mythology' - Trivia

1. (b) 2. (a) 3. (d) 4. (d) 5. (a)
6. (b) 7. (b) 8. (c) 9. (b) 10. (a)

