

Swamiji's Shivarathri Message

Swami Paramarthananda gave a special talk on February 13, 2018 for Shivarathri. The topic of the message was two types of bakthi. Please listen to Swamiji's message at this link:

2018 Shivarathri Message

Upasanas in Shikshavalli

Shishavalli of Taitreya Upanishad enumerates the following vedic upasanas:

- Samhitha Upasana
- Vyahirithi Upasana
- Hiranya Garbha Upasana
- Panktha Brahma Upasana

Please click on the link below for a chart reproduced from Swami Paramarthananda's book with minor additions based on Swamiji's classes.

Upasanas in Sikshavallie

Taitreya Upanishads, Class 9

Homa sadhana (Fire rituals) students ask for fourfold prayer

1. Dhana prapthi; asking for prosperity primarily meant for dharma for completing karma yoga
2. Chitha sudhi prabthi; purifying the mind; this is described as deivi sampth in Baghawat Geeta.
3. Gyana prapthi
4. Sishya prapthi; share the knowledge by sharing with the next generation;

Money should lead to purity; purity should lead to knowledge; and knowledge should lead to teaching.

Fourth Anuravaga (Continued)

May students come to me. May students come to me with varied interests. May students come to me with intelligence. May students come to me with sense control. May students come to me with mind control. May I be well known as a teacher among the people. May I be the greatest among the wealthy. Oh Lord! May I merge into you. Oh Lord! Mat you merge into me. Oh Lord! Mat students come to me from all directions. May students come to me just as waters rush downwards and just as the months rush towards the next year. Oh Lord! You are like a rest house. Reveal yourself until me and enter into me

In this verse, the seeker is praying for shishya prapthi so that he can share his knowledge.

Brahma means vedas and chari is the one who has a disciplined life; one who is not concerned about sthula sareeram but strives for vedic knowledge; Brhamachari primary meaning is a dedicated student, not necessarily a bachelor.

The seeker is parying for students with varied interests. There are three types of students:

1. Mandha students: Stem of like plantain stem – one who is difficult to light up,
2. Madhyama student – like coal, can be lit after an extended time

3. Uthama student – like camphor; easy to light up.

Bha – light of knowledge; ratha – revel; Bharatham is reveling in the light of knowledge. The seeker is praying for students with sense control and mind control. The seeker is praying for wealth so that he can provide for the students who come to him for education. The one who spends for Saraswathy (Knowledge) should not worry about Lakshmi (Money).

The seeker is praying for jivatma paramatma aikyam, similar to the river merging into ocean. Not only the river merges into ocean, ocean also merges with the river. This is why the river water before the point of merger is salty.

Each manifestation of god is like a branch of Eeswara similar to the tributaries of a great river. By dipping in any tributary of the river, we purify our body; similarly, by worshiping any of the form of the lord, you are purifying your mind. Physical purity is obtained by dipping into river; mental purity is obtained by remembering the Lord. This is nothing but worshiping the Lord.

The prayer is concluded asking for students:

- Just as the water gushes through the slope, students should come to me
- Just like each month is rising towards next year, students should come to me from all directions.

By comparing Lord to a rest house, the seeker says when we are frustrated with our pursuit of gyna, Bakthi and devotion will help us overcome the frustration. Surrendering to the Lord is the solution when one is overwhelmed by frustration.

There is no physical movement in jivatma paramatma aikyam, because Bhagavan is not away from me. Merger into Bhagawan means dropping the notion that Bhagawan is away from me and with the clear knowing “Aham Brahma Asmi”

Taitreaya Upanishads, Class 5

Greetings All,

Chapter 1, Shikshavalli.

Paragraph # 2:

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said, the chapter # 1, Shikshavalli, is Sadhana Pradhana. We started the teaching with Shiksha shastram that provides the rules for mantra chanting. Shankaracharya pointed out that the method of chanting is very important in Vedas. He says, initially the student learns or Veda Adhyayanam. At this time one learns only the chanting not necessarily the meaning of the shlokas. This stage is Shabda Pradhanam and must be learnt properly. Veda Adhyayanam is also used for Veda Parayanam or Brahma Yagyam. This parayanam helps with Chitta Shuddhi. The Vedas must be chanted properly to obtain the Adrishta balam. This adrishta balam takes a person on the path to spiritual growth. The Veda Adhyayanam, where students learn proper chanting, but may not yet know meaning of the shlokas, will be used to understand it's meaning now in a process known as Veda Mimamsa. Veda Mimamsa is Vedic enquiry. It is divided into two parts called Poorva mimasa and Uttara mimasa. Poorva mimasa is also known as Karma Kanda and its study results in Adrishta balam. Uttara mimasa also called Veda-anta is same as Gyana Kanda and it results in Drishta balam. For this enquiry one has to learn the Vedic mantras. Through an analysis of the Vedic mantras one obtains Karma Gyanam and later Brahma Gyanam.

Gyanam is Drishta Phalam. Punyam is Adrishta Phalam or Karma phalam.

The rules for proper chanting have six factors and we discussed this in the last class. In this manner the science of pronunciation has been presented.

In Paragraph # 2, or Anvaka # 2, Veda Parayanam or Brahma yoga is discussed. Gayathri parayanam is considered equivalent to chanting the Vedas. Ramayana parayanam or any other scriptural parayanam are all part of Brahma Yagna.

Paragraph or Anuvakaha # 3: In introduction we said that Shikshavalli talks of different disciplines of Pancha Maha Yagna, Proper Values (moral, ethical), Verbal Sadhanas, (parayanam, Japam) and five types of Upasanas or meditation. These meditations are not Vedantic meditations while **Nidhidhyanam is a vedantic meditation. The five upasanas are:**

1. Sagumhito Upasana: These upasanas are difficult and some say more difficult than Vedanta itself. Nowadays, they are mostly of academic interest only. Today, puranic upsanas such as praying to deities is more common. The study of upsanas itself is considered very sacred and results in great punyam.

This anuvaka begins with a prayer that says, “ May my Guru and myself become popular in society. May I have an attractive personality, born out of spiritual life or as the shloka calls it Brahma Varchas”. Why is student asking for such a boon? Especially when we are studying Vedanta it does not seem to make sense. Swamiji clarified every Vedantic student wants to receive knowledge and share it with others. They were concerned about future generations. All Vedantic students, especially Brahmin students had to teach. A Kshatriya or Vaishya did not have to teach others. In Vedic times a Brahmin could not take up any other profession. His only profession was to spread the teachings of the Vedas. In studying the Vedas you become indebted to the Rishi's who brought this knowledge to you. So, I have to express my gratitude to the

Rishi Parampara. This is called Rishi Rinum. One way to remove the Rinum (debt) is to share your knowledge or support an organization that supports teachings of the Vedas.

For above reasons you should be a popular Guru is the prayer.

The Sagamhitaya is derived from Sagumshita. Here M followed by sh, sa or Ha becomes Gum.

So, what is the Upasana? Any upsana requires two things. 1. An Object of the Upasana. This can be a deity such as Shiva, Vishnu etc. This then is the Upasana Vishayaha. Since most objects are too big and invisible, hence often we need a symbol to conceptualize the object. Citing an example, when we worship our country we end up worshipping a flag that represents the country. The country is too big and diverse physically to conceptualize, while the flag is easy to see. This worship of flag or a symbol is called Alambanam. While a Vishaya may not be concrete, an alambanam usually is. Thus, Vinayaka is worshipped in the turmeric powder, a book represents Saraswathi and the cow represents Laxmi.

So, what is the Sagumhitaya? It is a Vedic combination of letters; it is an alambanam. It is also called a sandhi. The shloka says:

Sagumhithayaha Upanishdam. Here the visarga drops out. For this upasana four factors are considered. Swamiji discussed these four factors through an example. The first mantra of Yajur Veda is: Ishe Tva. E (Ay) and T are thus joined. In this the E is the swaraha and is called Purva rupa and T is called Uttara rupa. Thus, Poorva and Uttara join together and their junction is called Sandhi. Through this joining a new letter comes in and it called Sandhanam. Thus, when E + T join another T comes in. Thus, the four factors are: Purva, Uttara, Sandhi and Samshanam. Hence, it is called Samshito Upsana, On these four symbols, four Vishayaha, one for each symbol, is invoked.

To further clarify this idea, Swamiji cited following example. Consider the four factors are like four chairs. Four people (Upsana Vishaya) are honored to sit on each chair.

The four Vishayas are associated with a particular field such as say sports, music etc. In the first Upasana a puja is performed to all four people, say from sports field and then they are asked to vacate the chair.

In second Upasana another four people, say from field of music, are asked to sit and puja is performed.

In this manner five rounds of pujas or Samhito Upasanas are performed. In total 20 objects are worshipped in five different fields. Each field is called Adhikaranam. From each field four objects are invoked.

Why should Upanishad prescribe such a difficult Upasana, asks Shankaracharya? Why not keep it simple like worship of a cow? Answering his own question, Shankaracharya says, in those days people studied Vedas for 8 to 12 years. There were a variety of chanting's one learned. A lot of time was spent in learning Vedic chanting. Thus, we have chanting methods of Vakya patha, Pada patha, Krama Patha, Jatha Patha, and Ghana Patha. Here the combination of how the words are chanted, vary. Sandhi plays an important role in chanting. Every student was thorough with each "Letter" of Vedas. Experts in this field were called Salakshna Ghanapady. Vedic students were experts in words and they came to this Upasana with this knowledge. So, they were naturally inclined in its direction.

The five fields chosen are:

1. Adhilokam: Various Lokas
2. AdhiJyautisham: Luminaries such as the Sun, moon, stars etc.
3. Adi Vidhyam: Educational or learning
4. Adi Prajam: Progeny or family
5. Adhyatma or Shariram; our own bodies and its parts.

Each selected one is meditated upon. Thus, there are twenty meditations. We invoke 20 objects. Hence, they are called alambanams. What are these twenty objects?With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Foot note:

Chanting methods:

Pada Patha: "Gajaananam Bootha Ganaathi Sevitham"

Krama Patha: "Gajaananam Bootha, Bootha Ganaathi, Ganaathi Sevitham"

Jata Patha: "Gajaananam Bootha Bootha Gajaananam Gajaananam Bootha;

Bootha Ganaathi Ganaathi Bootha Bootha Ganaathi;

Ganaathi Sevitham Sevitham Ganaathi Ganaathi Sevitham"

Ghana patha: "Gajaananam Bootha Bootha Gajaananam Gajaananam Bootha Ganaathi Ganaathi Bootha Gajaananam Gajaananam Bootha Ganaathi;

Bootha Ganaathi Ganaathi Bootha Bootha Ganaathi Sevitham Sevitham Ganaathi Bootha Bootha Ganaathi Sevitham;"

Upadesa Saram by D. M . Sastri

Use this PDF document to follow swamiji's classes on Upadesa Saram. MaharshiUpadesaSaram

2016 Sivaratri Message from Swamiji: Five Features of Bakthi

This is the recording of the special talk given by Swamiji for the Sivatri festival in 2016.

2016 Sivaratri Talk