



October 2018 - Volume 16 Number 10

The Vedanta Kyokai Newsletter

NEWS, UPDATES AND MISCELLANY FROM THE VEDANTA SOCIETY OF JAPAN

November 2018
Calendar

Birthdays

**Swami
Subodhananda**
Tuesday, 20 Nov

**Swami
Vijnanananda**
Thursday, 22 Nov

Zushi Events

4th (Sun)
Zushi Half Day
14:00~16:00
Chanting, Reading,
Discussion, Meditation,
Tea
Please Contact:
benkyo.nvk@gmail.com

6th (Tue)
Sri Sri Kali Puja
Zushi Annexe
19:00 Puja,
Pushpanjali Homa
21:00 Prasad
All are Welcome!

18th (Sun)
Zushi Retreat
(10:30-16:30)
AM Session
Lunch Prasad
PM Session
All are Welcome!

See Page 2 for details of
these and other events!



✘ Thus Spake ✘

"If you do good action, that will counteract your past evil actions. Past sins can be counteracted by meditation, japa and spiritual thought."

- The Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi

"A noble thought is a Prayer. An earnest desire is a Prayer. A pious longing is a Prayer. The sincere sighing of a penitent heart is a Prayer."

- Holy Prophet Zarathushtra

Zushi August Retreat 2018 'Ananda' - PART II A talk by Swami Medhasananda

[Part I was presented in our September issue and concluded with characteristics of Sattvic, Rajasic and Tamasic Sukhas. Part II concludes our report on Swami Medhasananda's talk on 'Ananda'.]

Much of our pain and happiness are only in imagination. Imagined pain is potent, but real pain is not so severe. So also with happiness. We should always remember this fact and then we will be able to better endure suffering and not
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VEDANTA SOCIETY of JAPAN SCHEDULE of EVENTS

NOVEMBER 2018

3rd (Sat)

Discourse on Bhagavad Gita - At the Embassy of India in Tokyo
(10:00~12:00 in Japanese only) <<http://www.gita-embassy.com/>>

4th (Sun)

Half Day Retreat at Zushi 14:00~16:00
Chanting, Reading, Discussion, Meditation, Tea and snacks
Please Contact: benkyo.nvk@gmail.com

6th (Tue)

Sri Sri Kali Puja - At the Annexe
19:00 Puja, Pushpanjali (offering of flowers), Homa
21:00 Prasad - All are Welcome!
Prior notification of your participation (medhasananda@gmail.com) is appreciated.

11th (Sun)

Satsanga in Kumamoto
Please Contact: Kajiwara (0967-22-3359)
Swami visits Kumamoto from the 8th to the 13th.

17th (Sat)

Discourse on Upanishad - At the Embassy of India in Tokyo
(10:00~12:00 in Japanese only) <<http://www.gita-embassy.com/>>

18th (Sun)

Monthly Retreat at Zushi
At the Zushi Centre (10:30-16:30)
Please Contact: Kyokai (046-873-0428)

20th (Tue)

Gospel Class
At the Zushi Centre (14:00~16:30)

23rd (Fri.)

Akhanda Japam
At the Zushi Centre (5:00am-20:00pm)
Your hourly or greater participation is appreciated.
Please Contact: vedanta.karmayoga@gmail.com

23rd (Fri)

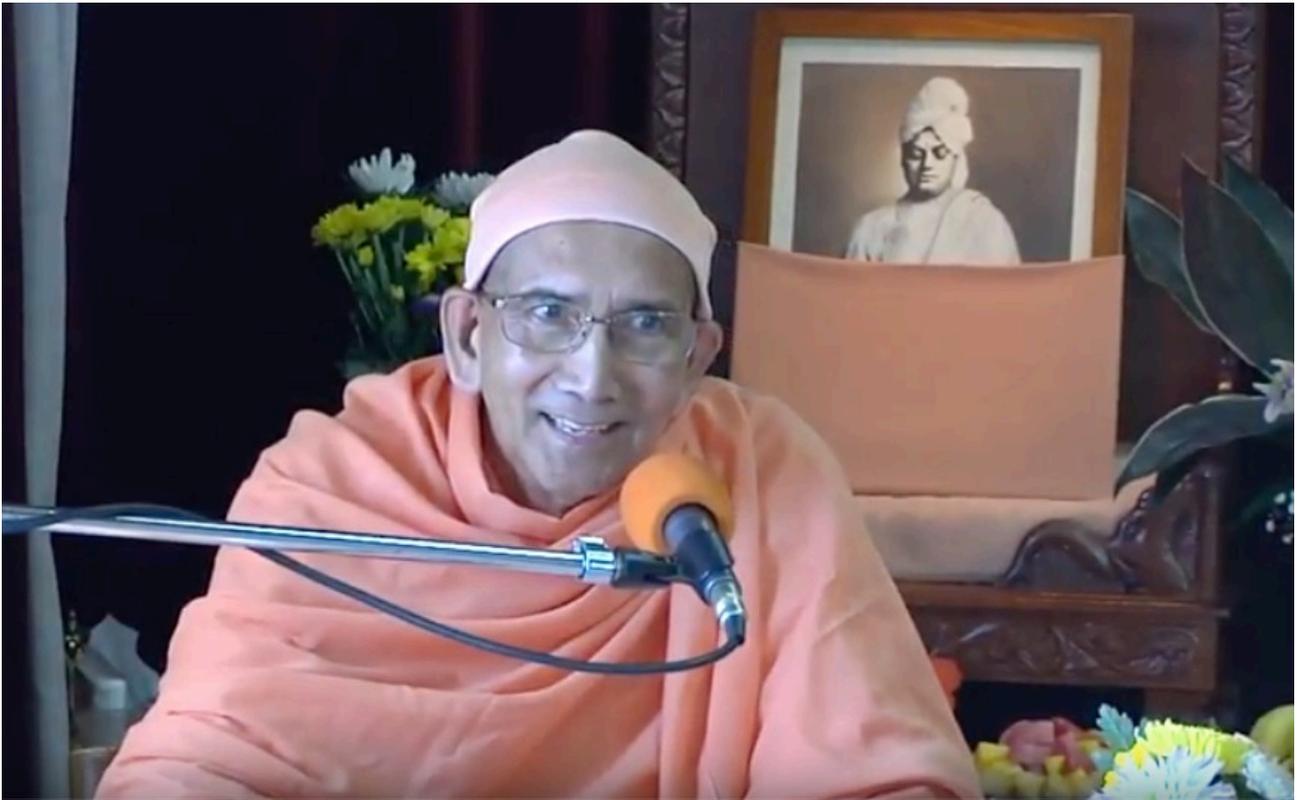
Nara Narayan: Service to Homeless Narayan
Please Contact: Ms. Sato <urara5599@gmail.com>

24th (Sat)

Discourses in Osaka and Kyoto
Monthly discourses on "Bhagavad Gita" and "Upanishad"
<<http://vedanta.main.jp/>> Osaka Study Society Website

Every Saturday (from 10:45-11:45)

Yoga-Asana Class - At the Zushi Annexe
Please Contact: Hanari 080-6702-2308 (羽成淳) <http://zushi-hatayoga.jimdo.com/>



Ananda Part II (from page 1)

get disappointed while hoping for happiness. With practice no overwhelmed state of mind will appear, and we will not be overwhelmed by either imagined happiness or imagined pain. Our mind can stay calm at anytime.

Mahamaya's Trick

Again, why are people more fond of pleasure, than spiritual joy? This is because of the trick of Mahamaya (The Great Delusion). People are deluded by the trick of maya, and they forget their real nature. If one should experience divine joy, he would no longer hanker for secular joy; he would lose all interest toward keeping a family, getting married, having children, or in worldly enjoyments. God doesn't like that situation because God wants people to be a part of his play with the world.

We don't have the motivation to seek real bliss. Though our real nature is supreme bliss, Mahamaya hides this fact with a curtain or veil of ignorance. Sri Ramakrishna tells a devotee a short story in 'Chapter 19' in The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna to help illustrate this:

Devotee: "Why does He delude us? Why has He so willed?"

Master: "If but once He should give man a taste of divine joy, then man would not care to lead a worldly life. The creation would come to an end. The grain-dealer stores rice in huge bags in his warehouse. Near them he puts some puffed rice in a tray. This is to keep the rats away. The puffed rice tastes sweet to the rats and they nibble at it all night; they do not seek the rice itself. But just think! One seer of rice yields fourteen seers of puffed rice. How infinitely superior is the joy of God to the pleasure of 'woman and gold'! To one who thinks of the beauty of God, the beauty of even Rambhā and Tilottamā appears as but the ashes of a funeral pyre."

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Ananda Part II (from page 3)

Three More Kinds of Joy

Sri Ramakrishna made another classification of joy and said there are three kinds of joy. One is Vishayananda. Ananda means joy and vishaya means object of sense. Hence Vishayananda is sensual joy. Sensual pleasure ensues when the object of your joy is derived from ordinary material things.

Next is Bhajanananda. An example of this is when we get joy reading from the life of a saint, or 'The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna', or the reminiscences of Brahmanandaji, Premanandaji, or 'Sri Ramakrishna as I Saw Him'. When devotees get joy in spiritual talk with each other.

There is a sentence in the Bhagavad Gita (10:9) which says devotees enjoy talking about God. "Tuṣyanti ca ramanti ca" they are so happy, "bodhyantah parasparam" mutually when they talk about God. Listening to spiritual talks also brings joy. Chanting, japam, meditation, attending a ritualistic worship like Kali Puja, even going on a pilgrimage gives devotees joy. These are all examples of Bhajanananda.

Next is Brahmananda. When one experiences the highest state of realisation, he experiences Brahmananda. This 'ananda' is the rarest of these rare experiences. Even those who have experienced Brahmananda cannot put it into words which is finite, because such joy is experienced in samadhi, when one transcends the finite into the infinite.

How does one look when one experiences the highest bliss in samadhi? There have been avatars like Krishna, Buddha, and Jesus who all also enjoyed such bliss, but their photos, of course, are not available. Only Sri Ramakrishna, born in the Modern Age when various gadgets became available, had his photo taken in samadhi. We are able to imagine, though very little, how delightful this state is by examining this photo. Sri Ramakrishna explained how one experiences the ecstatic joy of samadhi by using some images. A bird (the Soul) is flying in the infinite sky of Brahman (sat-chit-ananda). The bird is flying freely and delightfully in the sky. Sri Ramakrishna said that the bird is Atman, our soul, and the infinite sky is Brahman. Another example is a fish, the Soul, joyfully swimming in the sea of sat-chit-ananda.

Talk of Joy!

In Buddhist philosophy we find such experiences as, 'dukkham dukkham sarvam dukkam', which means everything is pain and full of sufferings. However, from another perspective though there is much pain in this world, there also is little joy. But Sri Ramakrishna advises devotees not to dwell on the reality of sufferings and pains, but to think instead of the joy of God. Think of Bhajanananda and Brahmananda and focus on the joy of God. This is the positive and profound approach to satisfy our natural inclination to seek joy.

Holy Mother often said that one can only experience real joy through thinking of God. For ordinary people, the experience of Brahmananda is difficult. We cannot suddenly get Brahmananda. But we can surely taste the joy of Bhajanananda if we are sincere in our spiritual practices. Let's remind ourselves again that such practices are namely studying scriptures, talking about God, listening about God, joining worships, singing devotional songs, chanting mantra, doing japam and meditation, and going on pilgrimages, all of which are not difficult for us to practice. And the more we do these types of practices, the more we get a genuine and pure joy.

Thank you.

Thought of the Month

"Love all, trust a few,
do wrong to none."

— William Shakespeare



**Swami Medhasananda Addresses
The Ayurveda Society of Japan**
Reported by Miwako Tanabe

On September 15th (Sat.) from 14:30 to 16:30, there was a discourse sponsored by Ayurveda Society of Japan at the Ota City Industrial Plaza (PIO) to which about 30 people attended.

The theme of the discourse was 'Knowledge and Practice to the Truth' and Swami Medhasananda's (Maharaj) talk was based on his book 'Rebirth and the Law of Karma'. He talked on how to not only 'live long' and 'live well', but also to 'live meaningfully'.

Ms. Yaeko Suzuki, Manager of the Ayurveda Society of Japan, said that Ayurveda is wide ranging and is thought to be for beauty or for personality analysis by Tridosha or astrology these days, but that real Ayurveda is much more profound, so she planned this discourse to learn how to live and how to think through our life. Maharaj's discourse started with the statement that, 'The very basis of Indian culture is Indian philosophy'.

Translated by Atsumi Honda

Vedanta Society of Japan Participates in Namaste India 2018
Reported by Shanti Izumida

On September 29th (Sat) and 30th (Sun), Namaste India was held at Tokyo's Yoyogi Park. The Vedanta Society of Japan took part in the yearly event operating its 'Ganga CD Shop' again this year.

The first day was rainy. and on the second day the weather forecast threatened a typhoon would likely hit Tokyo squarely. With this new the secretariat notified every shop to withdraw from the event until after 13:30. The weather threatened but, we could deliver and set

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Namaste India 2018 (from page 5)

up and then dismantle again as the secretariat requested without any water damage. After our goods were secured the rain came down in buckets.

The morning of the second day was sunny and many customers came. We could finish the event without any trouble this year again thanks to Sri Thakur (Ramakrishna) and the great cooperation of 20 volunteers who helped both days.

Translated by Atsumi Honda





• A Story to Remember •

According to an old Hindu legend...

...there was once a time when all human beings were gods, but they so abused their divinity that Brahma, the chief god, decided to take it away from them and hide it where it could never be found.

Where to hide their divinity was the question. So Brahma called a council of the gods to help him decide. "Let's bury it deep in the earth," said the gods.

But Brahma answered, "No, that will not do because humans will dig into the earth and find it."

Then the gods said, "Let's sink it in the deepest ocean."

But Brahma said, "No, not there, for they will learn to dive into the ocean and will find it."

Then the gods said, "Let's take it to the top of the highest mountain and hide it there."

But once again Brahma replied, "No, that will not do either, because they will eventually climb every mountain and once again take up their divinity."

Then the gods gave up and said, "We do not know where to hide it, because it seems that there is no place on earth or in the sea that human beings will not eventually reach."

Brahma thought for a time and then said, "Here is what we will do. We will hide their divinity deep in the center of their own being, for few humans will ever think to look for it there."

All the gods agreed that this was the perfect hiding place, and the deed was done. And since that time humans have been going up and down the earth, digging, diving, climbing, exploring and searching the universe for something already within themselves.

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