Aarsha Vidya Bharati - Jun 2023
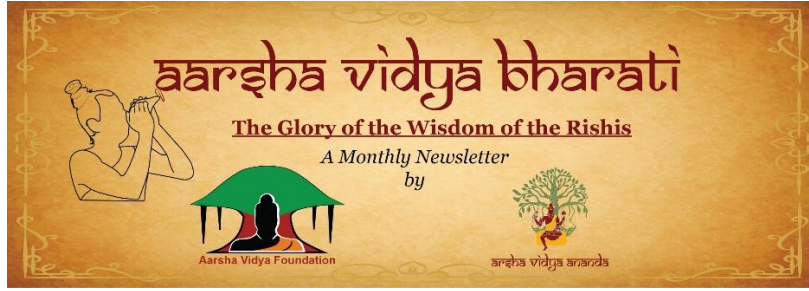## *Jyeshta - Ashadha 2080*
A monthly newsletter that will bring you more happiness, more wisdom and more freedom

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Value of Values

Adhyātmajñānanityatvam 19/20
By Anu Sharma, USA

In Chapter 13 verse 11, Bhagavan Krishna elucidates value #19.

Adhyātmajñānanityatvam tattvajñānārthadarśanam

"Always (dwelling upon) knowledge centered on the self, keeping in view the purpose of knowledge of the truth".

If we are to succeed in our goal of *mokṣa*, then this value is one of the most important ones in our *sādhana*. My personal goal is assimilating the Vedanta teachings and therefore, this value is my guiding light right now.

First, however, we need to be clear why we want to assimilate the teachings of Vedanta, or, in other words, what is the benefit of the knowledge of the truth?

Tattvajñānārthadarśanam, suggests that we must see the *phala* of this knowledge, i.e., *mokṣa*. For example, when I approach life as *Ātma*, I find that all existential and psychological suffering ceases immediately. There is total freedom from *saṁsāra* resulting in a deep sense of wellbeing and peace of mind. Understanding the value of *Ātmajñānam*, thus reinforces my desire for permanent liberation, which in turn renews my commitment to assimilating the knowledge.

Bhagavān Krishna gives us many tools and guidelines which aid our discovery, *mokṣa* in the Gita. I highlight a few that I use below:

In Chapter 2 verse 41, *Bhagavān* Krishna says '*vyavasāyātmikā buddhir ekeha kuru-nandana*'. A *vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ* or one-pointed focus and single-minded commitment to *mokṣa* is necessary or we will get distracted by the endless pursuit of worldly desires.

In Chapter 6 verse 35 *Bhagavān* Krishna says '*abhyāsena tu kaunteya vairāgyeṇa ca gṛihyate*'. This verse gives us a clear path to success in spiritual life. The importance of repetition (*abhyāsa*) cannot be overstated. Repetition creates newer and stronger neural pathways in the brain which subserve the new knowledge that we are trying to assimilate.

For *adhyātmajñānanityatvam* (dwelling on the knowledge centered on the self), my main *sādhana* is *śravaṇam*, *mananam* and *nididhyāsanam*.

Since shastra is the only *pramāṇa* for self-knowledge, *śravaṇam* is critical. Even though some of Swaminiji's classes are at inconvenient times for me in the US, I find myself eagerly waking up to attend them. The different texts unfold the knowledge in different ways. However, the knowledge is always the same. "*Aham Brahmāsmi*". As Pujya Swamiji has said 'while the *pramāṇa* works immediately, not gradually, we do see a growing clarity as we spend more and more time exposed to the teaching'. I take advantage of the many options that Swaminji offers (e.g., virtual classes, podcasts, camps, workshops) listening with a relaxed, focused and attentive mind.

As part of *mananam*, I take advantage of the Q&A sessions with Swaminiji or the Slack channel to seek clarification. I also find myself constantly contemplating and analyzing my everyday reality and experiences within the framework of the teachings.

Nididhyāsanam is helpful to remove the habitual tendencies we have of continuing to operate as a *jīva*. Dwelling on the knowledge, I try to approach life as *Ātma*, i.e., from the fullness that I am, without jealousy, regret, hankering after desires, and avoiding fears. As *Ātma*, I am *pūrṇa* and so there are no expectations, so I don't need to try to control things, I let life unfold.

Dwelling on the knowledge and abiding as the *Ātma* in and through the *jīva* and all forms.

Pujya Swamiji has said: "*nididhyāsana* is not something you do, it is a state of existence—in and through every act". Thus, adhering to value #19, 'always dwelling on the knowledge of the truth' will help us to become permanently centered in the self.