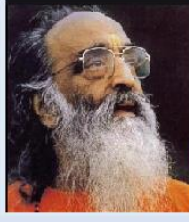




CHINMAYA MISSION CHICAGO

BADRI - A School of Vedantic Studies

Monthly Newsletter – September 2023



Chinmaya

Wisdom Quote

"Mere knowledge is of no particular use." – Swami Chinmayananda

A Tribute To Our Guru



God's creation does not bind. That which does so is Jeeva's own creation.
— Ramana

We alone are responsible for our misery.
How do we bind ourselves?

The scriptures say: मन एव मनुष्याणाम् कारणम् बन्ध मोक्षयोः ।

Our mind alone is the cause of bondage and liberation. We bind ourselves with our wrong notions.

A man came to Nagarjuna, the great Buddhist mystic, and said, "I would like to meditate, but I am not able to concentrate. Please help me."

Nagarjuna looked at the man and said, "Do you love anybody?" The man felt a little embarrassed. With a little hesitation, he said, "I love only my buffalo. But I really really love her, she is such a beautiful being."

Nagarjuna said, "That will do. You go and sit inside that cave, and continuously think only one thing – that you have become your buffalo."

The man said, "I can do it. In fact, I am wondering how you came to know of it, because sometimes, I think... I love my buffalo so much that sometimes I think of how it will be if I become a buffalo in my next life."

Nagarjuna said, "You go, and don't come out of that cave until I ask you to come out." One day passed.

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Upcoming Events -

- **Sri Krishna Jayanthi**
 - Puja & Celebration – 9/6 @ 7 pm
 - BV Program – 9/17 @ 11:30 am
- **Vishnu Sahasranamam:** 9/10 @ 9:00 am
- **BV Inauguration** – 9/10 @ 10 am
- **Monthly Bhajan:** 9/9 @ 6 – 7:30 pm
 - Host: Smt Shilpa & Shri Anil Boggaram
- **Ganesh Chaturthi**
 - Puja & Celebration – 9/18 @ 7 pm
 - BV Program – 9/24 @ 11:30 am
- **Group Vedic Chanting** - 9/24 @ 9:00 am

Highlights from Previous Month

The month of August, though it came in the middle of the summer break, was a month of hectic activity at Badri. We had a Bhagavatha Saptah by Dr Medasani Mohan, followed by a discourse on Shiva Sankalpa Stotram by Br. Soham Chaitanya from San Jose center. We had put up a booth for publicity purposes at the Naperville India Day parade on the occasion of 75th Indian Independence Day. The following weekend we also organized a Fun Fair and Open House to provide an opportunity for new families to get familiar with our center, the activities and various programs. This year we celebrated Onam during a Sunday session and the celebration was well received with a huge turnout. We also had our regular monthly activities of Vishnu Sahasranamam Chanting and monthly group Vedic Chanting as planned.

1. Bhajan Sandhya

The June month's Bhajan Sandhya was hosted by Smt Deepa & Shri Rajesh Salem at their home. The evening was well attended by the Badri family as several participants sang the Bhajans after all the shlokas were chanted. The event as always practiced, ended with the chanting of Nirvana Shatakam and Aarthi, followed by the distribution of prasadam dinner.



2. Monthly Vedic Chanting

We had our Monthly Group chanting of Vedic mantras and suktams on the last Sunday of the month. We had a larger participation and we split the group into two so that each team took turns in chanting alternate lines as it is practiced in traditional vedic chanting rituals. Anyone willing to join the chanting or listening to an hour of Vedic chants, can join the group who conduct this on the last Sunday of every month at our Badri Shrine.

3. Vishnu Sahasranamam Chanting

The first Sunday of the month always starts with the revibrating chant of Vishnu Sahasranamam at our Badri Narayana's shrine. We had a good participation and the session concluded with the chanting of Narayana Suktam. Next month our chanting will coincide with the Bala Vihar Inauguration day and we are encouraging many more people to join the chanting.

4. Bhagavatha Saptah

A very timely arrangement was made for a Bhagavatha Saptah by renowned speaker Dr Medasani Mohan who has conducted several such events around the world. The Saptah was spread across 8 days with the first day spent in talking about the importance of Srimad Bhagavatham. On each weekday the discourse was scheduled in the evening and during weekends it was for two hours in the morning. The entire Saptah also had celebrations of Lord Krishna's birth and the marriage with Rukmini.

5. Discourse on Shiva Sankalpa Suktam – Br Soham Chaitanya

We had the fortune of having Br Soham Chaitanya ji for three days (8/15 – 8/17) and his discourse was around Shiva Sankalpa Suktam. On each day the talk started with a few bhajans after which the discourse went on. It was all about handling our mind during various scenarios that occur in our daily life. The examples he shared and the related messages were clearly driving the point. The three day event simply flew by and few of us had the fortunate opportunity to serve Bhiksha that gave us more time to spend with him.

6. Fun Fair & Open House

A Fun Fair and Open House was organized on 19th August from 11 am – 3 pm. Various types of games to entertain children including inflated houses, Tank dunk, face painting, ribbon toys, snow cones, sugar candy etc. An array of snacks and fruits were also available. We had several volunteers to guide the new families and walk them through the various Bala Vihar activities and other mission functions.

7. India Day Parade at Naperville

Our Badri center had a booth setup at the India Day Parade at Naperville as a part of the 75th India Independence Day celebration. It started at around 11 am and went on till 7 pm after by which we had around 75 new people who were interested in Chinmaya Mission activities especially the Balavihar classes.

Onam Celebration

World over, Onam is celebrated as a flagship festival by all who are associated with the south Indian state of Kerala that in a way reiterates the identity of the people from that state. This day is considered by the people as the occasion when King Mahabali, who had ruled them righteously was paying a visit. But though the validity of this story is questioned by many, this is considered the holy occasion of Lord Vishnu's avatar as Vamana, the young brahmin boy. Lord Vamana is considered the fifth avatar of Lord Vishnu after Lord Narasimha.

At Badri, we saw an attendance that beat our expected summer participation. We had the fortune of Swami Aparijitananda ji visiting us that day for a Q&A satsang that brought forward several members with their questions. This was followed by a procession welcoming King Mahabali into the shrine that ended with the Aarthi. Then there was a short chanting of Narayaneeyam, Dasakam #30 that elaborates the Vamana avatar. The cultural programs then took over with a skit by the Balavihar children, a well-rehearsed traditional Kerala dance called Kaikottikali and a Badri special version of the same where anyone and everyone are invited to dance. To mark the closure of the Onam celebrations, everyone were treated to a sumptuous typical Kerala banana leaf feast with over 22 dishes and payasam (kheer). This is an occasion that everyone will look forward to.



Happy Onam

Badri Weekly Class Schedule



Chinmaya Mission Chicago
Badri



Weekly Class Schedule

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Geeta Chanting	9:15 – 9:45 am 12:00 – 12:30 pm	7:00 – 8:00 pm *					
Sanskrit Classes	7:15 – 8:30 pm *	6:00 – 7:00 pm *			7:00 – 8:00 pm *		
Stuti Vandana			6:00 – 6:30 pm * 6:30 – 7:00 pm *				
Swaranjali (Bhajans)	12:30 – 1:00 pm			7:00 – 8:00 pm *			
Vedic Chanting	9:15 – 9:45 am 7:30 – 8:00 pm *				7:30 – 8:00 pm * 8:00 – 9:00 pm *		
Vishnu Sahasranamam	6:00 – 7:00 pm *						
Yoga							9:30 – 10:30 am

* - Online Classes – Please check website for details – <http://mychinmaya.org>

	Contacts	Please check website for registration and zoom information
Geeta Chanting	Ramesh Turuvekere : rameshrt@gmail.com Sudha Gouthama : sudhagouth@yahoo.com	http://mychinmaya.org/gita-chanting
Sanskrit	Venkat Palli : vsp410@gmail.com	https://mychinmaya.org/sanskrit-classes/
Stuti Vandana	Suchi Achar : suchiram@hotmail.com	https://mychinmaya.org/activities/stuti-vandana/
Swaranjali (Bhajans)	Pavithra Anand : pavithra.anand@gmail.com Raman Mahadevan : ramdevan23@gmail.com	https://mychinmaya.org/activities/swaranjali-2/
Vedic Chanting	Sunil Narayanan : pnsunil@outlook.com Sashi Narasimhan : laksharag@gmail.com	https://mychinmaya.org/activities/vedic-chanting/
Vishnu Sahasranamam	Sudha Gouthama : sudhagouth@yahoo.com Sini Narayanan : sini_athul@yahoo.com Venkat Palli : vsp410@gmail.com	
Yoga	Shila Sanghani : shilaom@gmail.com	https://mychinmaya.org/activities/yoga-meditation/

Swami Sharananandaji's Weekly Program Schedule

Program Name	Details
Saddarshanam (on Zoom)	Sunday/ 8:00 – 8:45 am
Bhagavad Gita Discourse (In-person at Shrine)	Sunday / 10 – 10:30 am
Viveka Choodamani (on Zoom)	Tuesday/ 7 – 8 pm
Mandukya Upanishad (on Zoom)	Wed/ 7 – 8 pm
Drik Drishya Viveka (on Zoom)	Saturday/ 8 – 9 am

Updates from around the world -

- [Swadhyaya Series of Self Learning](#) – Online learning with access to materials
- [CIF – Courses](#) available this month
 - Online mode only | Registration required
- [Puja Vidhanam Course](#)
 - 1 month in-person/ English
 - Swami Sharadananda Sarasvathi
 - Basic and Advanced level courses available
 - 12 Aug – 10 Sept 2023 @ Adi Shankara Nilayam

Swami Chinmayananda: Anecdote - 4

MIND LEVEL

While in USA a devotee was waiting in the car with Pujya Gurudev until it was time for him to enter the lecture hall for his morning talks.

They saw a man sitting on the curb with an open Upanishad book in front of him, holding a cup of coffee in one hand and a lit cigarette in the other. Pujya Gurudev gave a running commentary of what was going through the reader's mind, "Rama, Rama" ... "Coffee, coffee" ... "Rama, Rama" "Cigarette, cigarette" "Rama, Rama"

Just then a beautiful young lady walked past. Pujya Gurudev burst out laughing, "Oh, oh....! More distractions for the poor mind!"

A few words from Pujya Gurudev, but the learning is deep – we keep on helplessly suffer the onslaught of desires in our mind and often get swayed from our goal. The sadhana is to be alert, vigilant, silently rise above the raging desires and remain firm on our path."

Gurudev's Remembrance contd...

The second day passed. The third day passed. On the fourth day, in the morning, Nagarjuna went to the man's cave and called him from outside, "Now please come out."

The man did not come out. After waiting for a while, Nagarjuna enquired, "What is the matter? Why don't you come out?" The man responded from inside, "I am trying hard, but I don't think I can come out. I am so huge and the cave-entrance is so small... and don't you see my horns? I think I am permanently stuck here!"

Three days, continuously thinking that he is a buffalo, a buffalo, a buffalo... He had auto-hypnotized himself!

The man, having lost all hopes, started weeping. He said, "Now it seems that I will never in my life be able to get out of this cave. And for three days I have been hungry and thirsty, and now I cannot get out. Help me please. Please do something..."

Nagarjuna said, "I can see it is so difficult. But don't worry. Do what I say. Now think that you have become a man, and that you are no more a buffalo."

The man had to think for at least three hours that he was a man and not a buffalo.

And in three hours the buffalo disappeared, the delusion disappeared. He opened his eyes. He came out, greatly relieved, extremely grateful, and fell at the feet of Nagarjuna.

Let us apply the above quote to this incident.

1. He was a man. This was God's creation.
2. But he imagined himself to be a buffalo. This was his (Jeeva's) creation.
3. His creation (wrong notion) caused bondage, and made him miserable.
4. Even when he thought he was a buffalo, he was always a man. God's creation alone is real, not the imaginary creation of the Jeeva.

In the same way:

1. Our nature is Sat-Chit-Ananda. This is God's creation.
2. But we think we are the body. This is our creation.
3. Our creation (wrong notion) causes bondage, and makes us miserable.
4. In reality we are never bound. It is only an imagination.

The law of nature is – we experience what we strongly believe in. Hence the experience of misery is not because of the reality, but because of our wrong notions.

Bhagavad Geeta says: न अनुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः | = The wise people never grieve, because they are ever in touch with the reality. And the reality never gives us grief.

Mulla Nasruddin and his wife were lying in bed. They had no children, and the wife was very eager to have a child. As they were about to fall asleep the wife said, "Listen, if we have a child where will we put him to sleep? – because there is only one bed."

So Mulla slid a little towards the side, saying "We will put him right here between us."

And the wife said, "And then if we have a second?"

Mulla slid over a little more saying, "We can put him here also."

The wife said, "Miserly fellow! And if a third comes?"

Mulla slid over more and was just going to say "Put him right here," when he fell off the bed with a crash. His leg was broken. He howled and yelled in unbearable pain. The neighbours gathered. They asked, "What happened?"

He said, "This child – who does not yet exist – broke my leg. And when a non-existent child can cause so much trouble, what to say of a real one!"

He turned to his wife and said, "Excuse me, I don't want any children. This experience is enough!"

Who broke his leg? Not the real child, but the imaginary one.

So too, who causes misery to us? Not the reality, but our wrong notions.

Q=How does the wrong notion 'I am the body' make us miserable?

A=Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi says: वृत्तयः तु अहम् वृत्तिम् आश्रिताः।

The notion that 'I am this body' is called 'aham vrtti'. It is also called as the ego or the ahankara. All the agitations of the mind are because of this wrong notion.

Q=How is 'aham vrtti' related to the agitations of the mind?

A= There are millions of demands for the body regarding health, security, self-respect, looks etc. The mind becomes constantly busy worrying about the 'yoga-kshema' – the welfare and wellbeing of the body. Hence the cause of mental chattering is 'I am this body' notion.

Q=How to stop this chattering?

A=The cause of mental agitation is 'aham vrtti'. Hence to eliminate agitations, we have to eliminate 'aham vrtti'.

Q= How to eliminate 'aham vrtti'?

A= Bhagavan says: Do self-enquiry. When we enquire into the nature of 'aham vrtti', we come to know it doesn't even exist! अहम् अयम् कुतो भवति चिन्वतः अयि पतति अहम् निज विचारणम्। 'I am this body' is a wrong notion which has crept in the mind due to lack of self-enquiry.

Q=What are the consequences as a result of self-enquiry?

A= Bhagavan says: अहमि नाशभाजि अहम् अहंतया स्फुरति ह्रस्वयम् परम पूर्ण सत् | With self-enquiry, the 'aham vritti' – the false 'I' - falls, and the real 'I' – the supreme Reality – shines forth in its place.

I come to know that I am the supreme Self which is infinite and immortal, all-perfect and all-bliss. The chattering of the mind stops, as there are no more demands or cravings, desires or expectations. The mind rests in eternal peace.

Somebody asked the great Zen master Bokoju, "What do you do? What is your religious discipline?"

He said, "I live an ordinary life. That is my discipline. When I feel hungry I eat, and when I feel sleepy I sleep."

The questioner was puzzled. He said, "But I don't see anything special in it."

Bokoju said, "That is the point. There is nothing special."

The questioner was still puzzled. He said, "But this is what everybody else is doing – when hungry they eat, when feeling sleepy they sleep."

Bokoju laughed. He said, "No. When you eat, you do thousand-and-one things also. You indulge in aimless thinking. The mind thinks, plans, imagines, worries. You are not at all in the present. When I eat, I simply eat. Then there is only eating and nothing else. It is pure. When you sleep you do thousand-and-one things – you dream, you have nightmares. When I sleep I simply sleep, there is nothing else. When sleep is there, there is only sleep. Not even Bokoju exists. When eating is there, there is only eating. Not even Bokoju exists. When there is walking, there is only walking – no Bokoju. There is walking, simply walking."

Chattering of the mind is bondage. Quietude is freedom.

Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi says: कृत्यमस्ति किम् स्वस्थितिम् यतः | And the Bhagavad Geeta says: तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते | = For the one who abides in the Reality of his own Self after destroying the illusory ego through self-enquiry, there is nothing else to do, for he has attained the highest.

O M T A T S A T



Chinmaya Mission Chicago

A School of Vedantic Studies

Badri * Yamunotri * Gangotri



Enthralling Musical Extravaganza

Saturday, September 30, 2023 * 7 pm

VENUE: Badri - 11So80 Kingery Hwy, Willowbrook, IL 60527



JANAB HASSAN HAIDER KHAN
SHEHNAI

PT. SUBHEN CHATTERJEE
TABLA

VIDUSHI MITA NAG
SITAR

DONATION: VIP, \$100, \$50, \$35

Reserve Tickets at <https://www.mychinmaya.org/concert>

Box dinner offered before the concert (5 pm - 7 pm)

Shanker Pillai (630) 886 6442 | Ashok Dholakia (708) 602 3901 | Rajul Bhalala (847) 302 2383 | Ashok Bhatia (847)

Nitish Kanabar (347) 829 9099 | Sujata Patnaik (630) 544 1044 | Sujata Chande (708) 253 3571

Uma Iyer (630) 715 6889 | Siva Ramamurthy (630) 258 2960



Badri Expansion – Models & Plans





Om Tat Sat