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From The Editors Desk:

Welcome to the 50th Anniversary of the Chinmaya Movement and the 20th Anniversary of Chinmaya Balavihar in the Bay Area. This movement was initiated into activity by Swami Chinmayananda. All Mission Centers around the world are celebrating the year with Yajnas, Spiritual Melas, special events and programs as a tribute to the great Master. In the Bay Area, we are offering four Jnana Yajnas inviting all residents and seekers to participate. Visiting Swamis Shantananda (Philadelphia), Ishwarananda (Los Angeles) Swaooapananda (Melbourne, Australia) and Nikhilananda (Dallas) will be giving discourses at these Yajnas. Swami Siddhananda will conduct a 5-day Bhajan Sandhya at San Jose. In Addition, Summer Camps for Youth and Young Adults will be held at Krishnalaya. Bala Utsav, festivities for young people will be held before summer.

The Celebrations' Grand Finale will be in December 24 - 31 in Mumbai, India.

A delegation from Chinmaya Mission San Jose consisting of 100 families are planning to attend. For details of the trip to India, please contact Uma at (Email: umakj@aol.com)

Chinmaya Tej Editorial Staff:

Editorial Advisors: Uma Jeyarasasingam, Satish Joshi

Editor

Anju Malwah

Contributors: Swami Tejomayananda, Swami Nikhilananda, Anjali Singh Swami Tapovanam, Swamini Vidyananda Saraswati

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Phone: (408) 998-2793

Fax: (408) 998-2952



Gujarat Earthquake Relief WorkLetter from Swami Tejomayananda

February 9, 2001

All Chinmaya Mission Centers

Hari Om! Salutations!!

Thank you for the response I have received to my earlier communication to you with regards to the Gujarat Earthquake Relief Work.

Our local Chinmaya Mission centers at Ahmedabad and Jamnagar have already sprung into action and were quick to reach the sites and provide urgent relief with food grains, tents, clothes, medicines, water, blankets, etc. I have just personally completed a tour of a part of Gujarat affected by the tragic earthquake. We have now identified the village of Bhavpar in Malia Taluka in Rajkot District and decided to serve hundreds of families who have been rendered homeless there. Bhavpar has a population of nearly 2,500. During the earthquake, there were 18 fatalities, 45 injuries, and all the 500 homes have been rendered unoccupiable.

While the government will assist the people in construction of permanent homes, it will be quite some time before the people can have a roof over their heads. In order to bridge the time gap and to provide the immediate need of a shelter, we have decided to construct about 500 modular row houses predominantly made of fiber-reinforced-plastic (FRP) sheets in corrugated form. The material is lightweight, safe in case of an earthquake, and lends itself of speedy construction. Work will start within a week and be completed within a month.

It is estimated that we will require Rs.1.00 Crore (Rs.60 Lakhs) for the building of the new houses and remainder for other required equipment), i.e. about US \$250,000 — for this project. Please send your contributions in favor of CENTRAL CHINMAYA MISSION TRUST with a covering letter to:

**The Chief Executive
Central Chinmaya Mission Trust
Sandeepany Sadhanalaya
Saki Vihar Road, Mumbai-400 072
Tel.: (91-22) 8572367 / 5806
Email: ccmt@vsnl.com**

(continued on p. 20)

In order to implement this project, a committee has been formed as follows:

Swamini Premananda
Shri Shivalal Vekariya
Shri Pashabhai Patel
Shri Santoshbhai Kamdar

Donations in USA may be given to Chinmaya Mission centers there that will then be sent to CCMT-Mumbai.

Chinmaya Mission Adopts Bhavpur Village

The Times of India

Friday, February 9, 2001

RAJKOT: Chinmaya Mission has adopted Bhavpur village in Maliya taluka of Rajkot district and will provide fiberglass houses to 500 survivors of the village. The Mission said Rs 75 lakh would be spent for rehabilitating the entire village.

The cost of each fiberglass structure would be Rs 12,000 and would be borne by the mission. A mission statement said that pre-fabricated houses were durable and could be assembled within 30 minutes. It would have a door and a window for ventilation and could withstand vagaries of nature. The houses have been designed with maximum interchangeability for corrugated sheets, doors, windows and even structural profiles. They can be installed with the help of steel fasteners. These structures would be ready within 8 to 10 days, the statement added.

The Mission said families would be provided with a bed, a cupboard, two racks and a month's ration. A sample of the house would be displayed at Trikon Baugh at Rajkot on Friday.

Meanwhile, the Ramkrishna Mission has also started relief work in villages of Porbander and Jamnagar districts. The Mission has distributed 1,766 food packets, 360 packets of biscuits, 174 blankets, 824 quilts, 22 sweaters, 815 tents, 2,350 kg of tarpaulin sheets besides rations like bajra, wheat, rice and dal. Four community kitchens have also been started.

To serve the Almighty who is manifested in all living creatures with whatever faculty each one of us has, is the greatest worship, the highest spiritual living.

Swami Chinmayananda



CHINMAYA MISSION SAN JOSE

Presents a

CHINMAYA SPIRITUAL YAGNA

APRIL 21, 2001

BHAGAVAD GITA, CH. 12

“The Path of Devotion”

at

SANDEEPANY SAN JOSE

1050 Park Avenue • San Jose • California

Conducted by

SWAMI SHANTANANDA

Resident Acharya

Chinmaya Mission Tri-State



In chapter 12 of *Bhagavad Gita* Lord Krishna extols the glory of devotion to God. He discusses the different forms of spiritual discipline and the qualities of a devotee.

Swami Shantananda served Swami Chinmayananda as his traveling secretary for almost two years. After completing the Vedanta Training Course at Mumbai he successfully managed his own business while teaching Vedanta part-time until 1992, when he was given *sannyas* by Pujya Gurudev. He has been instrumental in building Chinmaya Mission in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and other parts of the world. He teaches regularly throughout the Tri-State area. His talks are filled with wonderful insight, and people respond instantly to his wisdom and affectionate nature.

During his stay in San Jose, Swamiji plans to conduct daytime classes from 10:00-11:30 a.m. and speak on *Srimad Nayaraneeyam*, a concise version of *Bhagavatham*.



Chinmaya Mission San Jose New Building Project 2001

Chinmaya Mission San Jose, a nonprofit organization incorporated in California and currently located at 1050 Park Avenue, San Jose, CA 95125 began its activities at the above location in 1988.

1. Current Activities and Programs

- Chinmaya Mission, San Jose (CMSJ) began its operation at Sandeepany, 1050 Park Avenue, San Jose, CA 95126, on April 2nd, 1988.
- The Mission conducts the following activities
 - i. Bal Vihar classes – for Children
 - ii. Yuva Kendra Classes – for Teens
 - iii. Upanishads, *Bhagavat Gita*, *Ramayana*, *Bhagavatam*, *Puranas* – for Adults
 - iv. Spiritual Camps – for Families
 - v. Community outreach program – to Community at large
 - vi. Currently, programs are held in four locations, Los Altos, San Jose, Fremont and San Ramon. With the exception of San Jose, all other centers are using rented facilities to hold the programs.

These programs have gained momentum in recent years at all four locations. Los Altos is the oldest (since 1981) and has the largest student population, (about 500). There are two Sessions of Bala Vihar held on the same day for want of space so that we can accept all those who wish to participate in the programs. City of Los Altos has first choice for the use of Hillview Community Center. When they have a City related program that conflicts with our classes' schedules, we either cancel our classes or share rooms whenever possible. This is happening more and more often in recent times, thus interrupting our programs.

With Swami Tejomayananda's Blessings, we have launched the Chinmaya Mission New Building Project to build our own facilities to house all our programs, with future expansion in mind. It is about time and the time is now.

The Financial Market is not very encouraging now but that need not deter us from our goal. We can and we must do our part, each one of us, to raise the money we need to accomplish our goals. This is our chance to build a heritage for our children so that they may continue

the Hindu Cultural Heritage for future generations to come. This will be our legacy to the Children of Tomorrow.

Fund Raising—the area where most help is needed at this time. As the Project gets underway one can help in many other ways.

1. Logistics

- a) A CMSJ Building Fund account will be set up this purpose.
- b) All funds raised will be only used for this purpose.
- c) All donations are tax deductible. Tax ID # 77-0315648
- d) All donors will be kept informed of the progress of the Fund-raising effort.

2. Types of donations made to “Chinmaya Mission San Jose - Building Fund”

- a) Cash and/or Checks.
- b) Shares of a Public Company.
- c) Pledges of any kind.
- d) Monthly, quarterly, semi annual and annual contributions.

3. Your choice of Contributions

- \$50,000 - 100,000
- \$25,000
- \$15,000
- \$10,000
- \$5,000
- \$1,000

You may choose to contribute that which is comfortable for you. Please talk to your friends and bring them to the project. Each one of us will reach as many families as we know and introduce them to the project. As the Chinmaya Family grows in numbers, the Vision of a Chinmaya Cultural Center will become a reality.

I wish to donate:

- a) Cash in the amount of \$ _____ paid cash or check # _____ drawn on bank _____ in favor of Chinmaya Mission San Jose Building Fund
- b) _____ of Shares of a Public Company _____ currently valued at \$ _____ by endorsing these shares in the name of Chinmaya Mission San Jose-New Building Project.

If you wish to consult with us on this, please contact Satish Joshi at: (408)730-2596 or satish@joshi.com

Donor's Name _____

Address _____

Phone (____) _____ Fax (____) _____ E-mail _____

Fund raising for the new building project is gaining momentum. The property search is underway in the South Bay for a site for the new building. We hope to raise all the funds needed before the property is located and we need your support to reach our goals.

All activities have accelerated in recent years. We wish to continue to serve our communities in the best way possible. Chinmaya Mission has accepted all students who have reached us so far. We hope to not be in a position where we must refuse admission to any child for want of space. To accommodate the current rate of growth it is imperative to build a facility that is large enough to house all programs. This is the gift we all can give our children of the future.



In His service,
Uma Jeyarasasingam

Chinmaya Mission San Jose

1050 Park Avenue • San Jose • California

Chinmaya Mission New Building Project 2001

I wish to donate toward the New Building Project for Chinmaya Mission San Jose

- Cash in the amount of \$_____ paid in cash or check # _____ in favor of Chinmaya Mission San Jose New Building Project
- _____ of Shares of a Public Company _____ currently valued at \$ _____ by endorsing these shares in the name of Chinmaya Mission San Jose New Building Project
- Annual contribution of \$750 or more over 4 years
- Other _____

If you wish to contribute by Credit Card, please use Visa or Master Card

- Credit Card # _____ Exp. date _____ Signature _____

If you wish to consult with us about the project or your donation, please contact Satish Joshi at (408) 730-2596

Donor's Name _____

Address _____

Phone (____) _____ Fax (____) _____ E-mail _____

Date _____

Please mail contributions to the above address

50th Anniversary Celebrations 2001

Chinmaya Mission San Jose will be joining all Mission Centers around the world to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Chinmaya Movement, from January-December 2001. The celebrations will take many forms and formats dedicated to Pujya Gurudev, Swami Chinmayananda.

There will be *Jnana Yajnas* by four visiting swamis: Shantananda, Ishwarananda, Nikhilananda and Swaroopananda and a *Bhajan Sandhya* by Swami Siddhananda. In addition, we plan to have a grand *Bala Utsav*, a program by students of Bala Vihar and Yuva Kendra.

As part of the commemoration, new Study Groups will be initiated. Gurudev's video lectures and special *Satsangs* on Pujya Gurudev—His Work and His Teaching, will be held in many parts of the Bay Area. These *satsangs* will be conducted by Gurudev's longtime devotees who will add details of their personal experiences. The speakers will include: Nalini Browning, Rudite Emir, and Uma Jeyarasasingam. Programs will be on-going throughout the year, and will bring Gurudev's message to the maximum number of people throughout the entire Bay Area.

As a special tribute to Pujya Gurudev, Chinmaya Mission San Jose is launching a project to build a large multifaceted facility to house Mission projects such as Chinmaya Cultural School activities, a Bala Vihar Teacher Training Center, lecture halls, an auditorium, and book shop.

Festivities will conclude in Mumbai in December 2001. Maximum number of devotees from Mission Centers around the world will participate in the Grand Finale from Dec. 24-31, 2001 in Mumbai. Chinmaya Mission San Jose invites all Mission families and their friends to join the delegation to attend this celebration. Those who wish to join us should let us know as early as April 1, 2001 by sending back this questionnaire to: Grand Finale-Mumbai, 1050 Park Avenue, San Jose CA 95126. Details of the trip, cost and accommodations will be discussed at a later date.

Please Print

Name: (Last Name) _____

Name: (First Name) _____

Children : First name

1 _____ 2 _____

3 _____ 4 _____

Address: _____

Phone: () _____ E-mail _____

Chinmaya Youth Camp Registration

Name (Parents) _____

Students' Names: _____ Age _____ M/F _____

_____ Age _____ M/F _____

_____ Age _____ M/F _____

We need a bus ride for _____ persons: One way \$ _____ Round-trip \$ _____

Address : _____ Phone (____) _____

_____ Fax (____) _____

Enclosed Check # _____ or Visa/Master Card no. _____

Expiration date _____ Signature _____

A Note to all applicants:

We accept only students who wish to attend the full Camp, from June 23 - July 1, 2001. Part-time admission is not available.

Camp Registration Fees:

Includes Room & Board (Registration fee only is tax deductible)

*2001 Sponsor Families		Non-Sponsors Families	
First child	Additional Child	First Child	Additional Child
\$150	\$50	\$300	\$150
Room & Board			
\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300

Bus ride includes lunch: *(Leaves Sandeepany San Jose at 8 a.m. June 23. Return trip: bus leaves Krishnalaya at 9 a.m. on July 1)*

One way \$40 Round-trip \$70

***Sponsorship is annual tax deductible contribution of \$500 to Chinmaya Mission San Jose.**

Camp applications with full payment is due by May 1, 2001. We have space for only 65 students. Applications accepted on first come first serve basis. Reservation is confirmed when we receive the registration fee by mail. We do not accept phone reservations. There is no refund on cancellations after May 15. Detailed Camp information will be mailed when we receive your registration. Make checks payable to "Chinmaya Mission" and mail to Chinmaya Youth Camp, 1050 Park Ave. San Jose, Ca 95126. For information call Uma at (650) 969-4389, or Meena at (925) 680-7037.

CHINMAYA YOUTH CAMP NO.9

KRISHNALAYA, PIERCY, CALIFORNIA

JUNE 23 - JULY 1, 2001

conducted by

Brahmcharini Aparna Chaitanya

Resident Acharya, Chinmaya Mission Miami

&

Uma Jeyarasasingam

and Bala Vihar Teachers of Chinmaya Mission San Jose

Residential Camp for Youths, ages 8-17 years

Camp Theme

SAINTS & SAGES: THE MOVING TEMPLES PT I

Meerabai, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Guru Nanak, Ramana Maharishi



- **Meditation Classes**
- **Saints & Sages—Life & Teachings**
- **Temples—The History & Legends**
 - **Songs & Prayers**
 - **Arts & Crafts**
 - **Hatha Yoga**
- **Discussions—The 3 Paths: Action • Devotion • Knowledge**
- **Sports & Recreation Activities**
- **Field Trips to National Parks**
- **Comfortable Accommodations**
 - **Vegetarian Meals**

Parents are advised to bring children to Krishnalaya on June 23, by 2:00 pm. Camp concludes on Sunday, July 1 after breakfast.

Parents returning the following weekend (June 30-July 1) to pick up their children should make reservations ahead of time. Reservations can be made by calling John at (707) 247-3488. The adult Room and Board is \$30 per night per person. The last weekend of the Camp is usually full, so please make your reservations early.



Registration Form
Third Annual Camp for College Students
Gita – Guidance to Youth
August 15-19, 2001

Name:Mr/Mrs/Ms _____

College/University _____

Address _____

Phone No (____) _____ E Mail _____

In Case of Emergency Please Contact _____

Emergency Contact Address _____

Emergency Phone No (____) _____

Medical Insurance _____

*Please make checks payable to **Chinmaya Mission West** and mail with the registration form to:*

Meena Kapadia, 4401 Arrowwood Court, Concord, CA 94521

Please tell us a little more about yourself

Is this the first time you will attend this camp?

Have you attended any Chinmaya Mission camps in the past?

Have you attended Bala Vihar or Yuva Kendra held by Chinmaya Mission?

How did you find out about this camp?

Would you be driving your self or carpooling?

Would you like to be contacted for car pool?

3RD ANNUAL CAMP

For
COLLEGE STUDENTS & YOUNG ADULTS



Ages 18- 25 years)

August 15 - 19, 2001

(5 days)

Conducted by
SWAMI ISHWARANANDA

at

Krishnalaya

Piercy, California

(200 miles north of San Francisco, on banks of Eel River, among the
giant Redwoods trees)

GITA – GUIDANCE TO YOUTH

**Knowledge Revealed by the *Bhagavad Gita* and the
Upanishads**

- Beyond the Bondage of Action
 - The Ways of the Wise
 - Magic of Meditation
- How to Find God in Your Life
- Is Your Life Your Message?

Cost:

\$150 for undergraduate students

\$200 for graduate students and working young adults

Room and Board Included

Registration will be accepted for full time attendance only.

Deadline for Registration: July 1, 2001. (Will be strictly enforced.)

For information: Call Meena Kapadia (925) 680-7037 evenings

Email: meenakapad@aol.com

www.happiness.org

by Swami Chidananda

You might have heard of many meanings of 'www', such as-World Wide Web, Wild Whales of Water, Working Woman of the West, World Wide Wildlife, etc.

Let us see some more... which may be more relevant to us in the New Year!
Let us do some channel surfing. Log on to www.happiness.org

- Happiness is a movement from one www to another www. That is, the individual goes from the state of 'weep, weep, weep' to win,, win,,win'!
- At the beginning, our mind is full of desires, want, want want'.
- In helplessness, we 'wonder, wonder, wonder' or 'worry, worry, worry.
- * The spiritual practices to overcome these are *karma yoga*, *bhakti yoga*, and *jnana yoga*. They are precisely the ways of 'work, worship and wisdom'.
- Working selflessly, in the spirit of 'service is *karma yoga*. We serve others, putting their comfort before ours. It may be summarised as 'work without wants'.
- * Loving God and expressing our love to Him through prayer and devotion is *bhakti yoga*. We understand this is "worship without wavering."
- * *Jnana yoga* is the enquiry into 'What is my true nature?'. Following scriptural study—the wisdom of Vedanta makes us observe the ways of our mind closely. Instead of sticking to false ideas and hasty judgments of ourselves or of others, we learn to witness our thoughts calmly, without getting disturbed. It is summarized as, watch without worry'.
- .* Conquest of the smaller self or the ego is the conquest of the world.

The inner transformation in us makes us exclaim 'wow, wow, wow!'

Shiva: The Conqueror of Death (Mrityunjaya)



People fear death and seek shelter in Lord Shiva.
By His grace, their ego first dies.
They are then, by nature, the true Self and immortal.
How can fear of death come to them again?
(Verse two, Saddarshanam of Shri Ramana Maharshi)

by Swami Chidananda

1. Death is of three types: clinical, of the nature of compromise and of the ego.
2. No one can avoid the first type. They body must die.
3. In the second type, we die in a sense whenever, out of cowardice, we compromise with our own values. As we grow in our understanding of values, we become strong and brave. "The valiant die but once," said a famous writer. The cowardly die many times, he meant.
4. Integrity is when we are a whole. (No wonder whole numbers are called integers in Mathematics.) When our life is true to our conscience, there is great strength in us.
5. Lack of integrity is when we are fragmented. (Mathematics would call us fractions, I guess!) Our actions then are different from the voice of our conscience.
6. Saints, who have total integrity, are rightly called His/Her Holiness. The holiness is really wholeness.
7. The third type, the death of the ego is the desirable kind.
8. When the ego dies, the true I (the Self) becomes manifest. (Upadesha Sara: 20)
9. When we live in true awareness and ask ourselves 'who am I?' constantly, all gaps in our personality are bridged. We become integrated (yukta—using Gita's language).
10. Devotion to Shiva helps us rise above our worldly habits.
11. Shiva's grace helps us undo our 'false ego.' He gives us new life, divine life.

May Lord Shiva bless you.

**BALA VIHAR & ADULT CLASSES IN FOUR LOCATIONS
CHINMAYA CULTURAL SCHOOL**

San Jose, Sandeepany, 1050 Park Avenue

Sunday:

Bala Vihar Assembly

01:30 p.m.

Bhagavad Gita, Ch. 4

01:45 - 03:00 p.m.

Discourse by Prof. Sreeharsha

Los Altos, 97 Hillview Avenue

Sunday:

Bala Vihar Assembly Session I

08:30 a.m.

Adults: *Bhagavad Gita, Ch. 5/Bala Vihar Session II*

09:45 - 10:50 a.m.

(Video lecture by Swami Chinmayananda)

Fremont, Washington High School

Saturday:

Bala Vihar Assembly

01:30 p.m.

Bhagavad Gita, Ch. 5

01:45 - 3:00 p.m.

(Video lecture by Swami Chinmayananda)

San Ramon, La Petit Academy

Saturday:

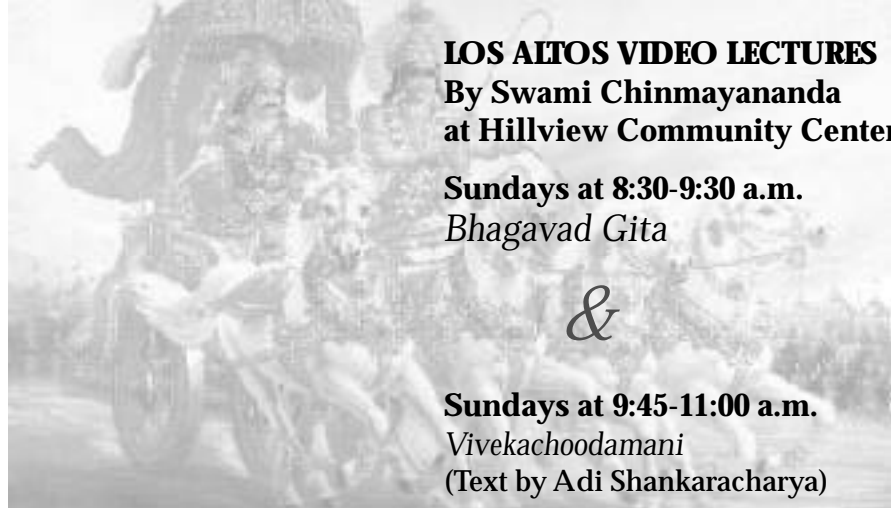
Bala Vihar Assembly

04:30 p.m.

Bhagavad Gita, Ch 8

04:45 - 06:00 p.m.

(Video Lecture by Swami Chinmayananda)



**LOS ALTOS VIDEO LECTURES
By Swami Chinmayananda
at Hillview Community Center**

**Sundays at 8:30-9:30 a.m.
*Bhagavad Gita***

&

**Sundays at 9:45-11:00 a.m.
Vivekachoodamani
(Text by Adi Shankaracharya)**

Advanced Sanskrit Classes for Children, Youth & Adults

Taught by Sarasvati Mohan. Contact Sanskrit Academy. samskrt@aol.com,

408-370-2260, web page: www.samskrtam.com

VEDANTA STUDY GROUPS – Adult Sessions

Pleasanton:	<i>Kenopanishad</i>	Sevika: Uma Jeyarasasingam
	Contact: Ratna Rao	(510) 846-4143
Milpitas	<i>Bhagavad Gita Ch. 9</i>	Sevika: Uma Jeyarasasingam
	Contact: Suma Venkatesh	(408) 263-2961
Fremont:	<i>Meditation and Life</i>	Sevika: Uma Jeyarasasingam
	Contact: Padma Srinivasan	(510) 490-3303
Sunnyvale:	<i>Vivekachudamani</i>	Sevak: Subbu Venkatakrishnan
	Contact: Satish Joshi	(408) 730-2596
Cupertino:	<i>Bhagavad Gita, Ch. 13</i>	Sevak: Sreeharsha
	Contact : Ram Mohan	(408) 255-4431
Saratoga:	<i>Tattwva Bodh & Vishnu Sahasranamam</i>	Sevika: Lakshmi Sukumar
	Contact: Lakshmi Sukumar	(408) 867-3388
Los Altos:	<i>Self Unfoldment</i>	Sevak: Ravi Kaw
	Contact: Nancy Kaw	(650) 948-1674
Fremont:	<i>Self Unfoldment</i>	Sevika: Priya Batheja
	Contact: Priya Batheja	(650) 490-1926
Sunnyvale:	<i>Vedic Chanting</i>	Sevak: Subbu Venkatakrishnan
	Contact: Mallika Subramanian	(408) 245-4915
Redwood City:	<i>The Art of Man-Making</i>	Sevak: Sreeharsha
	Contact: Sunil Jeswani	(650) 873-8118

On Study Groups

"Mere listening to my yagnas will not add to your beauty. These ideas are to be reflected deeply and digested slowly. This process is hastened only when you discuss what you have studied with others. Study groups constitute the heart of our Mission. The ideas gathered by you, when discussed with others, not only become deeply rooted in yourself, but as they become clearer in your own understanding, they also inspire those who listen to you. Thus, each student, while trying to strengthen his own understanding, can become an instrument for the spread of this knowledge. This process is the dynamic STUDY SCHEME followed in the Vedantic tradition. This is not a Chinmaya methodology, it is the most ancient Vedantic tradition of Study. —Swami Chinmayananda

VEDANTA CLASSES AT SANDEEPANY SAN JOSE

1050 Park Avenue, San Jose, California

Wednesdays: *Srimad Bhagavatham* 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Video lecture series of Swami Tejomayananda. Swamiji takes us through the philosophical implications of this great work of Vyasa Bhagavan. The talks are accompanied by Swamiji's melodious music. All are welcome.

Saturdays: Yoga Classes 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Taught by Anirudh Shastri

Shiva Abhisheka & Puja at Sandeepany San Jose

conducted by

Subbu Venkatakrisnan

Time: 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Dates: March 12-April 9

Community Outreach Program

Chinmaya Mission San Jose

Seva Opportunities

Are You Willing to Volunteer or

Just Sponser the Program?

If yes, Please Call Krishna Bhamre @ (408) 733-4612 or email

sbhamre@yahoo.com

We need volunteers for preparing and serving

Hot Meals for the Homeless

The lunch bags are prepared at

Los Altos Community Center

All Youth volunteers are required to sign up with Krishna Bhamre.

May 19, 2001

Meals For The Homeless Program

Hot Meal Lunch Preparation (10 a.m. to 1 p.m.)

Serving at San Jose's Emergency Housing Consortium

@ Orchard Drive off Curtner Avenue

(Adult & Youth Volunteers & sponsors)

BALA VIHAR SCHOOL LOCATIONS 2000 - 2001

- San Ramon:** La Petit Academy
1001 Market Place,
Winter Quarter: Saturday, Jan. 6, 2001 4:30 p.m.
Contact: Ratna Rao - (925) 846-4143
- Sacramento:** Country Day School
2636, Latham Drive,
Winter Quarter: Sunday, Jan. 7, 2001 9:30 a.m.
Contact: Vanaja Tiwakaran - (916) 485-4438
- Los Altos:** Hillview Community Center
97 Hillview Ave.,
Winter Quarter: Sunday, Jan. 7, 2001 *Session I-8:30 a.m.*
Contact: Ravi Ranganath - (408) 253-6245 *Session II-9:30 a.m.*
- San Jose:** Sandeepany San Jose
1050 Park Avenue,
Winter Quarter: Sunday, Jan. 7, 2001 1:30 p.m.
Contact: Ravi Ranganath - (408) 253-6245
- Fremont:** Washington High School
New Location 38442, Fremont Blvd.
Fall Quarter: Saturday, Jan. 6, 2001 1:30 p.m.
Contact: Aradhana Gupta - (510) 651-2002

Gita Chanting Classes for Children

by Mallika Subramanian

Los Altos: Hillview Community Centre, Room 2
When: Every Sunday Time: 12:00 p.m. - 12:30 p.m.

San Jose: Sandeepany, 1050 Park Avenue
When: Every Sunday Time: 01:00 p.m. - 01:30 p.m.
Contact: (408) 245-4915 for reservations.

New website!!!! Bala Vihar Website from CM-Houston
Want to know about Bala Vihar? Go to www.chinmayakids.org
The website is really great!

(continued from p. 3)

March 15, 2001

All Regional Chinmaya Mission Centers

Hari Om! Salutations!!

In my last letter, dated February 27, 2001, I had mentioned that I would be visiting Bhavpar (the village in Gujarat that Chinmaya Mission has adopted to rebuild) on March 9 but due to unavoidable circumstances, I could go there only on March 12. Here is an update.

I am pleased to inform you that we have erected over 100 shelters, which have been occupied by the most needy people of the village. The work is in progress for constructing the remaining 400 shelters.

As I reached the village, I was surprised and touched by the warm welcome that I was accorded by so many whose homes and lives were in shambles. In the midst of death and destruction, young children danced in greeting. All the villagers turned out to receive me. I was very moved that they had collected Rs. 51,000/ (a huge amount by their standards) as guru dakshina. All the villagers were very happy with the services rendered by Chinmaya Mission.

I take this opportunity to thank Swamini Premananda and Shri Shivilalbai Vekaria for their great efforts in this regard. A committee of fifteen leading people of the village has been formed and with their guidance, the homes are being allocated. Our work doesn't stop at providing these shelters. More work will follow up. We have plans to also make the school building and temple functional soon.

Shri Laju Chanrai, Trustee of CCMT, and his wife Smt. Kavita accompanied me to Bhavpar and are taking very keen interest in spearheading the efforts to rebuild the village. We have received overwhelming support from all out Mission Centres and I thank all who have contributed their mite.

I will keep you informed from time to time and hope that your continuing support will help us make a tangible difference to the villagers of Bhavpar.

In service of the Lord,
Swami Tejomayananda

The Ramayana

by Swami Tejomayananda



THOUGH IT IS NOT POSSIBLE here to relate in detail the story of the *Ramayana*, I will touch on certain important points. The literal meaning of *Ramayana* is “the life story of Rama.” Rama was the Prince of Ayodhya, the son of King Dasharatha who was ruling the kingdom at that time. King Dasharatha had three wives to whom were born four sons. Sri Ramachandra was born to Queen Kausalya, Bharata to Queen Kaikeyi, and Lakshmana and Shatrughna to Queen Sumitra.

In its simplest form, the *Ramayana* is the story of a great noble prince who was an ideal son, brother, disciple, husband, and king. Generally we find that a person is perfect in only one or maybe two relationships or fields of activity in life. One may be an ideal husband but not an ideal son; another may be an ideal son but a monstrous husband and an uncaring father.

To find someone who is ideal in all of his or her relationships, in all fields of activity, and who is full of noble virtues is nearly impossible. Yet we find in the *Ramayana*, Sri Ramachandra, who achieves what we consider “nearly impossible.”

Sage Valmiki, who wrote the *Ramayana*, presented Ramachandra as the perfect person because society is always in need of an ideal. It is a fact that when people have a higher goal in their lives, they strive hard to improve and bring out the best in themselves. But if one’s ideal is low or if one has no higher goal to aspire to, one only drifts along in life and gets carried away by whatever whims and fancies are in his mind or in the society around him.

There are some people who believe that Sri Ramachandra was not an actual living person and that the *Ramayana* is therefore imaginary, not historical. Why do we think in this

way? Because we can rarely live up to the simplest noble principle in our life, we conclude therefore, that as perfects a life as his is not possible. But such a view is false. Ramachandra was a living person, and, in fact, he lives even now in our hearts—everywhere. The *Ramayana* is not just a fictitious story or novel; it is true history. If it were merely a novel, it would never have gained such great respect, and even worship, that it now has.

Dharma Shastra

Sri Ramachandra was not only an ideal man. It is said that he was a form of the Lord Himself, who came to earth and took human embodiment for our sake—to teach us how to live our lives correctly. Because Ramachandra's life was the embodiment of *dharma*, of righteousness, the *Ramayana* is also considered to be a *dharma shastra*. Its method of teaching is different from *sruti* and *smṛti*, however, in that the latter teach by way of commandments or injunctions—*prabhu vakya*; they state directly what one ought to do and what one ought not to do; what is right and what is wrong. But there is another way of teaching, called *mitra vakya*, by which we are given friendly advice as to what conduct is best to practice and what to avoid. As a *dharma shastra*, the *Ramayana* is considered to be *mitra vakya* (friendly advice).

Most of us, however, need more than just commandments or advice. We need demonstrations in practical life, and our question always is, “Has there ever been a person who has

lived this life of perfection?” We want to see him, not off in the Himalayas somewhere, but right here in front of us, where we are now, going through all the ups and downs of life!

Sri Ramachandra was such a man of perfection. When you and I suffer in life, we usually complain and ask, “Why me?” But Sri Ramachandra was in the forest for fourteen years through no fault of his own, never complained. Even though we find him weeping at times for his father, for Sita, for Lakshmana, or for Bharata, if we look closely at his life, we see that what he loved most of all was *dharma*. For *dharma*'s sake he was ready to give up everything, as he himself said in a famous *śloka*:

As a king, the people are my deity, my altar of worship and for their sake I will renounce whatever is demanded of me—my affection, compassion, happiness, or even Sita.

Even Maricha, the friend of Ravana, acknowledged Rama as the embodiment of *dharma*; and if one's own enemy gives such a certificate of approval, you know there must certainly be truth in it! If we cannot accept that such a person as Rama existed or if we think it is possible for him to live such a perfect life, but not ourselves, this is due to our own weakness of mind. In that case, the very purpose of the *Ramayana* is defeated, for Rama came for the sole purpose to guide and help people like us to live as he did. This, in fact, is the specialty of the *Ramayana*—that it demonstrates right conduct and shows how the higher values can be

lived. In India, the *Ramayana* is so popular that even those who are poorly educated know of it.

Once an old villager was reading the *Ramayana* while sitting on a bench at the railway station waiting for the train to arrive. A young man with his wife was standing nearby and said to the old man, “You old-fashioned people read only that *Ramayana* all the time. Do you not have any other book to read? There are so many best-sellers available these days. What is so great in the *Ramayana* anyway?”

The old man continued to read and did not reply. The young man went away but came back after about half an hour, and when he saw the old man still reading, he became really annoyed and began to criticize the old man even more. Soon, however, the train arrived and everyone rushed in to get a seat, as one must do in India. It turned out that the old man and the young man were seated next to each other. The old man continued to read the *Ramayana*. Suddenly the young man realized that his wife was missing! He looked for the emergency chain to stop the train and shouted anxiously, “My wife! Where is she? I think she has been left behind on the platform!”

The old man said to him calmly, “If you had read the *Ramayana*, you would never have committed that mistake.”

“What?” said the young man.

The old man explained: “It is said in the *Ramayana* that when Ramachandra, Sita, and Lakshmana

were standing on the bank of the Ganges and the boatman came with his boat, Ramachandra asked Sita to sit in the boat first and only then did he get in the boat himself! So why are you asking me what is said in the *Ramayana* when you do not even know enough to take care of your wife and see that she gets into the train first? You see, the *Ramayana* tells you even this!”

True enough, any time you are confused and cannot decide what your duty is, just read the *Ramayana* and you will find the answer to all your doubts!

Solving Life's Conflicts

If we study the *Ramayana* carefully, we will discover that not only are day-to-day duties demonstrated through Rama's example, but we are also taught how to deal with the greater conflicts in life, although the exact circumstances may be somewhat different. Consider, for example, how one day Sri Rama is told that he will be crowned king and the very next morning he is told that he must be exiled to the forest for fourteen years. The whole population of Ayodhya, as well as King Dasharatha, were begging him to stay, and though there were many other arguments against his going, Rama left for the forest, knowing it was his *dharma* to fulfill the boon his father had promised to Kaikeyi. This was a big decision to make—one that he made without showing any disappointment or bitterness.

On the other hand, Bharata's situation was more difficult. When he was told he had to become king in

Rama's place, Bharata wondered at first whether he should do so. Rama himself tells Bharata that he should fulfill the wishes of their father and become king according to the second boon of Kaikeyi. But Bharata finally said, "No." How did he arrive at this conclusion? You see, in the law there is both the letter and the spirit. Which is more important? Naturally the spirit or intention is more important than the letter or literal meaning. Bharata knew that all the coronation arrangements had really been made for Ramachandra and that their father, King Dasharatha, had really decided to make Rama king, but had unfortunately been cornered by Kaikeyi. So Bharata asked himself, "Is it my *dharma* to fulfill my father's words or his wishes?" Realizing that his *dharma* was to fulfill his father's wishes, he did not accept the kingship.

These are the subtle ways by which we must determine our *dharma*. It is often difficult for people to determine *dharma* because, as it is said, "the mystery or the secret of *dharma* is hidden." The great importance of the *Ramayana*, therefore, is that it teaches us how to observe situations and come to the right decision.

There is also a symbolic meaning in the story of the *Ramayana*. I will just give the central ideas, as there are many different interpretations.

A line from a beautiful song in the *Adhyatma Ramayana* by Sadashiva Brahmendra tells the real identity of Sri Rama: "He who is sporting in my heart is Rama." Here Rama means "to sport, to revel." In another, it is said: "He who revels in the heart of all is

Rama." Another meaning of the name Rama is given in the *Ramayana* itself: "Rama is that *sat-cit-ananda* (existence-consciousness-bliss) *Brahman*, in which all yogis ever revel."

Rama is also, "He who delights everyone." What is that which delights everyone? If you ask a child, he may say, "Nintendo." Another person may say "Coke" or "money," but what actually delights everyone is joy, *ananda*. It is not the toy, game, house, or money, but the joy that we derive from them. Therefore, Saint Tulsidas says: That ocean of bliss, a small drop-let of which all the beings of all worlds take delight in, and depend upon for their happiness, that is Ramachandra.

The Symbolism of the Characters

Rama is *ananda svarupa*, the essence of joy, the *sat-cit-ananda* playing in our heart. Therefore, the Rama about whom we read in the *Ramayana* is actually our own absolute spiritual nature. And who is Sita to whom Rama is married? She is *santi videhasuta saharini*, the absolute peace wedded to our blissful nature (*ananda svarupa*). And the Ayodhya in which bliss and peace dwell together is the space in the heart.

In the story of the *Ramayana*, Ramachandra had to cross the ocean to kill Ravana and Kumbhakarna. This ocean is the great ocean of ignorance and delusion that we must cross in order to destroy the enemies within us; the likes and dislikes, and the desire and anger. Only when these hosts of negative tendencies in our hearts are removed can we attain absolute peace.

Rama is also sometimes said to be *jnana*, knowledge, and Sita, *bhakti*, devotion. Only Rama, who is pure Knowledge, can destroy Ravana, who is the embodiment of ignorance and delusion, ego and pride. Lakshmana is the incarnation of dispassion, Bharata the embodiment of love (of Rama *prema*); and Shatrughna the embodiment of egoless service.

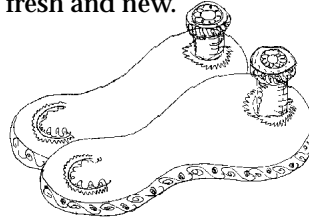
And what about Hanuman? Hanuman is very difficult to talk about because he is the embodiment of all the great divine qualities put together—devotion, dedication, service, dispassion, strength, humility, knowledge and every other virtue!

The other monkeys in Rama's army represent our numerous thoughts, some of which are not always directed toward the Lord alone. They also represent different kinds of spiritual disciplines, such as *japa*, austerity, or charity, in which we engage for other than purely spiritual purposes. This should not be the case, for all our spiritual endeavors should be dedicated to the Lord alone and not for any other reason, such as fame, wealth, or power. This is why it is said in a prayer: "Whatever I do, I dedicate to Lord Narayana." If you can do this you gain the real Rama rajya, the kingdom of happiness, peace, and prosperity.

The *Ramayana* is a poem, a story, an epic. But more than this, it is also a *dharma shastra*, a demonstration of righteous living. Knowledge of almost every kind is found in the *Ramayana*, including that taught in modern day courses, such as economics, warfare, effective time

management, and motivation theories. But of greatest importance is the fact that the *Ramayana* is a manifestation of the Vedas and contains the highest spiritual knowledge (*Brahma vidya* or *Atma vidya*). The epic is therefore also called *adhyatma shastra*, a scripture that reveals the knowledge of the Self.

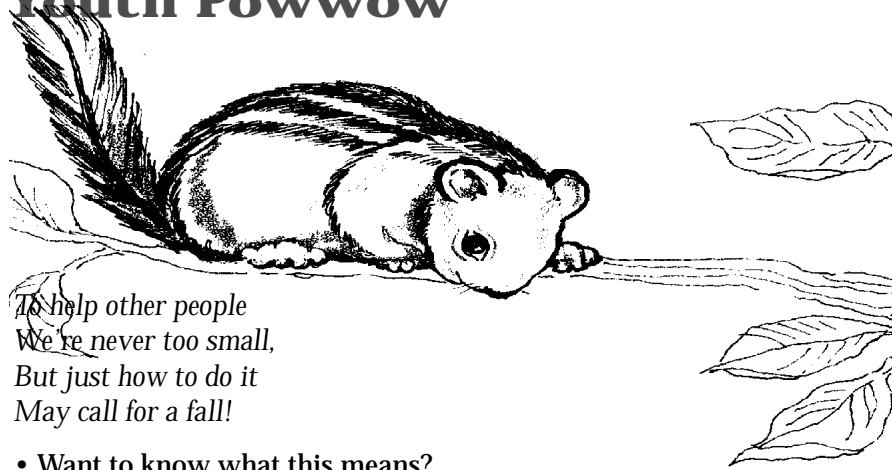
Thus, we can never really say that the *Ramayana* is old. As we saw from the way people were glued to their television screens when the *Ramayana* series was aired, the charm of *Ramayana* can never fade away. It is ever fresh and new.



The secret vein of energy that runs in every one of us is struck, not through pills and elixirs, but through dedicated actions. Selfish actions drain our energy. Actions dedicated unto the feet of the Lord, or for that matter, unto any higher cause, generate energy and ginger up enthusiasm in man.

Swami Chinmayananda

Youth Powwow



To help other people
We're never too small,
But just how to do it
May call for a fall!

- Want to know what this means?
- The Chipmunk has three stripes on his backs. Want to know how he got them?

Well, here is a story from India that will answer these questions.

Gitu's Place

ONCE UPON A TIME, IN A SMALL VILLAGE IN KERALA, there lived a chipmunk named Gitu, and he was very small. Why, he was the smallest animal in the forest that stood near the great ocean. The forest stood behind the great beach of sand dunes. Gitu's home was very beautiful.

But sometimes this place didn't seem beautiful to Gitu, because he didn't seem to have a place in it. Gitu didn't seem to belong, and sometimes he thought of himself not only as the smallest of animals, but as one of the most useless. At those times he would complain to his mother, "Chipmunks are useless, Mom."

His mother would reply with understanding, "No. Gitu, we too have our place."

The problem was that though Gitu was small, he wanted to be helpful to others in the forest; however, no matter whom Gitu would approach to help, he or she would take one look at his size and say: "No, Gitu, you're too small." No wonder he felt useless!

Why, just the other day Gitu had watched the Little Woodsman's smallest daughter struggle to take kindling into the house for her elderly father, and Gitu had decided to help, but when he ran to hold the door for her she screeched, "Watch out, shrimp! Get out of the way! "

Gitu was crushed. Chipmunks were no good for anything, he thought.

“They can’t even help the smallest human. “

“Useless!” he shouted, as he began to cry softly in his little room. His mother soon came in and stroked his soft brown fur. “Don’t worry, my little Gitu, everything has its place. If you want to help, then pray very hard and keep on trying. You’ll find a way.” Soon Gitu felt better and he fell asleep.



The next day loud clashes of thunder awakened Gitu. Great clouds had appeared over the forest, and now as the rains poured down and the sky crackled, the great ocean swelled. Every year this happened at the time of the monsoon, but this year even the largest animal in the forest became alarmed as day after day it rained, and the water crept closer. One day Gitu heard the old elephant (who knows about those things) say that the the forest would be flooded soon. “A dam is the only way to help us,” he cried. “We must fill the sandbags, bring logs, anything we can to stop the water. Everyone must help! “

“Everyone must help,” thought Gitu. He didn’t know what a dam was. He didn’t even know what a flood was, but he was determined to find his place, to do his part. He watched as everybody—men, women, and animals—carried sandbags down the great sand hill to the place where the water stopped, but every time Gitu uttered his usual phrase, “Can I help?” he was simply ignored or pushed aside.

The elephant gave the biggest insult. “Hrrrhumph,” he roared, “We don’t need little things underfoot!”

This time, however, little Gitu didn’t give up. He said a little prayer and charged down the next hill to see if he could help another neighbor, but as he ran down the sand dune at top speed, he tripped and rolled down instead. Gitu was embarrassed as all the villagers laughed at the little ball of sand which landed at the place where the dam was being built. But they didn’t laugh for long; for as little Gitu shook off the sand with tears in his eyes, he noticed that a little pile of sand had formed, shaken loose from his fur. He was ecstatic! He had found his place! At least that is what he yelled as he ran up to the top of the hill and rolled to the bottom again and again. He would roll and shake, roll and shake. He estimated that by the time the dam was finished he would have added at least two whole bagfuls of sand!

At first the villagers laughed, but since Gitu never got tired, they soon took inspiration from him. Gitu actually helped them work faster and harder.

Soon the dam was finished, and the forest homes were saved. Everyone congratulated one another, and everyone was invited to a great celebration—everyone, that is, except little Gitu. When the job was done, nobody seemed to remember him.

“Oh, it isn’t so bad,” Gitu told his mother. “After all, Mom, now I know our place. Chipmunks aren’t useless!” Gitu was happy, but silently his mother prayed that he would somehow get the recognition he deserved.

And that, in fact, is what happened. As the story goes, on the eve of the great celebration for the building of the dam, a great and beautiful figure (who some say was the Lord in a special form) came to the home of little Gitu and lifted him up in his left hand. It seems that he carried the little chipmunk to the party and held him where all could see. Of course, on seeing the great figure everyone grew silent. Then, in a great, gentle voice which filled the sky, the figure spoke:

“This is my friend Gitu—my good friend in whom I am very well pleased. Behold, I will give him and all chipmunks to come stripes to show their place of service, marks for everyone to see!” And with that he stroked the little chipmunk with three fingers of his right hand and set him down. Thunderous applause from his neighbors filled the room, and Gitu felt very proud. Quietly the figure disappeared. All little Gitu could say about this event was these simple words, but everyone know he felt much more:

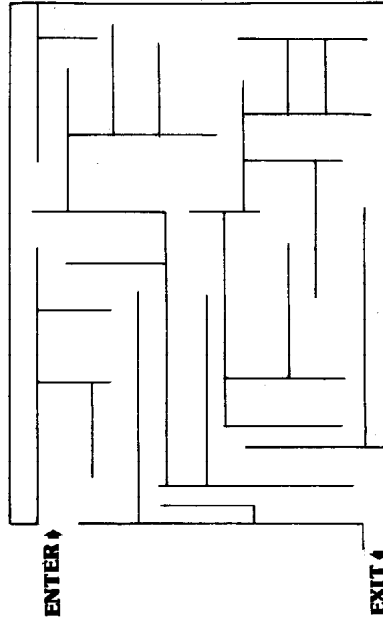
“Oh, it wasn’t much,” he said in his tiny voice. “All it took was a fall!”



youth Pow-wow puzzles: "gitu's secrets"

Unscramble the words at the right and fill the blanks in each sentence. Then unscramble the circled letters to get the magic word. Put it in the final sentence. Now you'll have many tips from Gitu. Good luck.

1. Happiness is the _____ reward. estb
2. You're never too _____ to help. eltilt
3. Gitu never _____ up. avge
4. He didn't just _____ when
everyone said "no." rcy
5. He always loved to _____. verse
6. He _____ forgot what he wanted. rvnee



Magic sentence:

He kept _____.

DON'T GIVE UP!!

Here's the way to practice:

Can you find three ways out of this maze in 10 seconds?

It can be done. Try it.

Now

ColorMe



Here is a picture of Gitu for you to color. Or punch holes in sheets of different colored paper with a hole puncher and then glue the circles onto the picture in order to color Gitu. Try it!

Why Do We Light a Lamp?



IN ALMOST EVERY INDIAN HOME A LAMP IS LIT DAILY before the altar of the Lord. In some houses it is lit at dawn, in some, twice a day—at dawn and at dusk - and in a few, it is maintained continuously (akhanda deepa). All auspicious functions and moments like daily worship, rituals and in festivals and even many social occasions like inaugurations, commence with the lighting of the lamp, which is often maintained right through the occasion.

Why do we light a lamp?

Light symbolizes knowledge, and darkness indicates ignorance. The Lord is the “Knowledge Principle” (chaitanya who is the source, the enlivener and the illuminator of all knowledge). Hence light is worshipped as the Lord Himself.

Knowledge removes ignorance just as light removes darkness. Also knowledge is lasting inner wealth by which all outer achievements can be accomplished. Hence we light the lamp to bow down to Knowledge as the greatest of all forms of wealth. Knowledge backs all our actions, whether good or bad. We therefore keep a lamp lit during all auspicious occasions as a witness to our thoughts and actions.

Why not light a bulb or tube light? That too removes darkness. But the traditional oil lamp has a further spiritual significance. The oil or ghee in lamp symbolizes our vasanas or negative tendencies and the wick represents the ego. When lit by spiritual knowledge, the vasanas get slowly exhausted and ego too finally perishes. The flame of a lamp always burns upwards. Similarly we should acquire such knowledge that would take us towards higher ideals.

A single lamp can light hundreds more just as a man of knowledge can give it to many more. The brilliance of the light does not diminish despite its repeated use to light many more lamps. So too knowledge does not lessen

when shared with or imparted to others. On the contrary it increases in clarity and conviction on giving. It benefits both the receiver and the giver.

Whilst lighting the lamp we thus pray

दीपजोतिः परब्रह्म दीपः सर्वतमोऽपहः
दीपेन साध्यते सर्व सन्ध्यादीपो नमोऽस्तु ते ॥

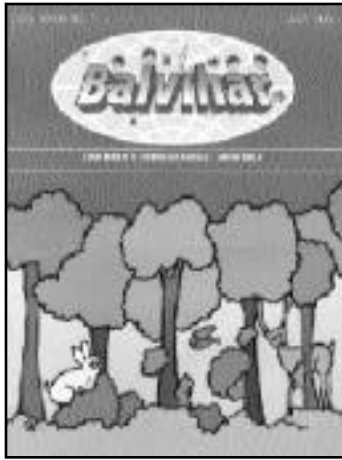
d pajoti` parabrahma d pa` sarva tamo`paha`
d pena sādhyate sarva sandhyād po namo`stu te

I prostrate to the dawn/dusk lamp, whose light is the Knowledge Principle (the Supreme Lord) which removes the darkness of ignorance and by which all can be achieved in life.

*Which else shall beautify a home
but the flame of a lovely lamp?
Which else shall adorn the mind
but the light of wisdom deep?
-Swami Chinmayananda*

Thus this custom like countless others in our rich culture contains a wealth of intellectual and spiritual meaning.

Bala Vihar Kids' own Magazine



Parents

This is a monthly magazine published by Central Chinmaya Mission, Mumbai for Children. It is packed with stories, puzzles, arts and craft ideas, children's contributions of essays, riddles, games, and much more. You can subscribe to it directly. The annual subscription is \$30 and you will receive it monthly by air. We suggest that you subscribe in your child's name so your child will have the pleasure of receiving his or her own magazine from India. Make your checks payable to "Central Chinmaya Mission Trust" and mail it to: Central Chinmaya Mission Trust, Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Saki Vihar Road, Mumbai 400 072, India.

Swami Tejomayananda's Itinerary March/April 2001

Month/Date	Location	Text	Telephone
Feb. 7-Mar. 18	Mumbai	Acharya's Conference	(091-022) 857 8647
Mar. 20-23	Melbourne	Satsangs	(61-3) 9846-8359
Mar. 24-27	Sydney Contact: Sri Kirti Bhima	Satsangs	(6102) 9680-1120
Mar. 29-Apr. 15	Mumbai		(091-022) 857-8647
Apr. 16-19	Chinchwad Contact: Sri Madhav Puranik	Reserved	(020) 857-8647
Apr. 20-25	Ichalkaranji Contact: Bhimkaran Chhapparwala	Tulasi Ramayana & Bhaja Govindam	(0230) 430076 (022) 857-8647
Apr. 27-30	Surat Contact: Sri Kulbandhu Sharma	Satsangs	(0261) 228632
May 2-10	Sidhabari Contact: Sri K.R. Pai	Brahmacharis	(01892) 24951

Chinmaya Dhvani (Youth Choir)

Every Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Location: 12646 Cheverly Ct, Saratoga

The Chinmaya Dhvani group presents devotional music performances at the Mission-organized celebrations of Festivals and events. If you are interested in singing or playing an instrument such as Tabla, Flute, Harmonium, Violin, Keyboard etc, please contact Lakshmi Sukumar at (408) 867- 3193.