

Programme 1

A Lead-in to Vedānta

Synopsis

Human beings are in constant pursuit of something or the other with the hope of finding happiness or fulfilment on achieving what is pursued. What every individual is seeking through any pursuit is to end all suffering and enjoy permanent bliss. But on reaching one goalpost, the pursuer feels the need to pursue more of the same goal or something else. This constant pursuit of satiation, fulfilment and happiness leaves the individual disappointed, fatigued and helpless. Vedānta, the philosophical portions occurring in the final sections within the Vedas, provides a solution to this great human problem. Of the different schools of Vedānta, Śaṅkarācārya's Advaita Vedānta shows that the solution is within oneself. All the facets of life which can be categorized into three: God, universe and the self. Advaita Vedānta establishes that all these three are but manifestations of One Absolute Reality, that the One alone is Existence-Consciousness-Bliss from which everything that we experience derives existence, consciousness and bliss; therefore, that One Absolute Reality alone is the Ultimate Truth and the rest are all unreal. And the greatest truth is that the essential nature of an individual is that Absolute Reality. On realising this truth, the external quest for peace, security and happiness ends instantaneously and the seeker readily re-aligns to live blissfully in this world of unreality. 'A Lead-in to Vedānta' offers a first acquaintance to understanding the fundamental problem, the truth about oneself, the means of realising that truth and re-aligning oneself to a life of freedom amidst chaos and uncertainty.

- **For Prior Reading and Revision**

pdf of my lecture for a class will be posted one week before the given class.

- **Suggested Reading**

The Vedanta Commentaries of H.P. Blavatsky: Compiled and Annotated by H.J. Spiereburg, Point Loma Publications, San Diego, California, USA, 1992, pages 1 – 38

Introduction to Vedanta (The Vedic View and Way of Life) by H.H. Sw. Paramarthananda, founder-acarya of Vedanta Vidyanthi Sangha. – Book can be downloaded from the website of Arsha Avinash Foundation

Introduction to Vedanta – Understanding the Fundamental Problem by H.H. Sw. Dayananda, Published Vision Books (Incorporating Orient Paperbacks), New Delhi / Mumbai / Hyderabad. – pdf book can be downloaded free from a few sites in the internet. e.g., vedpuran.files.wordpress.com, archive.org and other such sites