

Immersion in Jnana Ganga

Author : Swami Brahmavidananda

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(Vedanta camp from 14th – 20th August 2016 conducted by Swami Brahmavidananda ji and Swamini Brahma-prajnananda ji).

Outside the Swami Dayananda Ashram in Rishikesh, the Ganga dances and roars furiously towards its faraway destination. Inside the ashram, another river continues to flow quietly as it has been for years and years. The river of knowledge. Words are like snakes and they shed their skins and they become different things, and only a teacher can help you discover their true meaning. Puja Swami Dayananda Saraswati has taught many and so many of these torch-bearers have been keeping the flame alive, for the present and future generation. And this flame links you to the past, to a past that is thousands of years old, and to the present, because it leads to you.

The text for the 85 participants, at the 7-day-camp at the ashram was `Upadesha Saahasri (Teachings in a thousand verses) , 2nd chapter by Adi Sankaracarya which gradually unfolds the knowledge of the changeless and non dual I. This was brought home again and again as participants sat by the Ganga while watching the changing flow, participated in the intensive meditations, also from Taittiriya Upanishad and Mahabharata. The four definitions of Yoga were dwelled upon, drawing from the Bhagavad Gita and Yoga Sutras. The focus was on strengthening adhikaaritvam (self growth for knowledge) and self discovery.

In what could have become a formidable dark forest of words, Swami Brahmavidananda ji and Swamini Brahma-prajnananda ji with humour and gentleness tried to bring the students closer to the goal of clear understanding. The level of rigor of discourse and debate, of question and answer between the teacher and the student in the text, was a reminder that this country took learning and knowledge and spiritual growth

seriously. In the course of the 7-day camp, we managed to dip and immerse ourselves into this age-old Jnana Ganga.

Some takeaways from the participants about different features of the camp :

“Pujya Swamiji’s presence is felt everywhere”. – Mangala Panchapkesan, Mumbai

I have a new found love for the works of Shankaracharya and an intention to further study his works. I further intend to practise japa daily with the rudraksha that was kindly given – Sunny, London

I loved the way in which the glory of Ishvara is enjoyed as Ganga Ma and Gangadhareshwara Bhagavan. I loved Swamiji’s way of answering questions and his fearlessness -Gunjan A, Delhi

“Whatever Swamiji said, went home clearly. What to say about his humility and accessibility” – Krishana Jain, Hoshiarpur

“Being born ignorant is not a fault but getting stuck with it and not seeking knowledge is an error. Atma is the conscious being. If understood, it is Satyam, Jnanam, Anantam. If not understood, then a samsaari ” – Rashmi Kaikini, Mumbai

“I really loved how Swamini ji connects the dots of life. I also discussed many of my life issues with Swamini ji and her warmth, guidance and accessibility helped to clear a lot of doubts and confusion” – Dileep, Hyderabad

“The whole ashram by the Ganga is a wholesome feeling. The dips in Ganga were awesome”. – Manonmani Karrupaih, Singapore

“Great to have the two teachers and receive (to use an Australian expression) the ‘Double Barrel’ which equates to a very forceful blast. Very much enjoyed the teachings” – Matt Garnham, Australia

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