



THE DIVINE LIFE

Vol. LXXII

APRIL 2013

No. 1

KATHOPANISHAD

CHAPTER II

VALLI i

यदेवेह तदमुत्र यदमुत्र तदन्विह ।

मृत्योः स मृत्युमाप्नोति य इह नानेव पश्यति ॥१०॥

10. What is even here (visible in the world), the same is there (invisible in Brahman), and what is there, the same here. He proceeds from death to death, who beholds here the difference (between Brahman and the world).

शिवानन्दाष्टकम्

SIVANANDA-ASHTAKAM

(श्री आर. राजगोपाल)

जगद्गुरुं शिवप्रदं भवाब्धिपोतसत्तमं
अनन्तसद्गुणालयं सदात्मचित्प्रभोज्ज्वलम्।
विशिष्टबुद्धिदायकं कृपाकरं मुदाकरं
हिमाद्रिवासिनं भजे शिवाख्यसद्गुरुं मुदा॥११

I worship the great sage of the Himalayas, "Siva" (Sivananda), the pre-eminent Guru of the world, the bestower of auspiciousness, the rescuer from earthly existence, the abode of virtuous qualities, the brilliant light of the Atma embodied, and an ocean of mercy and joy;

सदेहलोकचिन्तया सुदूरकृष्टमानसान्
शिवोपदेशनिर्झरप्रवाहमग्नहर्षितान्।
करोति यो निजात्मतत्त्वभासुरान् तमादराद्
हिमाद्रिवासिनं भजे शिवाख्यसद्गुरुं मुदा॥१२

Him, who transports, to a world of joy, people who are constantly torn asunder by many a thought of this ephemeral life, and makes them shine with the light of knowledge of the Self;

यथा स्वदेशवासिनां मनोऽतिरंजयत्यरं
तथा प्रभावशालिनां च यो विदेशवासिनाम्।
हितोपदेशबृंहितैः प्रबोधनैः क्रियात्मकैः
हिमाद्रिवासिनं भजे तमादरात् शिवं गुरुम्॥१३

Him, who is the cynosure of all eyes of this country as well as the world outside, endeared by his teachings which are at once universal and imperishable and which prompt them to effective action;

यो ददाति मंगलं सतामयाचितः स्वयं
विशेषतः प्रपंचवृत्तिरागरंजितात्मनाम्।
यो हि दूरतः स्थितोऽयदूर एव चिन्तनात्
तं भजे हिमाद्रिवासिसद्गुरुं शिवाख्यकम्॥१४

Him, who bestows good to the devoted and particularly to those who are immersed in the tinsel-like joys of this world and who, though afar, is yet close at hand to the earnest seeker;

स्फोटनैरणुप्रभावसम्भवैर्भयप्रदैः
मोहमग्नचेतसां महाप्रबोधगर्जनम्।
यद्रचोमृतं दृढीकरोति धैर्यसंस्थितिं
तं भजे हिमाद्रिवासिसद्गुरुं शिवाख्यकम्॥१५

Who brings, by his thunderous roar of Vedanta, a great awakening to the deeply distressed minds of the people the distress caused, of late, by nuclear explosions and establishes them on the firm pedestal of courage and faith;

लोकशोकनाशनेऽतिवेलबद्धदीक्षितं
शिष्यतापहारिणं शिवात्मबोधसद्ब्रतम्।
ध्यानयोग संश्रितं क्रियाकृतार्थजीवितं
तं भजे हिमाद्रिवासिसद्गुरुं शिवाख्यकम्॥६

Who has girded up his loins for the destruction of the misery of the world, who has taken a vow of bringing the supreme knowledge to the door of all seekers, who, though immersed in meditation, is ever engaged in actions, uplifting and ennobling the soul;

येन दिव्यजीवनेऽनुनीयते जनव्रजो
भक्तकोटिसंस्तुते भवामयप्रमर्दने।
स्वात्मदर्शनप्रबन्धराशिना कृतोज्ज्वले
तं भजे हिमाद्रिवासिसद्गुरुं शिवाख्यकम्॥७

Who gently induces the people to take to the life divine, that has attracted a crore of devotees. The Divine Life society effectively bars the door to the world of death, disease and distress and

is illuminated by hundreds of lamps of Swamiji's writings.

यं गुरुं समेत्य दिव्यजीवने कृतादरा
येन नित्यशान्तिसौख्यभागिनः श्रिताः कृताः।
यस्य वाक्सुधाझरीनिमज्जनातिपाविताः
तं भजे हिमाद्रिवासिसद्गुरुं शिवाख्यकम्॥८

Day by day numerous devotees are pouring into His Divine Life. Innumerable are the people who are benefitted by him, have partaken of his joy and peace and are rendered pure by their dip in the holy stream of His speech (message).

शिवानन्दाष्टकं पुण्यं गुरुपादाम्बुजन्मनोः।
अर्पितं राजगोपालशर्मणा भक्तिसंयुतम्॥

I (Rajagopal Sharma) offer with devotion this bouquet of eight flowers (verses) at the lotus-feet of my Gurudev (on the auspicious occasion of his 72nd Birthday).

THE BEST-QUALIFIED ASPIRANT

The Uttama Adhikari, who is, ever ardent, silent and serene due to the dawn of proper knowledge, ever the same among the diverse men of the world, undisturbed by the distracted activities of the work-a-day world, calm and peaceful, withdrawn himself from the bustle of life, unmindful of what is happening on earth, disinterested either in this or that, indifferent to the pleasures of a so-called successful life,—that is really fit indeed to receive the ultimate Wisdom of the Lord and the Truth. Even if there is the slightest desire lurking inside other than for the realisation of the Divine, that person will not be able to comprehend the true import of the Upanishadic teachings or the instruction by the spiritual teacher. He will have thousand doubts and distractions in the mind that make impossible all spiritual activity.

—Swami Sivananda

Sri Ramanavami Message:

CULTIVATE THE TWIN IDEALS OF TRUTH AND PURITY

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

No one but the righteous can be truly happy. No one but he who has the correct sense of duty and the will for its implementation can be said to live worthily. One must be imbued with a definite conviction about the supremacy of moral principles, ethical values and spiritual ideals that should guide one's day-to-day actions and serve as a powerful means for the culture of the human personality. This is the purpose of life. This is the way to Self-realization.

If anything justifies life, it is the law of righteousness. Righteousness is not merely something of a moral code; it is the basic principle which upholds life. It fulfils one's responsibility as a unit of society, affirms the dignity of the human being and his dedication to the ideals of truth and justice, uplifting him from all that is vulgar and mean, evil and inequitable.

In a remote age, we find a great and aging king electing to die of broken-heart in order to adhere to a promise—necessitating him to banish his most beloved son and depriving him of the right of succession—rather than to try to justify its negation or withdraw from it for personal preference or sentiment. That a promise once given, however ambiguous its scope or wide its range of application, has got to be fulfilled, irrespective of its consequences, is

pathetically exemplified in the case of Dasaratha, and gloriously so in the case of Sri Rama. The latter's magnificent sense of values, upholding of the law of righteousness, has ever been the ideal of every Hindu.

Shri Rama was 'Dharmadhvaja', the apostle of righteousness. The method of his living, his characteristic behaviour towards his Gurus, parents, wife, brothers, friends and enemies gives a clue to the proper conduct of the social man and a remedy to the degeneration of the present day society. '*Dharmasya Tattvam Nihitam Guhayam*'—the true nature of righteousness is hidden in the recess of direct illumination. To act according to Dharma requires a spiritual vigilance. Rama has shown the way.

The Dharma of all Dharmas is the spiritual expansion of the self. All ethics, but, form auxiliaries of this natural and essential fact. Sri Rama flashed a light of this truth through the torch of his own life, and all lovers of Truth are the lovers and worshippers of Rama, the Supreme Divinity expressed in the relative land of Dharma.

On the most auspicious and joyous Ramanavami Day, let us all cultivate the ideals of Truth and Purity and let these twin principles be the motto of our life. Let these principles animate every moment of our existence, motivate each action of ours, dwell in our hearts, fill our

minds and pervade our speech. Let Truth and Purity light up our career, guide our conduct and mould our character. Let these twin forces sweep away all inauspiciousness and evil for ever from our life. Banished will be the black-night of sorrow and suffering, and before their divine blaze will vanish the shadows of vice and of unrighteousness.

Amongst the numerous lessons I wish, this day, to particularly impress upon you, two ideas stand prominent. They are the special need of the world today. Humanity has been corrupt now due to its falling away from the two essential ideals indispensable to the weal and happiness of life,—individual, national, and also international. They are the ideals of Purity and Truth. Let these twin flames of Truth and Purity burn bright upon your broad bosom.

Therefore, I emphasise these two great ideals—the sublime ideal of Purity and the lofty ideal of Truth. Rama was the embodiment of both. The entire Ramayana was the outcome of his burning desire to validate the promise of his father, Dasaratha, made to Kaikeyi, the queen. An illustrious prince, Rama, voluntarily subjected himself to the untold hardships of fourteen years of forest-life, amidst fierce beasts and Asuras, just to keep up a promise not made or given by him but by another, even before he was born. The Ramayana is permeated with the spirit of these two ideals. Dasaratha sticks to truth even though it costs him his very life. Grief breaks his heart and shatters his body to death, yet the word given to Kaikeyi is kept up. Then let us take an instance of Rama's life. He loves Bharata more than his life-breath. Yet, having given his word to his stepmother, not even the

most poignant entreaty of the beloved Bharata can make him budge an inch from his resolve. What a proof of the strength of truth! In every man's heart should ring today the grand and most memorable declaration of Sri Rama: "The fire may abandon its heat, ice its coolness, jasmine its fragrance, but I never break my promise made to my father." Truth is indeed the supreme good; nay, God Himself. Therefore, blessed aspirants! take up this trident of Truth, with its threefold prongs of truthful thought, speech and deed, and deal a death-blow to all untruth and impurity.

Sri Ramanavami, and such other periodical celebrations, are indeed a boon and blessing to us. They serve to keep bright and alive those lofty examples by following which life on earth becomes fruitful. Attend to the celebration with the right and proper *Bhava* (attitude) and benefit yourself fully by it. Resolve from this Sri Ramanavami Day to take a daily dip into the life-redeeming waters that Ramayana is. Read a small portion of the Ramayana everyday. You will be constantly inspired. You will derive valuable guidance in your day-to-day life. You will, without fail, absorb into your own being the lofty qualities embodied therein. Within a short time you will surely find yourself a different man, greatly filled with Sattva, with the divine spirit of Truth and Purity. Peace, joy and prosperity will be yours here and hereafter.

May the blessings of the Lord Rama be upon you all!

Sivanandashram,
15th March, 1963.



STRENGTH AND HUMILITY

(Sri Swami Chidananda)

The worship of Lord Hanuman is an ideal that requires our attention and adoration not once in a year, but always. The worship of Hanuman verily constitutes worship of the Divine Reality in the form of strength and powers dedicated to duty and to the Divine Being. The worship of Hanuman implies the worship of strength adorned with humility—the worship of strength and powers simultaneously combined with devotion and dutifulness.

The great Hanuman's life is nothing if it is not devotion and dedication, humility and the spirit of service. The worship of Hanuman indicates your acceptance of this ideal. The worship of Hanuman is a token of adoration to the principles of self-sacrifice and service, devotion and dedication, and absolute impersonal selflessness. The worship of Hanuman is the ideal for all beings who wish to transform their lives and themselves into beings of courage and strength, and at the same time be adorned by the spirit of service, devotion and total dedication to the feet of the one of whom they consider themselves to be the disciple, follower and devoted servant.

If you consider yourself as a devoted servant of God, devotee of God, follower of God, you have ever to keep before you

the effulgent, radiant ideal of this unparalleled personality of the Ramayana. He had the strength that could lift mountains. He had the strength that could cross oceans. But despite this he remained what he really was: a dedicated, devoted, self-effacing servant of the Divine, depicted always at the feet of the Divine, head bowed down and hands folded.

This is Hanuman's place, vow and personality, ever in the presence of God. It is due to his dedication, devotion, humility and utter selflessness that he has become the favourite among the devotees of God. It is due to these sublime qualities of self-effacement that Hanuman has become perpetual, an idea in Indian culture. He is the deity of millions in India. And through the Ramayana, Valmiki has sought to make him immortal, ever present in the vision of all human beings.

May the grace of the Supreme inspire you to emulate this ideal and to sincerely work towards the fulfilment of such an ideal in your own personal life. The hazard and the danger of a subtle spiritual ego, a Sadhaka Abhiman, will be made impossible if this ideal is present in your heart as a guide to your spiritual living, to your Sadhana and to whatever selfless service you are engaged

in. To beautify, elevate and transform all these three aspects of your spiritual life, the worship of Hanuman presents special significance, holds special meaning and constitutes a universal ideal.

May God and Guru enable us to live such a life, having before us this ideal to be striven for as we offer the external worship this morning at the little shrine on the bank of the Ganga!

* * *

HE GUIDES ME FROM AFAR

(Sri Vina Mhaskar, Tanzania, E.Africa)

It is said that if a Sadhaka is really in search of 'Guru-Upadesha' or 'Guru-Kripa', he can get it wherever he may be! And I have experienced its trueness.

A person like me staying far away in Africa, in an undeveloped country like Tanzania, in a small place like Lindi, doing Satsanga Mandal activity, one day met a gentleman who gave me a book 'Sivananda's Illuminating Messages' to read. I read it as I read other books, but my mind changed! I found something new. A few hours' good company makes a revolution in a person. Nastika becomes Astika. It is all true. Surely that was the miracle of the Satsanga of Swamiji's writings!

I wrote a letter to Swamiji for his grace, doubting whether I am worthy of it! But to my surprise I got an answer by return mail and also his precious books coming one by one, pouring Divine Nectar. The books are more than a treasure to me indeed.

For the last two years I have been constantly reading his books, magazines, etc., and I find that his writings are like the divine Cow (Kama Dhenu). If I think about anything, or if any problem crops up, I just go through his books and I get the answer.

When one is so much inspired by his writings, that is by doing Satsanga of his books, I wonder what must be the glory if one is fortunate enough to have his Satsanga in person! Indeed Swamiji is a mystery. I have no words to describe how very grateful I am for His kind grace!



THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HEART IN THE FIELD OF SPIRITUAL LIVING

(Sri Swami Krishnananda)

(Continued from the previous issue)

We are often landed in an enigma, a dilemma, a quandary, a difficulty when we collect our thoughts in meditation, because objects impinge on our senses. They resist our attempt to concentrate on the true subjectivity of ourselves which is the heart, which is the true cave. It is called the cave because it is hiddenly present behind all phenomenal appearance. It is that which gives meaning to phenomena. It is the reality behind the appearance. It is inside the appearance; therefore, it is the cave. To refer to the analogy I gave earlier, it is the deepest inside the five sheaths, or the *koshas*, as they are called: *annamaya*, *pranamaya*, *manomaya*, *vijnanamaya*, *anandamaya*, corresponding to which there are the planes of existence, which are also said to be seven in number. The different lokas or planes of existence are called Bhuloka, Bhuhvarloka, Svarloka, Maharloka, Janaloka, Tapoloka and Satyaloka.

All sacred things are counted in sevens. There are seven stages of knowledge, seven stages in everything. The eighth thing behind the seven stages, or bordering upon the edge of the seventh, is the core, the centre, the true subject. We have lost that subjectivity in us by entangling ourselves in objectivity. We are objects, and no more subjects. There is no use merely parading our subjectivity and announcing our pride that we are

independent persons. No more are we independent when we have converted ourselves into objects which are visible to the senses. This body is an object of sense perception, and therefore, if the body is the 'I' or the 'me', it is no more a subject. So every person, every thing, has become an object, which means to say everyone has entered into phenomena, and lost the true reality that is behind phenomena.

Meditation is the reversal of the phenomenal process into the true subjectivity that is the cave behind phenomena—the heart of things. So, when the heart is spoken of, it is not my heart or your heart that we are referring to, as there is no such thing as that. There is no such thing as my subjectivity and your subjectivity, or my heart and your heart, my consciousness and your consciousness, my Atman and your Atman. It is a basic expanse which comprehends the imagined subjectivities in a transcendent subjectivity which philosophers sometimes refer to as the transcendental unity of apperception. It is not perception but apperception, which is cognition of cognition itself, not cognition of an object. This is sometimes called *anuvyavasaya* in the language of the Nyaya philosophy. It is knowledge not of an object, but knowledge of knowledge itself.

Such is a requirement in the deeper reaches of meditation. We are involved individuals, no more spiritual sparks, when we are unable to conceive this true subjectivity in us and take our objectivity for our true reality. It is not enough if we merely struggle to get over this shackle of entanglement in the physical body. There is a greater difficulty in freeing ourselves from the bondage of involvement in mental operations also. That is the real bondage, not the body merely. The body is shed, and it has to be shed one day or the other, yet bondage does not cease. Our bondage does not end with the shedding of the body because bondage is not the physical encasement, but the way in which we think. And what is the way in which we are thinking? You know very well; everyone knows what everyone is thinking.

We think that we are one among many things, which is not the truth of the matter. We are not one among the many. There is something in us, as I mentioned a few minutes before, which defies comparison, and therefore, we cannot compare ourselves with somebody else and say that we are one in a large crowd of individuals. A subject that we are is not one in a large crowd of noises made by the senses. It is an independence, incapable of conception and description—*kaivalya*, true independence, aloneness, which is not a physical, geographical aloneness in our own rooms, but the psychological, or rather, the spiritual aloneness where we stand above even the limitations imposed upon us by the dimension of space and the movement of time.

The meditation on the heart referred to in the Taittiriya and the Chhandogya Upanishads is, therefore, the concentration of consciousness on itself,

because it is the deepest cave. Pure *chaitanya*, or consciousness, is the true subject behind every person and every thing, and even the so-called material objectivity gets reduced into this pure consciousness when it is investigated into, to its core. When matter is analysed threadbare into its ultimate compositions, it vanishes into mere space-time. And what is space-time if it is not merely a consciousness of being? So matter vanishes into a pure consciousness of being when it is dematerialised by analysis of its internal components. Thus goes man with his body, and thus goes the whole universe with its contents. Something remains, which is the heart, the true 'I', the creator, the sustainer, and the transformer of all things, the God of religions.

This is the Absolute. It is the Absolute because it is not relative. The word 'absolute' is used to indicate something which cannot be compared to something else. Anything that is capable of comparison with something else is not absolute, it is relative. It is relative because it is related to something else. Every description is a relation of one thing to another thing; therefore, anything that is capable of being described or characterised is not absolute. This is the reason why sometimes people say God is *nirguna*; the Absolute is without characteristics, without qualities. People imagine and tell us that the Supreme Being has no qualities, no attributes, because qualities and attributes are nothing but descriptions in terms of something else. This will not obtain in the Absolute. Therefore, it is said it has no qualities although everything that we can consider as a quality is involved in it, just as every statue can be found inside a block

of stone. Though we cannot see any statue inside it, yet we can carve out any statue.

So is the Absolute. Every little formation can be found in it, yet nothing is there. All things are there, and yet nothing is there. It is this centre because it is prior to the notion of there being such a thing as a world outside. The thinker of the world is prior to the world. Ideas come first, actions and deeds later on. In order that the world be there, there must be a consciousness that the world is there. This consciousness is prior to the very fact of there being such a thing called the world, and therefore, the world is not the important thing. The consciousness of the world is important.

In this world, everything is conditioned by consciousness. If you are rich, it only means that you are conscious that you are rich. A richness minus consciousness of being rich is no richness. If you are rich and not conscious that you are rich, you cannot be called rich. If you are anything and you are not conscious that you are that thing, you are not that thing. If you have a lot of money with you but you are not conscious that you have money, you have no money. Everything is consciousness. If you subtract consciousness from anything, you will find it is a nihil, a zero. Thus, the very existence of things is consciousness. This is so because minus that, nothing can be even imagined in the mind. Not the whole creation can exist minus the consciousness of creation.

So God is first, creation is afterwards. And what does man think? He says he is first, and everything is afterwards. This is the topsy-turvy outlook of man where the last thing in creation, which he is, regards itself as the first thing. The last effect

imagines that it is the first cause. Man thinks that he is the ruler of all things, that he is the maker of everybody. He is the king, the emperor, the ruler, the dictator, and what not. "Such fantastic tricks he plays, as make the angels weep," says the poet. Angels are weeping at man. Oh, what a creation has been made by God! Like an ape he walks, and plays such fantastic tricks. Yet, he carries within his heart something which is very valuable.

What does he carry? He carries nothing substantial, nothing of this world. No man, no thing, carries anything other than himself or itself. I carry myself, you carry yourself, everything carries itself, and nobody can carry anything other than one's own self. So I am my property, you are your property, and every thing is its own property. Nobody can have anything else other than what one is, because the largest, the greatest, and the most valuable property is Pure Being itself. This is why there is a struggle for existence, finally, and every struggle is a struggle for existence. Every effort, every adventure, every project, every activity, everything that anyone does in any manner is a struggle to exist somehow, finally. Existence is the supreme value, and minus consciousness, existence is not. Therefore, consciousness, existence, is the supreme value. That is the heart of things. Here is the freedom of the individual, the freedom of all beings; and freedom is bliss.

Thus, existence and consciousness and freedom go together, and if freedom is bliss, *sat-chit-ananda*, Existence-Knowledge-Bliss is the heart of things. On this may we meditate.

(Concluded)

ADAPTABILITY

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

Adaptability is a virtue or noble quality by which one adapts or fits himself with others, whatever their nature may be. A man of adaptability accommodates himself with others, whatever their temperaments may be. This is a most desirable habit or quality for success in life. This has to be developed slowly. The vast majority of persons do not know how to adjust themselves with others. Adaptability is a peculiar knack or pluck to win the hearts of others and ultimately the battle of life.

The wife does not know how to adapt herself with her husband. She displeases her husband always and makes room for quarrels in the house and gets separated. The clerk does not know how to adapt himself with his boss or superior. He quarrels with him and gets an immediate dismissal. The disciple does not know how to adapt himself with his Guru. He misbehaves and leaves the Guru. The business man does not know how to adapt himself with his customers and therefore loses his customers and also business. The Diwan does not know how to adapt himself with the Maharajah. He displeases him.

This world runs on adaptability. He who knows this art pulls on quite well in this world and is always happy under varying conditions of life. The man must be pliable if he wants to adapt himself. It does need much wisdom and ingenuity.

If the clerk understands well the ways, habits and temperaments of his superior and adjusts himself nicely to suit his ways, the superior becomes a slave of the clerk. Gentleness of behaviour and some kind words are all that is needed.

Remember the maxim: "Obedience is greater than service". The superior wants a little respect. It costs you nothing. He will have always a soft corner for you in his heart. He will even overlook your mistakes. Humility and obedience are necessary for developing adaptability. That egoistic proud man finds it very difficult to adapt himself. He is always in trouble. He always fails in his attempts. Egoism and pride are two important and insurmountable obstacles in the way of developing adaptability.

When one student does not know how to adapt himself with his fellow-students who are living in the same room, friction comes and their friendship is at stake. Adaptability makes friendship last for a long time. Students fight for little things. One student says, "I gave Mr. X tea on several occasions. I took him to the cinema on my own account for many days. I asked him to lend me the book "Boswells's life of Johnson" for reading. He bluntly refused. What sort of a friend is he? I do not like him at all." Thus the friendship

is broken now. A simple thing upsets the mind. Adaptability is a strong cat-gut ligature that links people in bonds of unbroken love and friendship. A man of adaptability can pull on with anybody in any part of the world. People unconsciously love a man of adaptability. Adaptability develops will.

A man of adaptability has to make some sacrifice. It develops the spirit of sacrifice. It kills selfishness. A man of adaptability has to share what he has with others. He has to bear insult and harsh words. A man of adaptability develops the feeling of oneness or unity. For Vedantic Sadhana it is of invaluable help. He who practises adaptability has to destroy the feelings of *Ghrina* (contempt) and the idea of superiority.

He has to mix with all. He has to embrace all. Adaptability develops universal love and kills the feeling of hatred.

If you want to develop adaptability you must be very patient and enduring. You should be kind to others. You must speak sweet words. If you practise this one virtue all other virtues will stick to you automatically. Adaptability brings Atma Jnana eventually. It makes you realise the Atmic bliss. You will become divinity incarnate if you persist in sticking to this one virtue.

May you develop this wonderful virtue and with its help attain success in every walk of life and ultimately merge in the supreme Self or Brahman at the dissolution of the physical body!

Om Shanti, Shanti, Shanti!

PANACEA FOR BIRTH AND DEATH

MAKE your heart as the mortar,
 When you prepare this celestial drink;
 Rub the mortar with the pestle of "Sri Ram",
 Rub it again and again forcibly;
 Crush the cravings and "I-ness" and "mine-ness".
 Sing or chant "Om Sri Ram Jaya Ram Jaya Jaya Ram".
 Let the current be unbroken.
 Add the syrup of meditation of Lord's Form;
 Also add a few black pepper of "Grace" through surrender.
 Now drink this elixir very freely.
 Repeat it again and again.
 This is the panacea for birth and death.

—*Swami Sivananda*

KEEPING OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE PROGRESSIVE

(Sri Swami Atmaswarupananda)

It is not uncommon in the spiritual life that a seeker, after many years of sincere struggle, can suffer from disillusionment. There are many factors that can trigger this disillusionment. Sometimes it is disappointment in a teacher or an organization, but most often it is a disappointment in our own progress. We feel that we have put in the required effort—perhaps even more than we thought should be required—and we simply don't see any fundamental change.

The reason usually is a basic misunderstanding of the spiritual life. It is because we are seeking something *for* the ego instead of seeking freedom *from* the ego. We may know that getting rid of the ego is the essence of the spiritual life, but knowing it intellectually and understanding what the problem is at a gut level is something else again.

We have a picture of our ego—my ego. We can know it quite well. But knowing it even inside out doesn't mean we're moving one inch away from it. Indeed, our spiritual practices may have even strengthened the ego rather than worn it away. Because the truth is that it isn't who we imagine ourselves to be, that is the real problem. It is, having identified with one body and mind, we have the illusion that we are the centre of the universe.

It is that centre of the universe, that illusion, that has to be worn away or surrendered. If we are not even aware that that is our fundamental position, how likely is it that it will be worn away? Thus we continue in our spiritual life as the centre of the universe and wonder why we

haven't made any progress. What we need to understand is, whether we call it renunciation or sacrifice or surrender, it is the illusion that we are the centre of the universe that has to be dealt with.

Day by day, as Pujya Swami Chidanandaji used to say, wear away the ego a little bit. It means day by day rid ourselves of a little bit of the illusion that we are the centre of the universe. A fundamental step towards this is to treat others the way we would like others to treat us, to see others as ourselves, to see ourselves in others. If we really relate to other people, we will see that they too think that they are the centre of the universe. We will then begin to realize that that is the fundamental basis of all our problems as human beings. Each one of us thinks that we are the centre of the universe. We are the important ones. We are the subject and everything else—including God—is our object.

It is the spirit of continuous surrender of the illusion that we are the centre of the universe that is key to our spiritual life. Once that is seen and practised, then our spiritual life can become progressive, and we can gradually, or sometimes suddenly, see real movement within. Our spiritual life becomes progressive, because we know the true path: It is not getting something *for* the ego. It is being freed *from* it. We begin to understand the ego and its tricks. We subtly begin to understand who we are—that eternal presence that never judges, that has ever been there, and is ever our best friend. □ □ □

THE BEACON LIGHT TO THE MODERN WORLD

(Sri E. A. Rajagopalachari, B. A. L. T., Gadhwal, Deccan.)

Man is inherently a compound of the three abstract qualities: Animality, Humanity and Divinity. It is generally said that he is 90% of the first quality, 9% of the second and only 1% of the last. Whatever may be the percentage of these qualities, we are witnessing in these modern days, that the mentality of the people instead of endeavouring to evolve to nobler heights, to realise the cosmic truth is sinking lower into depths of degradation and hopeless despondency, from which never to return. Go to the north, go to the east, go to the west the goddess of Materialism reigns supreme. In the words of the English poet: *"The world is too much for us."* We are too busy in materialistic pursuits and physical comforts and luxuries, without meditating even for a single moment upon the manifestation of Divine Energy all round us. We very often, pervaded by Maya or illusion and with our scanty lore and skill, carry our disputations to such a pitch as to negate the Vedas, Puranas and other sacred scriptures and deny the very existence of not only God but even our forefathers, who have left us such glorious traditions of their accumulated wisdom. Egoism and selfishness and blind imitation have occupied a strong place in the horizon of human mentality. Appeasement of physical senses—self-display—exploitation of others have become the order of the day, and are considered the highest cardinal

principles of our terrestrial existence. Life beyond is a myth—the ideas of sin and purgatory, Heaven and its delights are no more recognised than mere phantoms. Life in the present—I mean the animal life is the predominating field of attention.

The Lord in the glorious Gita has well spoken that whenever vice rises and virtue sinks, that He incarnates Himself on earth to relieve mankind. Men of superb merits are accordingly born from time to time, work hard for the uplift of the world within the limit of their human infirmities and pass away, some-times leaving their unfinished work to their successors in the field. What is all this but the Will of Cosmic Soul?

In the field of spirituality, in particular there have been magnets like Ramtirtha, Ramkrishna, Vivekananda in the near past, Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhwa in the distant past, kings like Janak—sages like Vasishta, world teachers like Krishna, heroes like Rama in the dim past. In the modern world Swami Sivananda needs no introduction to the readers and aspirants. Occupying a secluded shelter amidst the snowy heights of the Himalayas, Sri Swamiji is radiating his spiritual energy to the four corners of the world with a burning ambition to elevate modern man to his pristine glory once more adopting such methods and means as would suit the

modern environmental conditions – a brilliant star in the firmament of the Vedic lore—a beacon light to the aspirants in search of Truth and eternity. Though far away, he is ever enshrined in the hearts of his disciples and aspirants who have been the many recipients of his spiritual gifts. The books, pamphlets and other literature and the Magazine 'Divine Life', his lectures in several places, his opening of societies and its branches in all parts of the world are self-evident truths of the Swamiji's never ending desire to transform the world its ancient glory. His selfless service to humanity — his words of wisdom and courage, which he gives to

the aspirants in his letters, and above all his practical methods to suit individual tastes and inclinations and conveniences of the modern people, cannot but excite our admiration and appreciation of this noble soul whose voice like the celestial song of Sri Krishna of yore reverberates from corner to corner of the modern world. His disciples, followers and aspirants celebrate the auspicious occasion of his Birthday all over the country in all glory and magnificence, praying to the Almighty Lord to spare him for the benefit of mankind for many more turns to come.

OPTIMISM IS A LIVING STAMINA

Optimism is the doctrine or view that everything in nature and the history of mankind is ordained for the best, the order of things in the universe being adapted to produce the highest good. It is sanguine temperament opposed to pessimism. Pessimism is the opposite of optimism.

An optimist sees an opportunity in every difficulty; a pessimist sees a difficulty in every opportunity.

There is a bright side to every situation. Adopt a hopeful, confident state of mind. The trouble is half overcome before you start on it.

An optimist gets the best out of life. He hopes for the best and makes the best of people and circumstances and thinks the best of people.

Optimism is hope. It is happy life. It saves people. Optimism makes you happy and cheerful. The accident is not as terrible as you feared. The hill is not so steep as you begin climbing. The difficulty is not as great as you expected. Things come out better than you hope.

—Swami Sivananda

Children's Page

HOW TO VANQUISH THE ONE WHO QUARRELS

(Sri Swami Ramarajyamji)

Once Gandhiji was travelling. An Englishman was sitting near him. He wrote insulting words addressed to Gandhiji on a number of slips, stitched them with a pin and handed them over to him.

Gandhiji read a few lines but kept quiet. Then he took out the pin and threw the papers out of the window.

The Englishman was watching this. He had thought that Gandhiji would lose temper on reading them. Then he would get another chance of abusing him.

He lost his temper when he noticed that Gandhiji had thrown the papers. He said to Gandhiji sarcastically, "You should have gone through all those

papers. Those papers contained praises which I had heaped on you."

Gandhiji said smilingly, "Thank you, look at this pin. This is the essence of your praises. The essence I have kept with me and the rubbish I have thrown out."

We learn from this incident that if someone indulges in foolishness, we should exercise restraint and not repeat his foolishness. One, who quarrels with us, wants to incite us to retaliate. He would get a chance to show off his bravery if we succumb to his wish and retaliate. And that would be his triumph! The only way to vanquish him is to remain calm.

SIMPLICITY IS GRACEFUL

Simplicity is freedom from duplicity, affectation or pretension. In dress, in food, in character, in manners, in style, in all things, the supreme excellence is simplicity. There is a majesty in simplicity. Simplicity is Nature's first step and the last of art.

Be what you say. Say what you are. Write as you speak. Speak as you think. Be simple like a child. The door of Moksha will be opened unto you.

The greatest truths are the simplest; and so are the greatest men. Goodness and simplicity are indissolubly united. A simple, frank man is the most agreeable man. Purity and simplicity are the two wings with which man soars high to the Kingdom of God.

—Swami Sivananda

NEWS AND REPORTS

NEWS FROM THE HEADQUARTERS

SEVA THROUGH SIVANANDA HOME

By the profound Blessings of Sri Gurudev, the Divine Life Society Headquarters continues rendering its humble service through Sivananda Home, situated in Tapovan near Laxman Jhula. It provides medical facilities for homeless people who have become ill and are in need of in-patient treatment.

Not seldom it happens that a patient upon admission, seems to be completely at the end of his or her road. Having undergone many trials and tribulations, both physically and mentally, due to a life on the outskirts, on the edge, exposed to all weather conditions, street dogs and other hunters, for a long time, something inside is broken, the elasticity is fully outstretched and the power to resist or fight against all odds is just gone.

This was the case of one of the patients who got admitted this month, as he himself recalled. Suffering from a severe infected, painful and deep ulcer on the heel of the foot, he had been struggling for more than 2 years, on the run, 2 days treatment here, 3 days treatment there, from Delhi to Jaipur to Agra and back. So much so that he could not think properly even. After a short

investigation and routine checking of his bloodsugar, he was found to be highly diabetic, more than four times the normal level. In addition to this, he had a gastro-enteritis and could not stop vomiting for 2 days. But by the grace of the Almighty, he started feeling better, little by little, day by day, being under medical treatment, including high doses of antibiotics, daily bloodsugar charting, corresponding medication and diet. He would not speak much, just allowed his fatigued and exhausted body to rest on the bed. A lonely pilgrim, a brother in need, who found shelter at the feet of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, the ultimate healer, the doctor of body, mind and soul. Jai Sivananda! Jai Gurudev!

*“All that I am, all that I have, I lay them
before You, O Lord,
All my regrets, all my acclaims, the joy
and the pain, I am making them Yours.
Things in the past, things yet unseen, wishes
and dreams, that are yet to come true,
All of my heart, all of my praise, my heart
and hands are lifted to You.”*
(D. Moen)

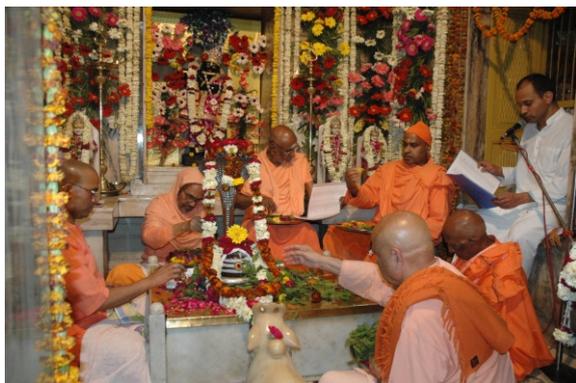
“Let us behold Thee in all these names and forms. Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms. Let us ever remember Thee. Let us ever sing Thy glories. Let Thy Name be ever on our lips. Let us abide in Thee for ever and ever.”
(Swami Sivananda).

SRI MAHASIVARATRI CELEBRATIONS AT THE HEADQUARTERS ASHRAM

तेजोमयं सगुणनिर्गुणमद्वितीयमानन्दकन्दमपराजितमप्रमेयम् ।
नादात्मकं सकलनिष्कलमात्मरूपं वाराणसीपुरपतिं
भज विश्वनाथम् ॥

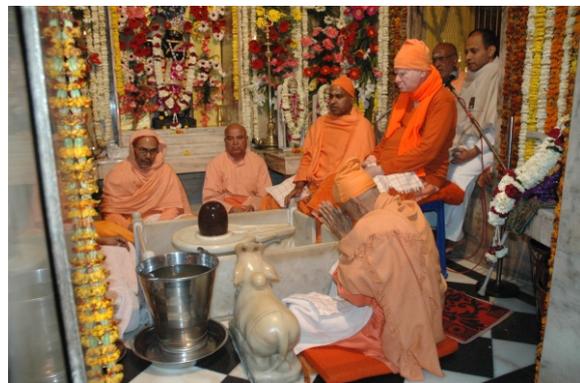
(Worship Vishwanatha, the Lord of Varanasi, who is effulgent, who is both with and without qualities, the one without a second, who is bliss itself, the unconquerable one, the unknowable one, the symbol of sound, who is both with and without parts or phases and who is the Self.)

The auspicious occasion of Mahasivaratri was celebrated with great sacredness and devoutness at the Headquarters Ashram on 10th March 2013. A large number of devotees from different parts of India and abroad had come to



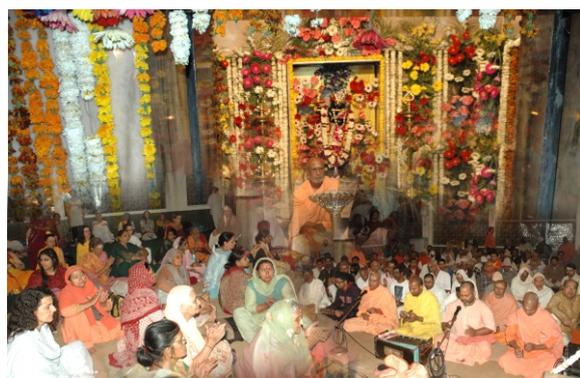
the holy abode of Sadgurudev to participate in Mahasivaratri celebrations.

As a part of the celebrations, the chanting of Panchakshari Mantra 'Om Namah Sivaya' was done daily for two hours from 6th to 9th March at Sri Vishwanatha Mandir. The Mahasivaratri day's programme commenced at 5.00 a.m. with prayers and meditation followed by Prabhat Pheri. Sri Vishwanatha Mandir reverberated with the soulful chanting of 'Om Namah Sivaya' from 7.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. as the Sannyasins, Brahmacharins, Sadhaks and visitors of the Ashram participated enthusiastically in the Akhanda chanting. A Havan for peace and welfare of the world was also performed at the Yajnasala.



At 8.00 p.m., the Mahasivaratri Puja commenced in the beautifully decorated and splendidly illuminated shrine of Lord Sri Vishwanatha; four grand worships in four Praharas were offered to the Lord to the chanting of Namakam and Chamakam. Everyone got the blessed opportunity of performing Abhisheka and Archana of the Lord. The devout and sonorous singing of Kirtans and hymns of Lord Siva throughout the night made the hearts as well as the temple premises 'Sivamaya'. The celebration concluded at 4.00 a.m. with Mangala Arati and distribution of sacred Prasad at Annapurna Dining Hall.

May the ever-auspicious Lord Siva and Sadgurudev shower their blessings upon us all.



INAUGURAL FUNCTION OF THE 73RD BASIC YOGA-VEDANTA COURSE

The seventy third oblation in the sacred Jnana Yajna of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was offered in the form of 73rd Basic Yoga-Vedanta Course. The two months Basic Yoga Vedanta Course (March—April) was inaugurated on 1st March 2013 at YVFA Hall wherein forty students from thirteen different States of India got the blessed opportunity to participate.

H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj and H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj graced the inaugural function by their august presence. The function commenced with the Puja at the holy temples of Mother Durga and Dattatreya Bhagavan. After the chanting of Jaya Ganesh Prayer and Guru Stotra, Sri Swami Yogavedantanandaji Maharaj, Registrar of the Academy, extended a hearty welcome to all those present. H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj lighted the Deepa (lamp) as an auspicious token of the commencement of

the Course. Thereafter, Sri Swami Akhilanandaji Maharaj introduced the students to the gathering.

H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj in his inaugural address apprised the students of the inspiring life of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and His glorious mission. Sri Swamiji also inspired the students to make their lives sublime and share the wisdom treasure received in the Academy with all. H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj in his blessing message enlightening the students about divine life said that negating the animal in man and transforming the human into divine is Divine Life. Sri Swamiji advised them to make best use of their stay at the sacred abode of Sadgurudev. The function concluded with the worship of Mother Saraswati and distribution of Prasad.

May the blessings of the Lord Almighty and Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj be upon all.

SANNYASA DIKSHA AT SIVANANDA ASHRAM

(The Divine Life Society Headquarters)

On the Holy Sivaratri Day, Sunday, 10th March, 2013, H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, President, DLS Headquarters, ordained Sannyasa Diksha, in the spiritual presence of Worshipful Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Worshipful H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj at Gurudev's Kutir on the sacred bank of Mother Ganga, at Sivananda Ashram, Shivanandanagar.

The following are the resident Sadhaks initiated into the Holy Sannyasa Order of Dasanami Parampara.

<u>Purvashram Name</u>	<u>Sannyasa Name</u>
1. Sri Harihar Singh	Swami Hariharananda Saraswati
2. Br. Raghava Chaitanya	Swami Raghavananda Saraswati

—THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY



Academy

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REPORTS FROM THE DLS BRANCHES

Ambala (Haryana): During the months of January and February 2013, the Branch held daily Satsanga on Sundays, Video Satsanga on the second Sundays, Sri Hanuman Stotra-chanting, Bhajans, etc. on Tuesdays, special Satsangas on the New Year Day and Punyatithi of H.H. Sri Swami Premanandaji Maharaj. Social service through Homeopathic Clinics is continued.

Aska (Odisha): The Branch held biweekly Satsanga on Thursdays and Sundays and monthly Sadhana Day on the first Sundays. On 6th January the Sadhana Day was in a village 15km away. It included a discourse on Sri Ramacharita Manas. 350 participating devotees were served Anna Prasad. In the Annual Day function Paduka Puja was done with offerings with one thousand names of our two Gurus—300 participants. A free Medical Camp was organised on the Republic Day—250 patients benefitted.

Bangalore (Karnataka): The Branch conducted Satsanga with Paduka Puja on Thursdays, Devi Puja and recitation of Sri Lalita-sahasranama and Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotras on Fridays, and Abhishekam, Bhajans and Svadhyaya on the first Sundays, Akhanda Kirtan on the third and monthly Satsanga on the fourth Sundays. H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj visited the Branch on 23rd February and gave a talk on “What Is Divine Life”. Yogasana class is held in the morning daily.

Barbil (Odisha): The Branch held weekly Satsanga at the Ashram on Mondays, Home Satsanga at the residence of the devotees on Thursdays, Balvikas class on Sundays, and Sadhana Day with Paduka Puja, Srimad Bhagavad Gita Path, Prasad Sevan and evening Satsanga on Chidananda Day. Sivananda Charitable Homeo Dispensary treated 600 patients in January.

Bargarh (Odisha): The Branch conducted 2-time Puja, Arati, daily Svadhyaya, Satsanga on Saturdays, Paduka Puja on Thursdays, Bhagavad Gita Path Chakra on Sundays, and daily Yogasana class. The Pratishtha Day of the Ashram was celebrated on Vasanta Panchami with Sri Saraswati Devi Puja and other programmes. Revered Swami Mokshapriynandaji took daily class on Gurudev’s teaching during his stay here.

Baripada (Odisha): The Branch held Paduka Puja daily, Annual Day special Paduka Puja and Satsanga on 2nd January, a Home Satsanga, and special Paduka Puja on Makar Sankranti.

Bellary (Karnataka): Besides the daily Puja, the Branch conducted Paduka Puja and Satsanga on Sundays. It also arranged special programme on Punyatithi of H.H. Sri Swami Devanandaji Maharaj.

Berhampur, Ladies Branch (Odisha): The Branch held special Satsanga on the New Year Day, Srimad Bhagavad Gita recitation on Ekadasis, and 108 Avartana (recitation) of Sri Hanuman Chalisa on Makar Sankranti. Revered Swami Shraddhaswarupanandaji and

Shraddheya Smt. Kamal Kumari Panigrahi Mataji joined in the programme of distributing food and utensils to 130 destitutes on third Sunday. A blood donation camp on the Republic Day, and free medical check-up of senior citizens were the other activities.

Berhampur, Lanjipalli (Odisha): On the occasion of the 22nd Annual Day of the Branch, Sri Rama-charita Manas Navahna (9-day) Parayana and Katha and daily Yajna were organised from February 17 to 25 in the newly constructed Ashram premises. On the concluding day food and clothes were distributed to the poor.

Bhanjanagar (Odisha): In addition to the daily Paduka Puja, the Branch held Satsanga on Ekadasis with Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotra Parayana, and Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on Makar Sankranti. On the occasion of 63rd Annual Day, it organised Sri Rama-charita Manas 9-day Parayana and discourses by Revered Smt. Kamala Kumari Panigrahi Mataji from January 25 to February 2.

Bhilai, Shantipara (Chhattisgarh): Special Activities: 1) Visit of saints: On 19th December 2012, Revered Swami Devabhaktanandaji and other Swamijis and leaders of the State visited this Branch. In a 5-hour special Satsanga, they gave spiritual talks and also gave spiritual guidance to the devotees. 2) Gita Jayanti: early morning Prabhat Pheri, Paduka Puja, Srimad Bhagavad Gita Parayana, Prasad Sevan. 3) Gita Svadhyaya: daily for two hours. 4) H.H. Sri Swami Devananda Maharaj's Punyatithi: Prabhat Pheri, Paduka Puja, Srimad Bhagavad Gita Parayana; Bhajan-kirtan, Prasad Sevan.

Bhismagiri (Odisha): The Branch held on Sundays weekly Satsanga with Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotra Parayana. On Purnima, 27th January, Pushya Abhisheka and Puja were performed, and Bhajan-kirtan, Narayan Seva and Prasad Sevan followed.

Bhubaneswar (Odisha): The Branch conducted the weekly Satsanga on Thursdays, Home Satsanga on Sundays, and the monthly Sadhana day on the last Sunday with poor feeding. On the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of the Branch, the 35th All Odisha D.L.S. Conference was organised on January 17-18-19. 55 saints, 5000 delegates, 10,000 devotees participated. (see a detailed report and photographs on Page-24, "Divine Life", February, 2013.)

Bikaner (Rajasthan): The Branch had 2-time Puja, daily 2-hour Satsanga, Yajna on Chidananda Day. Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on 8th January and 12th February, Sri Sukhamani Sahib Path on 26th January and 23rd February, and Guru Govindsingh Jayanti, were done. It continued its social service of scholarships to poor students, spiritual library and Yogasana class. Special Activities: (1) Makar Sankranti: Yajna on a large scale, distribution of sweets. (2) Special Havan: on 27th January. (3) Vasanta Panchami: Sri Saraswati Devi Puja. (4) Surya Saptami: Puja, Havan. (5) Punyatithi of Revered Swami Vandanananda: Bhajan-kirtan, tributes on 8th February. (6) Ekadashi: Havan, prayers.

Chandigarh: The Branch conducted Satsanga on Thursday evenings, and Satsanga with Svadhyaya on Sunday

forenoons, followed by free food (Bhandara) to about 300 poor, and medical consultation (50-60 patients). On Sivananda Day, 12-hour Akhand Kirtan of Mahamantra is done.

Special Activities: (1) New Year Day: special Satsanga, video talk by H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. (2) Makar Sankranti celebrated as the Foundation day anniversary of the Divine Life Society—Bhajan-kirtan, reading a message of Gurudev, Khichri Prasad. (3) Punyatithi of H.H. Sri Swami Premanandaji Maharaj: special Sasanga. (4) 24-hour Akhanda Japa of Mahamantra: February 7-8.

Chatrapur (Odisha): Regular Activities: daily Satsanga; weekly Satsanga on Thursdays; Paduka Puja on Sivananda Day and Chidananda Day; and Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on Sankranti—on 14th January and 12th February.

Special Activities: (1) New Year Day: special Satsanga. (2) Home Satsanga: five in two months. (3) Satsanga in villages: in a nearby village on 20th January—Revered Swami Ramakripanandaji and Revered Swami Govindanandaji gave talks. (4) special Satsanga in Satsanga Bhavan: five Satsangas on request from devotees, 4-hour long Satsanga on 3rd February, where Revered Swami Sadasivanandaji gave a talk.

Chennai, Anna Nagar (Tamil Nadu): *Special Activities:* (1) Divine Conference: 12 hour Conference on Gandhi Jayanti; morning prayers, homage to Mahatma Gandhi and Gurudev; demonstration of 60

Asanas with Mantra by 34 winners; procession to Madras University Campus to garland the standing statue of Gurudev, Paduka Puja; discourses by 15 scholars, Maha Prasad, Bhajanavali; presentations to the 34 title winners; felicitation; laghu (small) Prasad, Divine Dance, etc. (2) Special Satsanga: on 24th February; prayer, Sankirtan, a talk on “Tattvamasi”.

Dhananjay Nagar (Odisha): The Branch continued its weekly Satsanga with Bhagavad Gita Svadhyaya on Sundays.

Digapahandi (Odisha): Regular Activities: 2-time Puja; biweekly Satsanga on Thursdays and Sundays; Paduka Puja on Sivananda Day and Chidananda Day; and special Sankirtana on Sankranti. *Special Activities:* on 24th January a 5-hour Havan, Sadhana Shibir and Youth Camp (50 youths participated). Revered Swami Ramakripanandaji, Revered Swami Govindanandaji, Sri Prakash Chandra Rathji, Sri Sridhar Dasji and others gave discourses. Collective recitation of Sri Hanuman Chalisa (108 Avartan) was done on 27th January.

Erein, Ladies Branch (Odisha): The Branch held Satsanga on Sundays, two Home Satsangas, Paduka Puja on Sivananda day, and one Home Satsanga with Paduka Puja, Path from Srimad Bhagavatam, Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotra Parayana, etc. Its 38th Foundation Day was on Vasanta Panchami; the special programmes included early morning prayer session, Sri Saraswati Devi Puja, Paduka Puja, Path from Srimad Bhagavatam, Prasad Sevan and evening Satsanga.

Faridpur (U.P.): The Branch conducted daily Puja-Arati and Sri Ramayana (monthly cycle) Parayana, and weekly Satsanga with Svadhyaya. It distributed blankets, woollen clothes—caps, socks, etc. and dry ration. Its volunteers went around and covered the poor sleeping under the open sky, with blankets all throughout the winter. It also arranged complete treatment of a poor boy suffering from cancer of eye. H.H. Sri Swami Premanandaji Maharaj's Punyatithi: special programmes on Purnima included Akhanda Parayana of Sri Ramayana, Paduka Puja, Yajna, Sankirtan, etc.

Ghatpadmur–Jagadapur (Chhattisgarh): Regular Activities: daily early morning prayer-meditation, Sri Ramayana Path, Puja-Arati, Yogasana class, one hour Akhanda Sankirtan, and 2-hour evening Satsanga; Paduka Puja on Thursdays; recitation of Sri Sundarakanda on Saturdays and of Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotram on Sundays.

Special Activities: (1) Makar Sankranti: Puja, Sankirtan. (2) Punyatithi of Revered Swami Sadapremanandaji: 3-hour Akhanda Kirtan each of Mahamantra and of “Om Namo Bhagavate Sivanandaya” Mantra, Paduka Puja, tributes, etc. (3) Republic Day in Sivananda Vidyalaya: Prabhat Pheri, cultural programme, discourses. (4) Vasanta Panchami: Sri Saraswati Devi Puja, Japa, Sankirtan.

Jaipur, Malaviya Nagar (Rajasthan): The Branch conducted Havan and Satsanga on Sundays, Matri-Satsanga on Tuesdays, daily midday meditation, daily Svadhyaya in its study ground, Yogasana

class in the morning and evening, distribution of food to the poor on Tuesdays, and Swami Sivananda Homeopathic Dispensary. Revered Swami Yogavedantanandaji joined Prasad Sevan of the Posha-vada ceremony, and gave blessings.

Jaipur, Raja Park (Rajasthan): Regular Activities: Daily morning Sri Siva Purana Katha; daily evening Satsanga with collective Japa of Sri Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Japa on Thursday and Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on Saturdays; weekly Satsanga in Sunday forenoons—Havan, Svadhyaya, etc.; Matri-Satsanga on Mondays; distribution of Rs.4050/- per month to 27 destitute widows and Rs.7050/- p.m. as scholarships to 90 students; daily poor-feeding to about 300 persons; supplying dry ration of 90 kg foodgrains and 20 kg of other food items every month to a leprosy colony inhabitants; Swami Sivananda Homeopathic Dispensary—3110 patients treated in two months; and Swami Sivananda Library.

Special Activities: Posha-vada: Special Puja-Abhisheka along with Japa and Havan for four hours—Revered Swami Yogavadentanandaji, local M.L.A., Municipal Corporation Chairman, Mr. Khaitan and family members and other dignitaries participated; Prasad Sevan.

Jaypore (Odisha): The Branch conducted 2-time Puja, biweekly Satsanga on Sundays and Thursdays, Havan and Puja on Sivananda Day, and a Home Satsanga with 45 participants. It also held special Satsanga on the New Year Day. On Makar Sankranti, Puja and Archana with

the one thousand names of Lord Vishnu. A free Medical Camp was held after Paduka Puja on 28th January. 9 specialists examined about 1000 patients and necessary medicines were also given free.

Kakinada, Madhavapatnam (A.P.): Regular Activities: Weekly Satsanga at Sivananda Kshetram on Wednesdays, and on Sundays at Sai Mandir; fortnightly free Medical Camp; and Narayana Seva to 20-25 poor on Sundays. Special Activities: The Foundation Day of the Branch: (a) On 20th January early morning Prayer-Dhyana, Yogasana class, Paduka Puja, Rudra-Abhishekam, Narayana Seva, and in the evening a talk and blessings by H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj and Prasad—200 participants. (b) daily 2-hour Bhajan-Sankirtan from January 21 to 26. (c) A discourse on Bhakti Yoga by a Saint with 300 in the audience, Maha Prasad.

Kantabanji (Odisha): The Sunday Satsanga included Svadhyaya of Bhagavad Gita.

Khatiguda (Odisha): The Branch conducted 2-time Puja, weekly Satsanga on Thursdays, Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotra Parayana on Ekadasis, and the monthly Sadhana days with 12-hour Mahamantra Kirtan and Narayana Seva on 6th January and 3rd February (first Sundays). It also organised 2-day programmes on its Annual Day as follows: Bhajan Sandhya on 16th February, and morning prayer-meditation, Prabhat Pheri with Mahamantra Kirtan Paduka Puja, Satsanga, Prize Distribution to the winners of spiritual competition for students, Bhandara (free lunch),

Narayana Seva, evening Satsanga with special Bhakti Sangeet and a talk by Revered Swami Paramapriyanandaji.

Khurja (U.P.): The Branch held Satsanga with Svadhyaya and Sankirtan on Sundays, Matri-Sankirtan on Ekadasis, Yogasana class for men in the morning and for women in the evening, and Dhyan Yoga class on Sundays. Punyatithi of H.H. Sri Swami Devanandaji Maharaj was observed in Swami Devananda Satsanga Bhawan. Homeopathic Dispensary gives free medicines daily.

Kolkata, Kidderpur (W.B.): 56 devotees participated in the daylong Sadhana Shibir that included Paduka Puja and video Satsanga, on 24th February. Medical examination of 152 slum children was done and they were given free medicine.

Nandini Nagar (Chhattisgarh): Regular Activities: Daily 2-hour session of prayer, Stotra Path; daily evening Satsanga, weekly Home Satsanga on Thursdays, Sri Sundarakanda Parayana in Matri-satsanga on Saturdays; 3-hour Akhanda Mahamantra Kirtan on 3rd of every month.

Special Activities: (1) Elocution Competition for students: 4 groups—primary, middle, Higher Secondary and college students; Subject: “Importance of Ethical Values”; 45 participants; the President of Nagar Panchayat was the chief guest of the prize distribution ceremony. (2) Visit of saints: Revered Swami Dharmanishthanandaji attended the special Satsanga on 9th

February, and Br. Satyanarayanaji on 2nd February. (3) Siva-Abhisheka on 23rd February.

Ningthoukhong (Manipur): The weekly Satsanga at the Branch is on Sundays and at Hanuman Mandir on Tuesdays and Saturdays. Revered Swami Pavitranandaji visited the Branch. On the Foundation Day of the Divine Life Society it held the District level meeting of 12 branches to inspire and co-ordinate activities.

Rourkela, Steel Township (Odisha): Special Activities: (1) 3-day free Youth Camp by Revered Swami Dharmanishthanandaji on February 1-2-3. (2) Free Medical Camp in a village: 4 doctors examined 200 patients and gave free medicines.

South Balanda (Odisha): The Branch conducted 2-time Puja, weekly Satsanga on Fridays, Paduka Puja in the morning and special Satsanga on Sivananda Day and Chidananda Day, and 3-hour Akhanda Japa of Sri Mahamrityunjaya Mantra on Sankranti Days. It also had 3-hour Akhanda Mahamantra Sankirtan on 26th January and 12-hour Sankirtan on 28th February.

Sunabeda (Odisha): The Branch held biweekly Satsanga on Thursdays and Sundays, on initiation day of devotees Paduka Puja on January 1 and 18, and Paduka Puja and Havan in the morning and special Satsanga on January 3 and 20. Daily Yogasana class was the other activity.

Sunabeda, Ladies Branch (Odisha): Regular Activities: Path from Srimad Bhagavatam (one chapter), Bhagavad Gita

and Japa in the morning; one hour Mahamantra Sankirtan daily evening; biweekly Satsanga on Wednesdays and Saturdays; children's Satsanga in Sunday afternoons; Sivananda Study Circle for youth on Sundays; Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Path and Puja-Abhisheka on Ekadasis; 12-hour Akhanda Japa of Sri Mahamrityunjaya Mantra on Chidananda Day; and Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on Sankranti.

Special Activities: (1) New Year Day: a special Satsanga. (2) Vasanta Panchami: Sri Saraswati Devi Puja.

Surada (Odisha): Special Activities: (1) one day spiritual and Yogasana class in the Government Girl's High School on 30th November. (2) Pratishtha Anniversary of the Idols in the Branch: Brahmamuhurta Prayer, Paduka Puja, discourses, Narayana Seva, Prasad Sevan—all the members of the Branch participated. (3) New Year Day: Paduka Puja. (4) Annual Day: early morning prayer, Prabhat Pheri, Paduka Puja, Satsanga, Narayana Seva—the local MLA also participated.

Surendranagar (Gujarat): The Branch held daily Satsanga in the old premises and Matri-Satsanga in Sivananda Ashram, weekly Sri Sundarakanda Parayana and Sri Ramayana discourse. It also arranged two discourses on 'Sthitaprajna Yoga' and another special discourse. It continued Jiva-Seva through giving fodder to cows, flour to ants, and grains to birds. It organised various programmes of Revered Swami Dharmanishthanandaji from December 12 to January 5.

Vikrampur (Odisha): Regular Activities: 2-time Puja and prayer; weekly Satsanga on Wednesdays; three Home Satsanga during January-February; monthly Sadhana Day on the last Sundays; Paduka Puja on Sivananda Day; and Sadhana Day. Special Activity: 38th Annual Day: on Vasanta Panchami, early morning prayer, Paduka Puja, collective Path from Srimad Bhagavatam, Prasad Sevan, and evening Satsanga.

Visakhapatnam (A.P.): In addition to the daily Satsanga with Parayana of Sri Vishnu-sahasranama and Sri Lalita-sahasranama Stotras, the Branch conducted Srimad Bhagavad Gita Parayana (2½ hours) on Sundays. It also conducted 3-day class for Yogasana, meditation and Kirtan on February 9-10-11, and also for proper pronunciation of Sri Vishnu-sahasranama and Sri Aditya Hridayam Stotras.

OVERSEAS BRANCHES

Cape Town, Ananda Kutir Ashram (South Africa): Regular Activities: Twice a week Satsanga on Thursdays, Saturdays; Hatha Yoga class both in the morning and evening; Weekly Raja Yoga class, weekly guided meditation class, weekly discourse on Maharshi Patanjali's Yoga Sutras by Mother Yogeshwari; weekly discourse on Chhandogya Upanishad, weekly discourse on 'Yoga and Vedanta in daily life' by Swami Parvathiananda; weekly Indian Christian Spiritual gathering; Children's Integral Yoga; making and distributing sandwiches to clinics.

Hong Kong (China): The Branch invited H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji to visit Hong Kong from November 6 to 17, 2012 and organised various programmes (see the Report in Divine Life January 2013, page 19).

It held 1-hour chanting of Mahamantra at both the centres on Saturdays—68 participants in November-December, 2012. Monthly Satsanga was in the Jnana Yoga Camp in the holy presence of Swamiji—84 participants. In the December monthly Satsanga Sri Hariji gave a discourse—34 participants. In the regular Yogasana class there were 396 participants in the two months. Its Yoga teachers conducted two classes in Elderly Centre—24 participants. It participated in "Give Blood" activity. It organised Christmas Festival with Bhajan and dinner (24 participants).

Special Report

The D.L.S. Branch Surendranagar invited Revered Swami Dharmanishthanandaji and organized various programmes as under: 1) Yogasana classes January 1 to 5: in Loka Vidyalaya in the morning and in R.P.P. Girls' High School in the evening. 2) Visit to Wankaner and Dhrangadhra Branches. 3) Visit to Halvad where efforts are going on to start a new branch. 4) A discourse to students in another village. 5) Satsanga of Surendranagar Branch.

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