



# THE DIVINE LIFE

*Vol. LXXI*

*MARCH 2013*

*No. 12*

## **KATHOPANISHAD**

### CHAPTER II

#### *VALLI i*

यतश्चोदेति सूर्योऽस्तं यत्र च गच्छति ।

तं देवाः सर्वे अर्पितास्तदु नात्येति कश्चन । एतद्वै तत् ॥९॥

9. And that whence the sun rises, and whither it sets, on that there all the Devatas depend and no one goes beyond. This is indeed That.

## श्री शिवानन्दस्तोत्रम्

### SRI SIVANANDA STOTRAM

(श्री स्वामी भागवतानन्द)

अचिन्त्यशक्तिसम्पन्न ब्रह्मविष्णुशिवात्मक।  
अखण्डज्ञाननिलय सायुज्यं देहि मे शिव॥१

Grant me thou, O Siva, final emancipation, thou who art identical with Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, thou who art possessed of inconceivable power and who art the repository of Absolute Knowledge.

अप्पय्यकुलमार्ताण्ड अपराजितवैभव।  
अशेषजीवसंसेव्य सायुज्यं देहि मे शिव॥२

Grant me thou final liberation, O Siva, thou who art the Sun of Appayya's family, who art unequalled in glory and worthy of adoration by the entire humanity.

आनन्दाख्यकुटीरस्थ आखण्डलनिषेवित।  
आदिमध्यान्तरहित सायुज्यं देहि मे शिव॥३

Grant me final liberation, O Siva, thou who hast made Ananda Kutir as thy abode and art without the beginning, middle or the end and is worshipped (even) by Indra.

इष्टार्थदायिन् सर्वज्ञ इन्दुखण्डशिरोमणे।  
इच्छामात्रजगत्सृष्टः सायुज्यं देहि मे शिव॥४

Grant me thou final liberation, O Siva, thou who art the granter of boons Omniscient, thou whose head is adorned by the crest and who hast created the universe out of mere thought (Sankalpa).

ईषत्स्मितमुखोल्लास ईशित्वाद्यष्टसिद्धिद।  
ईशान सर्वदेवेश सायुज्यं देहि मे शिव॥५

Grant me thou absolute liberation, O Siva, thou who art the ruler of all and the

Lord of all celestials, who art the bestower of the eight occult powers, thou on whose face dances an eternal smile.

ओंकाररूप विश्वेश ओंकारप्रतिपादित।  
ओंकारध्वनिसन्तुष्ट सायुज्यं देहि मे शिव॥६

Grant me thou absolute freedom, O Siva, thou who art the Sovereign of the universe, who art of the form of Omkara, pleased with the sound of Omkara, and thou whose nature is expounded by Omkara.

कञ्जनेत्रारुणापाङ्ग कलिकल्मषभंजन।  
कमलाननकारुण्य सायुज्यं देहि मे शिव॥७

Grant me thou absolute liberation, O Siva, thou who art compassionate, thou who hast lotus-like face and sparkling eyes whose ends are (slightly) red, thou who art the destroyer of the sins of the iron age.

शिवानन्दमहादेव शिष्यकोटिसमन्वित।  
शिष्टप्रिय महाशान्त सायुज्यं देहि मे शिव॥८

Grant me thou final emancipation, O Siva, thou who art ever supremely serene and dear to the innumerable devotees who ever surround thee, thou who art the embodiment of auspiciousness and bliss and art known as the great God.

दासभागवतानन्दकृतं स्तोत्राष्टकं शुभम्।  
स्वीकृत्येदं शिवानन्द परमानुग्रहं कुरु॥९

Accepting these eight verses composed in your praise by Bhagavatananda, thy servant, bless him, my Lord.

SIVARATRI MESSAGE:

1st February, 1963.

**FREE YOURSELF FROM ALL IMAGINARY PAINS:  
ETERNAL HAPPINESS IS YOUR BIRTHDAY***(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)*

**A**spirants, after acquiring material wealth, worldly success, prosperity and power, plan and direct their lives in the manner best suited for the achievement of their ambitions. They exert to their utmost in getting success and crowning themselves with glory. Eagerly and earnestly they long to appear in the eyes of others as men of high position and vast possessions. Everybody, man or woman, desires popularity, fame, social distinction and, in short, all-round success in every undertaking. Everyone sets about equipping oneself with all the modern accomplishments, moves restlessly in fashionable societies and ever devises ways and means for gaining predominance over all men and things—this seems apparently to be the sole aim in life!

But after the highest reach of success, which is unstable and fleeting, where is man? The apparent success is never sustaining, and all his hopes seem to shatter to bits. Clouds of anxiety and pessimism begin to gather around him and to threaten him with nightmare speculations of an undefined future. Set-backs and disappointments appear one by one at every stage. His shrewdness and keen acumen fail to make any impression before the hard facts of life. He fails in the very first few attempts and is forthwith plunged into

despondency. His intelligence, smartness, refinement and adaptability fly away at the first test. He is discouraged, becomes restless, curses his fate and scowls at his brethren. He is completely disillusioned. He goes about with a woe-bygone face, like one being called to his doom.

O Man, cheer up! It is not these trifles—clinking coins, currency and cheques, lands, mansions, gold and silver,—that are going to help you to the last. All these are perishable trifles; you are the imperishable child of that immortal Brahman. You have only lost the right track. Shake off all despondency and misery. Free yourself from all imaginary pains. Realise that you are really meant for something grander, something more than becoming the slave of these fleeting, perishable and short-lived pleasures of this world. Realise that you are meant for a nobler selfless service. Understand that selfless service benefits both the server and the served. This alone makes life fruitful. Have full faith in the benevolent Lord, Who is the source of all sustaining happiness and true blessedness.

Sivaratri is the night during which the aspirant tries to free himself from the usual worldly activities, practises perfect self-restraint and attunes himself to the

Lord. In other words, the aspirant endeavours to discard his lower nature and completely resigns his personality to the Supreme Lord, Siva. The worship of the Lord Siva is a symbol of the supreme aspiration in man for the attainment of the perfections of which the Lord is the embodiment. Renunciation and establishment in Self-consciousness are the two great aspects of Siva. This demonstrates that absolute Self-centredness is achieved through renunciation. Supreme attainment is the fruit of supreme abandonment.

The pleasures of this phenomenal world, born of the contact of the senses with their objects, are the sources of pain; they are fleeting and impermanent, and therefore men of wisdom do not take delight in them. Objective experience of all descriptions, both pleasant and unpleasant, pulls the mind out of its own source—the Atman. Every moment of such separation of the mind and the Atman is one of pain only. Whether the sensation which draws the mind away is agreeable and therefore pleasant, or whether it is disagreeable and therefore painful, the fact is that it keeps the mind away from the fountain-source of Bliss, the Atman; and hence (whether one feels so at the moment or not) all such experiences are truly painful. That is why the Sages declare: *Sarvam Duhkham Vivekinha*—To a wise man everything is painful in this phenomenal world! This is not any pessimistic attitude to life, but is glorious optimism. It is certainly a statement of fact. Such declarations of the scriptures are intended to rouse dispassion in the mind of man, to fan the fire of discrimination in him.

Withdraw the mind and the senses from the objects. Collect all the dissipated rays of the mind—the rays dissipated on various worldly ambitions and desires—and direct the concentrated beam of the mind-light on the inner heart-chamber. It will rend the thick veil of ignorance that hides the entrance to the chamber of Bliss, the abode of the Atman. You will forever enjoy perennial peace and eternal light. Is this pessimism? No, it is the most glorious optimism. But he who would enjoy this ineffable bliss must pay the price; and that price is Vairagya, Vivekapurvaka-Vairagya or dispassion born of discrimination between the Real and the unreal.

If sense-pleasures are the sources of pain, why, then, does not man turn away from them as readily as he turns away from pain, the sceptic may ask. This seems to be a difficult question to answer. It is indeed a mystery. The mysterious power of the Lord, Maya, clouds man's understanding, hides the Real from his view and projects an unreality. Under its intoxicating influence man tries to grab the shadow and misses the substance. Maya deludes man at every step. Just as a frog in the jaws of death, which has been half-swallowed by a snake, puts out its tongue to catch a fly, man, who, at his birth brought with him the one certain event of death, clutches at every passing phantom and vainly hopes to quench his thirst in a mirage. The power of Maya is so formidable that it places obstacles in the path of even an advanced Sadhaka. The aspirant has to be eternally vigilant till he enjoys Nirvikalpa Samadhi and

becomes one with the Supreme Being. He should repeat and contemplate on the meaning of the great utterances of the Upanishads and the Gita; again and again he should generate the Nirodha Samskaras (the acts of suppression of evil impressions) in him and feel that the Self alone is Bliss, and that all else is misery only.

Divine Life shows the way to achieve, this result easily. If the aspirant practises Ahimsa, Satya and Brahmacharya (non-injury, truth and continence) in thought, word and deed; if he is regular in his Sadhana—Japa, Dhyana, Swadhyaya, Kirtan and selfless service; if he tries again and again to pierce through all names and forms and to see his own Self in everything, he will get the Lord's Grace quickly, and with His Grace he will cross this formidable

ocean of Maya. Divine Life is, therefore, life in God. Wherever you are, you will actually feel that the Lord is ever within you, and everywhere about you. Whatever you do, you will feel that you are doing for His sake alone. In everyone that you see, you will see Him alone. You will love all as the manifestation of God. You will serve all as you are serving Him. Here and now, living on this very earth, you will live in your own paradise made of the essence of God. Your life itself will become godly; and you would in time become one with Him.

May you all earnestly observe Maha-Sivaratri Vrata with devout worship of the Lord Siva. May you all obtain the Grace of the Lord Siva and enter the Kingdom of Supreme Peace and Eternal Bliss!

Om Namah Sivaya.

### AN EXERCISE FOR MENTAL RELAXATION

Here is a beautiful daily exercise for mental relaxation. It will pour into you great inspiration and strength. Close the eyes. Think of anything that is pleasant. This will relax the mind in a wonderful manner. Think of the mighty Himalayas, the sacred Ganga, the striking scenery in Kashmir, the Taj Mahal, the Victoria Memorial in Calcutta, a lovely sunset, the vast expanse of ocean or the infinite blue sky. Proceed also this way. Imagine that the whole world and your body are floating like a straw in this vast ocean of the Spirit. Feel that you are in touch with the Supreme Being. Feel that the life of the whole world is pulsating, vibrating and throbbing through you. Feel that the Ocean of Life is gently rocking you on Its vast bosom. Then open your eyes. You will experience immense mental peace.

—Swami Sivananda

## THE SPIRIT OF MAHASIVARATRI

*(Swami Chidananda's Letter of 1st March 1965)*

Immortal Atma Swaroopa!  
Blessed Seeker of TRUTH!

Om Namō Narayanaya.

**T**he Divine Grace of the Lord of the Universe, Jagadeeshwara Mahadev, Vishwa Natha, shower upon you and fill your life with light, joy and supreme peace of Atman! Maha-Siva-Ratri, one of the holiest of holy days in this land of ours, would have been observed from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari by the time this letter comes to you. Worship of the Great God with intense devotion and holy fervour would have been witnessed all over India, and the spirit of worshipfulness and adoration would have purified the Nation's atmosphere with its unique spiritually sanctifying touch.

Devotion should pervade the entire life-process of man here on earth. To live is to adore the Divine each moment of your life. To know and to be aware that God resides in all living beings, nay, in all things animate and inanimate, is verily the source of all righteousness. This knowledge is the root and support of Dharma. No man will injure another if he is intensely aware that God is in him. For he would be directly offending Him! Therefore, see Him in all and act with devotion and reverence towards all. Sarvam Sivamayam, Sarvam Vishnumayam. Thus let your heart

whisper with every beat. Let your blood flow to the rhythm of this sublime truth. Let your body pulsate to the note of this constant assertion that everything is permeated with the Divine Essence! Then indeed will every act of yours become a sacred sacrament, a spiritual Yajna, a Mahapuja. This is the glorious truth about your life. Arise to the light of this luminous vision. See God here and now! And worship Him here and now. In this lies the grandeur and the blessedness of human life.

Gracious, most gracious indeed is the Lord. Avail of His Grace Divine, the ever-present Love that is ceaselessly pouring upon us all. The irony of human life is not the withholding of Grace by a remote Divinity, but actually, man's rejection of the ever-present Love and Grace, running madly after egoistical pursuits and fleshy sensations. He would rather dedicate his entire life to his five senses than open his heart to the descent of Divine Love and Grace that seeks to enfold him in its infinite compassion and uplift him to the supreme blessedness.

Modern men and women should consciously seek to feel and recognise the nearness of God and the fact of His Love. This is an important task in your life. Your life is not just fleshy sensation and silly sentiment. Cultivate the deeper

level of your inner being. Become increasingly conscious of your close kinship in your essential nature with the Cosmic Being. You are never apart from Him. You are eternally linked and spiritually related to Him every moment of your life. This knowledge is the only real Bread of Life that nourishes your being as no other earthly nutriment shall ever be capable of doing. This knowledge is not only the Bread of Life, but is Life itself. O Man! Be nourished by this life-sustaining Divine Manna! God is near. His life sustains you. He is your breath, your life, your strength and your support. In Him alone is your peace and joy. Abiding in Him, you lack nothing.

Leaving Him, you are as nothing and are verily beggared. The Lord is your supreme wealth of wealth. May Siva, the ever-propitious, the ever-auspicious one, be gracious unto you.

The advent of the spring season is at hand. All life is renewed now. May there be a fresh awakening unto Divine Life and spiritual aspiration within your heart! God bless you.

With Regards, Prem and Pranams

Yours in Gurudev

*Swami Chidananda*

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Swami Chidananda

### THE GREAT SUPERMAN OF THE EAST

The Bhagavad Gita is the Gospel of life, the scripture of humanity, and the life of Sri Krishna is the great commentary on it. Sri Krishna lived the life of a princely householder, teaching mankind that the Knowledge of the Absolute is not incompatible with practical activity in life. He is the form, as it were, taken by the great Truth that the universe is the manifestation of Brahman. There was no end to the domestic troubles that Krishna had, no limit to the social and political disturbances and threatening situations in which Krishna was involved, no bound to his responsibility, and yet there was no match to his success, no equal to his shining example of the Life Perfect. Sri Krishna was a philosopher, a sage, a Yogi, and the statesman par excellence, who taught through example and precept the art of government, the way to maintain peace on earth.

Here are some valuable instructions of Sri Krishna to Uddhava. Sri Krishna says, "Give no attention to people who laugh in ridicule, forget the body, go beyond all sense of shame; fall prostrate on the ground and bow to all beings down even to the dog, the Chandala or the outcaste, the cow and the ass. See everything in Me and Me in everything. Cut off all sorts of attachments. Have perfect unswerving devotion to Me."

"Look upon this universe as a delusion, a play of the mind, now seen and the next moment destroyed, like a dream, and extremely inconsistent like the circle drawn by a firebrand (Alat Chakra). The threefold distinction of waking, dream and deep sleep which is caused by the transformation of Gunas, of the qualities of Nature, is Maya."

—Swami Sivananda

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HEART IN THE FIELD OF SPIRITUAL LIVING

(Sri Swami Krishnananda)

One of the seekers has made a request that I speak on the significance of the heart in the field of spiritual living. 'Heart' is a word which has been used with many meanings and referred to often in religious scriptures and spiritual instructions.

We are many a time told that the heart is the centre of the person, and this is a magnificent theme delineated upon in some of the Upanishads such as the Chhandogya and the Taittiriya, wherein they speak of what is known as the *hridayaguha*, or the cave of the heart, in which resides the Supreme Reality. "Go into the cave and you find the treasures of heaven," says the Chhandogya Upanishad particularly in its eighth chapter. There is a gorgeous description with thrilling details in the Chhandogya Upanishad where it tells us about the glories that are enshrined in our own hearts, and that the human being is not as he appears on the surface. To repeat the words as they occur in the Chhandogya Upanishad: "The sun and the moon and the stars, the very space and the clouds and the lightning and the rains—all this miracle of creation is within the heart of man." When it rains outside, it rains inside also, and the stellar regions shine resplendently within the heart of man.

Here is the key to the door of the secrets of life; and the secret is man himself. 'Heart' is a very enigmatic word. It escapes definition because of its variegated connotations. There is a heart which doctors operate upon and which physicians transplant, there is a heart which is deeply hurt when a person is insulted, there is a heart which is elated when a person is praised, and there is a heart wherein resides the centrality of the universe.

By the word 'heart' we mean the centre of anything. The core, the substance, the vitality, the very being of anything whatsoever is the heart of that thing. Now, this heart, this centre, this core, this vitality, this substantiality, or the being of anything, is incapable of description. When the heart speaks, everything is hushed. The voice of the heart is often regarded as the final word. All arguments cease to function when the heart speaks, which means to say the reality operates when the heart begins to function and express itself in any manner. We are also told that a meditation on the heart is one of the principal methods prescribed. People gaze inwardly into their own feelings and conceive of a lotus, a resplendent rising sun of golden hue, and so on, in their meditations.

It is also told to us in the Upanishads that the heart is the centre of the mind; it is the abode of all psychological operations. The mind goes to sleep in the heart. In meditation, in swoon, in death, in sleep, the mind is in the heart. In dream, the mind is supposed to be operating somewhere near the throat. And in the waking state, it is in the brain. The mind is active in the brain cells, and so we are predominantly intellectual in our outlook during our waking hours. We are translucently conscious when we are dreaming, and totally unconscious in the state of deep sleep. The mind subsides and enters its own nest, like a bird going back to its house at the close of the day, and winds up all its activities.

But there is another significance in what we mean by 'the heart' as far as spiritual seekers are concerned. The heart of the matter is the root thereof, which is incapable of objectivity or externalisation; the heart cannot become other than what it is. The heart is the person. It is identified with the very soul of the individual. When we speak of the spiritual significance behind the word 'heart', we have to go a little deeper than the mere physiological concept of it.

The *pranamayakosha*, or the vital sheath which is inside the physical sheath, is the cave as far as the physical body is concerned. But the mind is the cave as far as the vital sheath is concerned, because the mind is internal to the vital sheath and more pervasive than the vital sheath. The intellect is the cave even to the mind, because it is interior to the mind. And the soul is the

deepest because it is interior to the mind. The soul is the deepest essence of everything. It is the cave even to the intellect. It is prior to the operation of the intellect, and therefore, man cannot think the heart, and cannot conceive the soul. The meditation on the heart, therefore, becomes an unintelligible difficulty inasmuch as it cannot become an object of intellectual activity. If meditation is a thinking process or even an intellectual operation, such a meditation cannot touch the soul, because the soul is not an object of the intellect. It is not something that the mind can think because it is prior to the mind's thinking and the intellectual understanding of man.

What we call the heart is that which is prior to everything that we can imagine in our minds or understand through our intellects. The very presupposition of our very existence is the heart of ours. And there is a heart in everything. There is a core within even an atom. There is a substance of this heart even in the minutest of creatures, such as an ant. There is a status maintained by each person, each individual, each entity in the world, a status which is capable of getting identified with what we call the heart. Even an ant has a status of its own. It is not an object to itself; it is a subject.

So now we come to the other point that the heart is what we call the subject, incapable of description, again. That which we call the true subject is that which is indefinable by characteristics of any external object. The heart cannot be defined because it is the subject. Every

definition is a description of something in terms of other things, but the heart has no other thing. The subject cannot be compared to any other thing, and therefore, it cannot be described by comparing it with any other thing. There is no other thing for the heart, the centre, or the subject. The true subject is that which defies every kind of definition, just as you cannot define your true status. The word 'status' is a definition by itself. What you are is a definition of what you are, and nothing else can be said about what you are. If I say, "I am," there ends the matter.

This pure subjectivity, which is the heart of things, is present in every entity in the cosmos, and if the heart is the centre of anything and everything, this heart has to be present everywhere. Everything has a heart, a core. Even the molecule has a heart, a core, a neutron, a proton, a substance, an indescribable rebellious status which it maintains. It is rebellious because it is intolerant of any kind of interference from external definitions or characterisations. You do not wish to be compared with anybody else. You are what you are. To describe you in terms of somebody else would not be a credit given to you. Is there not something in you which is there without its being something in terms of somebody else? Are you going to describe yourself merely as a father, a mother, a son, a daughter, a brother, a sister, a boss, an officer, a president? Is this the way you want to describe yourself? Or are you something independent of these descriptions? When you are not a father, not a mother, not a brother, not a sister, not this, not that, are you not something

yet? This something that remains at the base, even when it is divested of every association, characterisation and relationship, is what you are. That is the heart, which is supposed to be the object of meditation, especially when we are told about it in such scriptures as the Chhandogya and Taittiriya Upanishads.

If this status of true subjectivity is the character of everything, everywhere, the whole world is filled with heart. There is nothing else in this world. It is only feeling, throbbing, pulsating, and demanding recognition in the way in which it has to be recognised and not by way of a description in terms of something other than what it is.

The meditation on such a heart is, therefore, difficult, because every meditation is a characterisation; it is a definition; it is a description; it is a conception that we are foisting upon a notional ideal we call the object of our meditation. But the heart defies such a characterisation. We cannot think our own selves because we are prior to the very act of thinking ourselves. If such is the heart that we are, and the subject that everyone is, and if everyone is only this subject, everyone is the heart. Everyone is a centre. Naturally, the centre is everywhere. This centre, this heart, this subject is, and has to be, everywhere, because no one would feel happy by being compared to somebody else. To be compared, to be described in terms of something else would be to reduce that something to a satellite of that with which it is compared, and in relation to which it is described. And we are not satellites of anybody. We are not

slaves, servants. Nobody wishes to be a servant. To belong to somebody else is ignominy, and no heart, no centre, no subject would tolerate that.

There is a struggle on the part of every centre to maintain itself, and every organisation struggles in this manner. It may be an astronomical, stellar organisation like a solar system. Or it may be an invisible organisation like an atom. It may be a human organisation. It may be an anatomical or a physiological organisation of the body. It may be a notional, ideological organisation. Whatever it is, it stands by itself on its own legs. It does not belong to somebody else. Nothing can belong to anything else and yet maintain its status. To belong to someone else and be described in terms of something else or someone else is to lose one's status. This is what one would not like to enter into, or reduce oneself to. Such is the nature of man, of all things, of nature in its entirety, of all creation.

This centre, which is the heart of everything, is, therefore, incapable of externalisation by way of description and definition. Therefore, it is the God of the universe. God is the centre of all things. When we say God resides in the heart of things, we have to understand what actually we mean. How we are to conceive the meaning of this statement that God resides in the heart of all

beings? We often think, like children, that God resides in the heart which we imagine as located within our physical sheath: God is inside me. This 'me' is a large capital Me which, again, is incapable of comparison with any other 'I's or 'me's. It is a single 'I', and therefore, because of the fact that it is a true subject which cannot brook any description, it stands as the central theme of all spiritual, gravitational activity in the form of meditation or spiritual pursuit.

All life is a movement towards this centre. Every step, or stage, in the process of the evolution of things is a tendency of converging towards this centre which is, and which has to be, everywhere. Such a centre is the object of our meditation; that is the heart. It is in us, no doubt, and when we speak about the meditation on the heart as the centre of all things, we are not concentrating our mind within this physical body merely, because God, the omnipresent kingdom of heaven, cannot be contained within a six-foot physical frame. This is something well known to everybody.

So there is a larger meaning in this great Upanishadic declaration that whatever is outside is also inside. What is in the Brahmanda is in the Pindanda, what is in the macrocosm is in the microcosm, and vice versa.

***(To be continued)***

We are humble seekers, we are not Masters. We are small people trying to follow the footsteps of great Masters like Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, in our own humble faltering way, trying to raise our minds to true devotion to God, in this attempt, let us be honest to ourselves. This is my prayer to my own self and to all. Honesty of conscience is the watch-word of a Sadhaka. —**Swami Krishnananda**

## HUMILITY

*(Sri Swami Atmaswarupananda)*

One of the greatest gifts we can have as seekers is the gift of humility. Indeed, Jesus said that it is a prime qualification for being a seeker: “Unless you become like a little child, you cannot enter the Kingdom of God.” Why is humility required? In the first place, that within us which is not humble, which is proud, totally disappears when we experience our divine nature. The ego, which is the seat of pride, cannot coexist with our divine nature—which is One without a second.

In addition, there is a very practical reason, and that is that what we are seeking is beyond, and not accessible by, our normal instruments of knowing. As seekers we have two principal avenues of knowing—our intellect and our feelings. But neither one can grasp the truth. As Ramana Maharshi said, the goal is closer to feeling than to thinking, but, of course, that means that it is neither.

Gurudev gave us help and guidance in his Universal Prayer. He said, “Grant us an understanding heart, equal vision, balanced mind, faith, devotion and wisdom. What does an understanding heart mean? We can’t fathom, but it seems to point in the same direction as Ramana Maharshi does when he says that what we are seeking is closer to feeling than to thinking.

When Gurudev adds to an understanding heart, equal vision, balanced mind, he tells us that it is

beyond the pairs of opposites and the three gunas. Lord Krishna told Arjuna, “Be gunatita.” It means to rise above the three gunas and the pairs of opposites and thus have equal vision and a balanced mind. Therefore, an understanding heart, being beyond the three gunas and pairs of opposites, is able to be the witness of them. Gurudev also adds the words faith, devotion and wisdom. Faith is needed because the goal is beyond our feelings and our thought, and yet we still require devotion and wisdom to approach it.

Knowing this we approach our spiritual life with great humility. No matter what spiritual experience we have, we realise that it is beyond our normal understanding. Therefore, instead of taking pride in it, we offer it back to God, who gave it to us in the first place. By offering everything to God, as Gurudev wanted us to do, we don’t lose the benefit of the experience, but we avoid taking false pride in something that was a gift of God to us.

Thus, we pray with Gurudev, “Grant us an understanding heart, equal vision, balanced mind, faith, devotion and wisdom,” and part of that wisdom is the humility to recognise that everything comes from God. We thus do not create unnecessary problems for ourselves by thinking that we have any individual value—no matter what gifts God may have given us. □ □ □

## SIVANANDA'S VOICE—THE VOICE OF GOD

*(Swami Hridayananda Mataji)*

Swamiji's voice, Ah? What an enchanting, wonderful voice it is! It is indeed the voice of God, a voice that directly speaks to the soul, a voice of inspiration, joy, peace, strength, purity, love and power. No one who has heard it once can forget it again. It will ring and linger in the ears forever with its sacred sweetness.

Mind is always attracted by sweet sounds. Even the cobra is enchanted by sweet music.

A voice super-charged with divine power is one of the most powerful contrivances by which the mind can be made to withdraw from other external influences and forced to rest in one-pointed attention and absorption.

The sound-vibrations have unlimited power. Instances have been quoted to show that the power of sound-vibration by itself can light lamps, produce or stop rain, etc. It has also got the power of curing diseases and relaxing nervous tension.

Swami Sivanandaji's voice is the voice of the Universal Eternal Heart and hence it releases spiritual forces that set into vibration every individual heart. It is a voice unspeakably rich with subtle emotions of divine love and sweetness and rings with the rapture of Self-realisation. Just like the musical vibrations of the flute of Lord Krishna, it

penetrates the soul of his devotees. The thrilling richness of his tone, the grace and ease with which it can be raised to any pitch and the appropriate proportion of its volume, combined with its unbounded spiritual power, make it the most perfect and wonderful voice in the world. It awakens reverence and divine love, and as if by the touch of a magic wand floods the whole being with peace and bliss.

His kind and loving words touch the very core of one's being, and manage to dispel the darkness of ignorance and fill it with the light of divine aspiration. Swamiji speaks gently, sweetly, soothingly, truthfully and speaks only what is good in measured words. His voice is one of the most effective means by which he is able to elevate the minds of human beings to sublime heights of divine splendour.

When Swamiji addresses a bigger audience, his voice becomes very powerful. It can be heard at a long distance without the aid of a loud speaker. Words of wisdom pour out from him with divine authority mingled with humility. His appealing and inspiring words tear the veil of worldliness by which men are enveloped and expound their soul. People stand spellbound by the effect of his magnetic orations. The divine messages conveyed through his

soul-penetrating voice leave a lasting impression on the listeners and transform even the confirmed atheists to theists.

It is a very rare treat to the ears to hear Swamiji chanting the sacred monosyllable "OM". The sound 'OM' is the first manifestation of the Absolute, and hence it is not a wonder that one experiences an inner harmony and feels the nearness of God when Swamiji, the God in human form starts chanting 'OM' with feeling and Bhava. The powerful vibrations of his voice impregnated with the dynamic force of godliness float over the space, filling it with sanctity, and invisible fingers pull at the heart-strings of the listeners inspiring them with overwhelming devotion. There is something in his voice that seems to set up a connecting link between heaven and earth, something that makes one feel that one is wafting in a strange space of beauties and joys, far away from this world, but nearest to God. This wonder-working voice in a mysterious way manages to force open the inner chamber of the heart and turns and controls the mind.

Swamiji's music is a rare blending of rhythm, metre and melody. It is nothing

but an expression of his ecstatic communion with God. In the blissful joy of listening to his melodious voice, one forgets all the cares and distractions of this mundane existence and at least for the moment feels as though the soul has been released from its human prison to enjoy the company of its Eternal Beloved. The nectar of his delightful music acts as an intoxicating drink and drowns one in divine madness.

To help those who have no patience to listen to lengthy religious discourse, he makes use of his singing capacity to enlighten them. His songs contain the essence of spiritual Sadhana, philosophy, Vedanta and Bhakti, etc., and he sings them in different languages.

Thus through the medium of his Omnipotent and Omniscient voice, the divine vibrations of the Eternal Spirit, Swamiji continues to disseminate spiritual knowledge to each and everyone who comes to him.

I pray to God to give my Beloved Gurudev, best of health, long life and powerful voice, so that he may lead us safely across the ocean of life.

#### BEHOLD GOOD IN ALL

Evil is mere appearance. It is not a reality. It is an illusion. Evil exists to glorify good. Good and evil are not two independent things or entities. They are the two sides of the coin.

An evil man is a saint of the future. Transmute evil into good through Vichara or reflection. Out of evil often cometh good. There is neither absolute good nor absolute evil in this phenomenal world. Good and evil are relative terms.

Behold good alone in everything. Develop again and again the good-finding faculty. Destroy the evil-finding quality to its very root. —*Swami Sivananda*

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## SWAMI SIVANANDA AS I KNOW HIM

*(Sri H.G.M. Piyananda, Gampola, Ceylon)*

Although I am a Buddhist and have an implicit faith in my religion, I am eager to know of other religions and their views of man. After an extensive study of man, I got disgusted with this life of mine and thought that it is not worth living. I enquired about this from several persons. Subsequently I was told by one of my friends about Sri Swami Sivananda of Himalayas. He said that this Swami had a vast knowledge of all religions.

As a true seeker and an aspirant I wrote to Sri Swami Sivananda asking a question. In answer to my question and to enable me to study various things in relation to my question, the Swami sent six books to me. I studied the contents of all the six books and gained knowledge of all and cleared my mind to a considerable extent. When I studied these books, the doubts and anxieties I had in my mind melted away like the snow melts under the sun's rays. Although I have not heard his exemplary teachings in person, I was rejoicing to read those choicest words. And even now I rejoice at the thought that I had an opportunity to read His thoughts. The precepts which Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj has conveyed to me through his worthy books have entered deep into my soul. His words are written in my mind in golden letters and will remain there forever. My mind was drawn to those

books as the piece of iron gets attracted by the magnet. His writings are a good mine of examples for adoption by humanity.

Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj rendered service to all irrespective of class, creed, communal and national differences, and this fact is evident in his works. By his services he has shown man that he should search inside and find the way towards good and righteous living. The Swami taught that in serving humanity you should radiate love. Service to humanity is the only thing every man must inevitably do. There is nothing to be achieved out of this body. Thoughts of man are only important. Sri Swami Sivananda was teaching us how to keep our mind free, clear and pure. According to his teachings, those who follow these methods can keep their mind free of fear and proceed along right lines. Sincere people respect only those of sincere purpose and of good nature and not those who have wealth or power or beauty of the person. Beauty perishes but service rendered to humanity lives forever. And that is what the world regards and respects.

Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj's Service, Love, Sympathy and Mercy have been such that these are equitably extended to all and are meant for all. He ranked first in his service to humanity.

He drew the goodness out of everybody without creating any difference. We will follow the path shown to us by Sri Swami Sivananda. The misery and sorrow of the down-trodden and the unfortunate are not seen by the greedy rich in their quest for wealth. The rich man thinks only of himself and his wealth. He never thinks

of others. He does no charity, nor is he merciful to the poor. We shall take a lesson from the services and love of Sri Swami Sivananda. May Sri Swami Sivananda Maharaj's Service and Love to Humanity shine in the world like stars in the sky and may His life be a beacon light to humanity forever.

*(From Waves of Bliss)*

### **SIVA THE SUPREME GURU (*Dakshinamurthy*)**

ENTHRONED on His seat on Himalaya's or  
Trans-Himalaya's heights,  
Siva taking youth's form human, exquisite, everlasting,  
Teaches reverend sages sitting at His feet  
Lessons of Eternal Wisdom, vanquishing  
Doubt, darkness, death, despair and delusion.

He, the Teacher of teachers—the Supreme Teacher—  
His method unique. His teachings flash from heart to heart,  
Soul to soul, which no spoken words convey,  
His silence nevertheless their doubts destroys.  
This is the wonder of wonders!

His hand is raised in benediction over this ancient land,  
On which He casts His south-ward gaze,  
Just as He "Conscious many faced" blesses all races and climes  
Facing them as they spread in front.

Eternal Watcher! Standing sentinel, shedding Love  
For earth's constant welfare.  
For as He seeth and silently rules,  
Naught can go wrong in His world,  
In whom all beings sentient or inert abide,  
Whose one will ordains that good overcometh evil  
And righteousness ever prevails even if seemingly delayed.

All teachers of whatever degree represent  
Him in all good things they impart,  
And His power goeth to bless both the  
teacher and the taught.

—*Swami Sivananda*

## THE MAHA KUMBHA MELA

*(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)*

**K**umbha is the equivalent of Aquarius, the eleventh sign in the Zodiac, and the Kumbha mela falls every twelfth year at a certain combination of Jupiter, Aquarius, Aries, and the Sun; between each Kumbha occurs the Ardh-Kumbha.

The Maha Kumbha Mela is held once in 12 years at Hardwar, Allahabad, Ujjain and Nasik. There are some fixed days during the period of the Mela for bathing, and a bath in the Ganges on those days is considered very sacred. Millions of people assemble here during these months.

Ambrosia or the nectar which confers Immortality was kept in a vessel (kumbha or kalasa). For getting the nectar, here was a tough fight between the Asuras and Devas for 12 days. During the fight, the kumbha fell on the earth four times at Hardwar, Allahabad, Ujjain and Nasik. At the end of 12 days when Surya (Sun) was on Mesha Rasi and Jupiter in Vrishabha Rasi, Lord Vishnu appeared and brought peace to one and all by distributing the nectar to deserving people. The Mela comes once in 12 years equivalent to 12 days of the Devas. Vishnu Purana says: "A bath in the Ganga on the Kumbha day will give the spiritual benefits of one lac of Pradakshina around the earth". Millions of people assemble at Hardwar for taking a bath in the Ganga on the sacred day.

In olden days Kumbha Melas were started for the moral and spiritual uplift of the people. Many Mahatmas, sages, Yogins and spiritual preceptors who were practising Tapas and silent meditation in the caves of the Himalayas and forests assembled in these places during Kumbha Mela days for imparting spiritual instructions to the thirsty aspirants and householders. There was not much noise in those days. People went, with Sraddha and Bhav to have Darshan of these Mahatmas and to imbibe the teachings of those highly elevated souls. Religious classes were held, Kathas and discourses were conducted and lectures were delivered by great men of practical experience. Real, sincere aspirants were initiated into the mysteries of Yoga and Kaivalya.

Though the place may be filled with many sorts of people, yet there are some highly advanced spiritual souls, Mandaleshwars and learned Pundits of the Sanatana Dharma Sabha, who untiringly work and clear the doubts of all aspirants and guide them on the spiritual path. They work for the spiritual good of the public. Again in some silent corners, you will find some great Virakta Mahatmas and Tyagis. You must hunt out such great souls among the Sadhus, Sannyasins, Yogins and Naga Babas. They will guide you in the right path. Have Darshan of such

Mahatmas and get spiritual instructions. Then you will be spiritually benefitted.

Grihasthis should not put so many questions as to the previous name, caste, creed, qualifications, relations, age, etc., of Sannyasins. They can talk only on philosophical points with a view to clear doubts. Then and then alone they can be benefitted by Satsanga with Sadhus. Satsanga is the easiest and quickest means to change the worldly mind towards the spiritual path and to overhaul thoroughly the vicious and wrong Samskaras. Live in the company of wise Sadhus. The company itself is the spiritual education. Serve them with Bhakti and Sraddha. Attend to their wants. Get Upadesh from them. Then you will have spiritual growth.

When you come to Hardwar for the Kumbha Mela, make it a point to finish some lacs of Japa during these days (Anushthan). Japa, done in holy places on such occasion will have marvellous influence and bestow on you spiritual benefits. For 15 or 30 days observe

Anushthan. Take milk and fruits only. Do plenty of Japa. Study Gita, Upanishads, Ramayana and Bhagavat. Have Satsanga and hear the words of great men. Observe Mouna. Do not wander hither and thither. You will grow wonderfully by silent rigid Sadhana. Do plenty of charity.

Serve the Sadhus and Mahatmas. Pray for spiritual instructions. Serve and help the sick persons. There is a very good opportunity for you to do Nishkama Karma Yoga. Such kind of spiritual Sadhana must be practised when you come to this sacred Mela which comes once in 12 years! Generally pilgrimages to all sacred places should be performed with the above discipline. Every year people go to Rishikesh and Hardwar, Badrinath and other places. They should all observe the above discipline and then only they would derive the benefits of performing Yatra or pilgrimages.

May God bless you with more energy to do real, sustained, solid Sadhana!

### DEPEND NOT ON WORLDLY OBJECTS

Worldly-minded, ignorant persons are charmed and deluded by the products of Maya. They lose their understanding on account of the force of Maya or Avidya and delude themselves in sensual objects and perish without realising the Atman.

The worldly objects are unreal. If you think deeply and do enquiry, the world, with its manifold multicoloured objects will appear as a long dream only. The object which appears for a short period only like the snake in the rope but does not exist in reality, is only a Mithya object.

—Swami Sivananda

*Children's Page:*

## OFFERING GOD WHAT IS GOD'S

*(Sri Swami Ramarajyamji)*

Once Swami Sivanandaji was returning from his office. He happened to come across a group of beggars who had been given alms only a day before by him.

A devotee accompanying Swamiji said humbly to him, "Please do not give them any more otherwise they will keep coming everyday."

"It does not matter. God is very generous in giving. He is constantly giving. He will give us more," replied Swamiji and told his disciple to give them one rupee each.

The contented beggars went away. Swamiji said to the devotee, "It is only God who gives, none else."

That is true. Who else can give? He is the source of our life and brings us up. He is our divine and real parent. Due to ignorance we think otherwise—my friend gives, my brother gives, my parents give,

etc. The truth, however, is that it is God who gives us through a friend, brother, parents, etc.

Moreover, God gives us on the condition that we do not behave like a miser in sharing with others what He gives us. If we do so, He may take it back and we will be the losers for that. On the other hand, if we are generous enough in giving it to others, it will increase. The more we share it with others, the more will it increase.

Whenever you get a chance to give your things to others, do give them without bothering to think whether the taker is good or bad; is deserving of your generosity or not. You should rather think in this way: My things are God's. God has appeared in the form of a taker. I am going to offer God's things to God only. Why should I hesitate? Why should I miss this opportunity of giving?

All of us who are striving for God should always remember that success in meditation depends upon the degree to which we develop our love for Him. The more we love God, the more our attention is attracted towards Him. The more we feel this attraction, the more we enjoy our meditation.

Meditation leads you to that unique spiritual faculty lying deep within each human soul, the faculty of intuition which is also called the third eye, or the eye of wisdom. That faculty alone is the rightful and legitimate instrument of the soul. —**Swami Chidananda**

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### NEWS FROM THE HEADQUARTERS

#### SEVA THROUGH SIVANANDA HOME

*'Sivananda Home is a Centre for the loving care of the destitute and the dying people who are found by the roadside, with no one to care for them.'* (Swami Chidananda). Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj himself initiated this Seva by his living example of unparalleled, undivided and unconditional Love in Action.

Sivananda Home provides basic medical care for homeless people who have become ill and are in need of in-patient treatment. Food, clothing and shelter: How simple it sounds! How self-evident! How automatically taken for granted! But if one of these primary needs is lacking, is absent, one may understand the real value of it.

This was the case of the young boy who was brought from the roadside, where he was sitting all alone. He seemed to be around fifteen years of age. Once admitted in the Home, he was running around, screaming utterly and gesturing that he wanted to eat. It could be an indication of being without food for many days, the fear that he would be forgotten in the midst of many, the feeling of hunger due to intestinal worms or trying to fulfill a huge unsatisfied need, an intense loneliness or cry for attention and security. It is unimaginable how he has been staying on the streets, since he is not able to speak a single word: like he never learnt to talk. The mind of this boy is also less developed, though his understanding is quite well intact. After a couple of days, he seemed to

adjust nicely with the other inmates, and when training of daily activities was started, and a name was given to him, he settled down slowly but steadily, joining the evening satsanga, helping with the chores in the room, playing and laughing around with the dog and the cats. Sivananda Home harbors two more youngsters, a boy and a girl, who also are completely unable to talk or to repeat any given sound, though their hearing is fully intact and their mental capacity severely weakened, obviously since birth. Another form of communication is required sometimes, and suddenly one discovers the limitation of any common language. By gesturing, by a look in the eyes, by being taken by the hand, or a simple touch on the arm, a new world opens, a world where one speaks without words, where a smile is just unconditional happiness, and weary and worry do not exist at all. What lessons are taught by each and everyone of His children, what great lessons by these little naughty handfuls, who show us every minute again that life is too short to feel down and out, rejected and dejected, but encourage to be alive in the only existing time which is HERE and NOW, this moment, brightly, shining and reflecting His abundant Light. Om Sri Suryaya Namah.

*"Lord. the Light of Your Love is shining, in the midst of the darkness shining,  
Shine upon us, shine in us, shine through us,  
and let there be Light" (unknown)*

*"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)

## CULTURAL TOUR OF H.H. SRI SWAMI NIRLIPTANANDAJI MAHARAJ

H.H. Sri Swami Nirliptanandaji Maharaj, Vice-President, DLS Headquarters, undertook cultural tours within India during December, 2012 and January, 2013.

Swamiji Maharaj visited Pattamadai, the holy Birthplace of Worshipful Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj from 12th December, 2012 onwards, in order to attend the Tamilnadu State Divine Life Society Conference, etc. Swami Sivananda Centenary Charitable Hospital which has been set up in Holy Pattamadai in the Centenary Year of Sri Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj has completed 25 years of its glorious dedicated service and was observing its Silver Jubilee Celebration in December 2012. On this occasion, as a part of the Celebrations, a State Level TN Divine Life Society, Conference had been organised, from 14th to 16th December at Pattamadai. Swamiji attended the Conference on all the three days. Swamiji Maharaj did the "Om" Flag Hoisting on 14th and also lighted the Lamp as a mark of commencement of the Conference. Swamiji also gave his discourses and blessings at the Conference on 14th and 15th December. Devotees from all over India and abroad had participated in the Conference in a large number and it was a great success.

The Silver Jubilee function of Swami Sivananda Centenary Hospital was on 16th December. Swamiji joined the Celebrations and participated in the different programmes. The Celebrations

were inaugurated by Hon. Justice Sri V. Rama Subramanian, High Court Judge, Chennai. Swamiji Maharaj also spoke on the occasion and gave his blessings.

On 15<sup>th</sup> December Swamiji attended the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Swami Sivananda Memorial Trust in the Hospital.

A Bhagavata Saptaha had been arranged at Faridabad by Sri Radhakrishna Sharmaji of Australia, from 21<sup>st</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> December. Upon invitation and request, Swamiji Maharaj attended it on 21<sup>st</sup>, the day of commencement. Swamiji also gave a discourse during the programme in the forenoon session.

The next tour commenced with a visit to Odisha from 4<sup>th</sup> January, 2013 onwards.

Under the auspices of 'Sanskriti Bharati' a three-day World Odiya Samaj Conference had been convened at Bhubaneswar from 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> January. At the earnest invitation of Sri Srikant Nayak, Convener of the Conference, Swamiji Maharaj attended the Conference on the first day. The motto of the Conference was "Excellent Man, Developed Nation, Social Prosperity". Its objective was Social, Cultural and economic development of the common citizen by application of moral, spiritual and value-based education in the educational system, and to make the firm resolve to prepare excellent citizens, build a developed Odisha State and Indian Nation. The idea was to lay emphasis on building excellent

character and personality by which alone awakening to improved service to humanity, justice, sincerity in action, truthful conduct, universal brotherhood and devotion to the nation would be possible. Swamiji Maharaj inaugurated the Conference and also addressed the gathering.

From 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> January Swamiji visited Swami Chidananda Hermitage Ashram, Baliguali.

The 35<sup>th</sup> All Odisha Divine Life Society Conference was organised by the Divine life Society Bhubaneswar as part of its Golden Jubilee Celebrations. The Branch had completed 50 years of its establishment. The Bhubaneswar Branch has been doing excellent work in all these fifty years for carrying on the Holy Mission of Worshipful Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj.

A Press Conference was called on behalf of the Conference on 12<sup>th</sup> January, in which Swamiji Maharaj participated.

Swamiji Maharaj attended the Conference on all the three days from 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> January. Swamiji hoisted the DLS Flag on 17<sup>th</sup> and also presided over the Conference.

The Conference was also attended by Parama Pujya Mahamandaleswar Sri Swami Divyananda Saraswatiji Maharaj, the Head of Kailash Ashram, Rishikesh, Parama Pujya Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj, General Secretary, DLS Headquarters, Parama Pujya Gajapati Maharaj Sri Dibya Singha Deb, and many other eminent saints and scholars. About 6000 delegates had

participated in the Conference from all over the country. Besides, thousands of devotees from the local general public also attended the different sessions of the Conference. Swamiji Maharaj everyday gave blessing discourses in morning meditation session, in the forenoon and in the evening.

The Conference was very well organised and the arrangements made were excellent. The organisers had made all-out efforts to look to all the aspects. The Conference was a grand all-round success in every respect. It extended excellent service to everybody and gave immense satisfaction to one and all, and all were very happy.

Swamiji Maharaj also visited Swami Sivananda Centenary Boys High School, Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar, during this tour. On 15<sup>th</sup> January, Swamiji attended the meeting of the Managing Committee of the School. He also addressed and gave blessings to the teachers in a special meeting convened on that day. Swamiji Maharaj also participated in the prayer meeting and blessed the students.

On 20<sup>th</sup> January, Swamiji gave an interview for the 'Prarthana Channel' of the OTV, arranged by the Conference organisers, which was about the Conference and Divine Life.

On the same day Swamiji Maharaj also attended the Seminar on "Lord Jagannath's Seva and the Tradition of Sevaks" organised under the joint auspices of Sri Neelachal Tattva Sandhan Parishad, Puri, and Institute of Technical and Educational Research

(ITER), Bhubaneswar, held at ITER University Campus. Swamiji inaugurated the Seminar and gave a talk addressing the participants of the Seminar.

The representative of the Odiya Daily "Prameya" requested for an interview for the newspaper to which Swamiji Maharaj agreed and gave the interview on that day, highlighting the need to take to spirituality in life and to live the Divine Life for getting real peace and happiness in life.

From Odisha Swamiji Proceeded to West Bengal on 20<sup>th</sup> January.

The Divine Life Society, West Bengal, had organised their Annual Sadhana Shibir at Hamirgachi from 21<sup>st</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> January. Swamiji's visit to West Bengal was in order to participate in it.

Swamiji Maharaj inaugurated the Sadhana Shibir on 21<sup>st</sup> January and gave a discourse on the occasion for the participating Sadhaks. On all the days Swamiji took part in the different programmes. Everyday early morning Sri Swamiji addressed the Sadhaks on different aspects of spiritual Sadhana. He also gave discourses in the Forenoon and afternoon sessions. In the night Satsang also Swamiji took part daily. The Sadhana Shibir was very well organised and excellent arrangements were made for the Sadhaks as also for the smooth conduct of the programmes. More than 300 Sadhaks from different parts of the country had joined the Sadhana Shibir. They were all immensely benefited, found it very inspiring and rewarding. It was a quite successful programme.

### ANNOUNCEMENT

This is to inform all the devotees, well-wishers and followers of Sat Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, the founder of the Divine Life Society, that one of the inmates of the Headquarters Ashram, **Sri Swami Yathidharmananda**, who used to serve in the Audio Video Department has suddenly left the Ashram on 12th July 2012 of his own accord, severing all connections with the Headquarters of the Divine Life Society.

We are placing this Announcement in our English monthly magazine DIVINE LIFE and Hindi monthly DIVYA JIVAN to inform all the followers of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj that Swami Yathidharmananda is no longer an inmate of the Sivananda Ashram, Shivanandanagar, Rishikesh and that he has nothing to do with the Headquarters Ashram nor with any of the Divine Life Society Branches located in different states in the country and Abroad.

**President,**

The Divine Life Society



## REPORTS FROM THE D.L.S. BRANCHS

### INLAND BRANCHES

**Ambala:** Regular Satsanga activities continued on Sundays and every Tuesday with Bhajan, Kirtan and meditation. Mahamantra Sankirtan on 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2012 and 'Om Namah Sivaya' Mantra chanting on 31<sup>st</sup> were conducted for two hours. Nishkama Homeopathic Seva continued at Sri Gurugranth Sahib Seva Society regularly and Jalseva is continued as usual.

**Aska (Odisha):** Apart from regular Satsanga, the Branch conducted a one-day Sadhana Camp on 2<sup>nd</sup> December. Devotees of different Branches took part in the camp which was concluded with Prasad to all the participants.

**Bangalore (Karnataka):** Regular activities of Satsanga continued in the Branch. On 16<sup>th</sup> December, there was Akhanda Kirtan followed by Guru Gita chanting and concluded with Mangalarati. On 23<sup>rd</sup> Gita Jayanti was celebrated and on 25<sup>th</sup>, Hanuman Jayanti by reciting Hanuman Chalisa. Dattatreya Jayanti was celebrated on 27<sup>th</sup> December with Bhajans followed by Mangalarati.

**Barbil (Odisha):** Regular weekly Satsanga and residential Satsangas were conducted by the Branch. Balvikas classes were held on every Sunday. On 24<sup>th</sup> of December, Sadhana Day was observed with Paduka Puja, Gita Path and evening Satsanga with Prasad. Sivananda Charitable Homeo Dispensary treated 600 patients.

**Baripada (Odisha):** The Branch observed Sadhana Day on 2<sup>nd</sup> December. A Gita Yajna was conducted on the occasion of Gita Jayanti on 25<sup>th</sup> December with community feeding. Mobile Satsangas are

held on Sundays. On 26<sup>th</sup> a special Satsanga was held wherein the dignitaries of the Town participated.

**Bellary (Karnataka) :** The Branch conducted daily Satsanga with Puja and Guru Paduka Puja. There was Ashtottara Archana on all Sundays concluded with the chanting of Mahamrityunjaya Mantra, Shanti Mantra and prayer for world peace, and Maha Mangalarati with distribution of Prasad.

**Berhampur (Odisha):** Regular activities continued in the Branch. A 'Sadhana Day' was conducted on 16<sup>th</sup> December with 200 devotees. There was a students programme with 50 participants and an examination was conducted, certificates, prizes were distributed along with spiritual literature on the occasion of 125<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. Gita Jayanti was on 23<sup>rd</sup> December, Christmas on 25<sup>th</sup> and a special Satsanga was conducted on 31<sup>st</sup> December.

**Bhanjanagar (Odisha):** Regular activities of the Branch were continued. Srimad Bhagavat Pravachan programme was arranged from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> December. Monthly Sadhana day was observed on 9<sup>th</sup> December with Bhajan, Kirtan, Guru Paduka Puja and discourses by Baba Sri Kishori Charan Das Maharaj on Srimad Bhagavat Mahapurana. Sankranti Day was observed on 15<sup>th</sup> December and Gita Jayanti on 23<sup>rd</sup> was with the chanting of all 700 Slokas of Gita where 700 Ahutis were offered and the programme was concluded with Arati and Prasad distribution.

**Bhel (Haridwar):** The Branch conducted Gita Jayanti on 23<sup>rd</sup> December. Paramapujya H.H. Sri Swami

Vigyananandaji Maharaj President of Gita Vigyan Trust Ashram, Kankhal, Haridwar, graced the occasion and gave discourses on Gita and blessed the audience.

**Bhishmagiri (Odisha):** The Branch held Satsanga and Puja daily and Archana on Sundays. A special Puja and Archana of Pujya Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Pujya Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj was conducted, with Bhajan, Kirtan, Mahamrityunjaya Mantra chanting, Shantimantra and Mangalarati and also prayers for world peace.

**Bhuj-Kutch (Gujarat):** Satsangas were held regularly and spiritual and educative speeches were delivered by experts. A special lecture and demonstration were held on the topic 'Rheumatism' by a physiotherapist. Many old persons attended and were benefited for their knee problems. All the programmes were followed by Bhajans and Dhoons.

**Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh):** Satsangas were conducted regularly. A Bhagavata Saptaha was conducted and Sri Swami Brahmasakshatkarandaji and Sadhu Bhagavat of Odisha joined and depicted the Glory of Lord Krishna and Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. On 19<sup>th</sup> December Swami Devbhaktanandaji of H.Q. Ashram visited the Branch and a special Satsanga was conducted with many devotees.

**Chandigarh:** Regular activities continued in the Branch. *Special Activities:* A short two-week Yoga Vedanta Course was organised from 15<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> December with the guidance of Sri Swami Akhilanandaji, Sri Swami Ramarajyamji and Sri Swami Shivashritananda Mataji from H.Q., Ashram. Gita Jayanti was celebrated enthusiastically from 5<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> December with chanting, studying the meaning and exposition of one chapter of Gita. On 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Parayana of all

the 700 Slokas was done on the Gita Jayanti Day in the holy presence of the three Swamis. The devotees were all benefited by the guidance and advice in their Sadhana by the three Swamis. Akhanda Mahamantra Japa was conducted on Sivananda Day i.e., 8<sup>th</sup> December, in which Swami Akhilanandaji Maharaj and Swami Shivashritanandaji Mataji actively participated. Two Home Satsangas were also conducted under their guidance.

**Chatrapur (Odisha):** The Branch conducted Guru Paduka Puja on 8<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of every month on Sri Sivananda and Sri Chidananda days. Gita Jayanti was observed from 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> December with chanting of 6 Chapters of Gita on each day by all the devotees followed by Vasudev Puja. On the Eve of 'Dhanu Sankranti' Shri Ramcharitamanas, Sundarakanda Parayana was done in the Satsanga Bhavan on 15<sup>th</sup> December.

**Digapahandi (Odisha):** The Branch held Satsangas regularly. On 15<sup>th</sup> December a Haven in the morning on the occasion of 'Dhanu Sankranti' for world peace was conducted. On 24<sup>th</sup>, Gita Jayanti was observed with Gita Swadhyaya, Guru Paduka Puja and Arati in the morning session.

**Gangtok (Sikkim):** The Branch convened a meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013 to discuss the various activities to be undertaken by the Branch during the current year, followed by Satsanga with members chanting Mahamantra for world peace. It was proposed to organise a 5 days Yoga Camp, a Yoga Camp for school children and to organize Satsangas at the residence of devotees on rotation basis and also membership drive.

**Jamnagar (Gujarat):** The Branch conducted Yogasan, Pranayam, Dhayan,

Mudra Yog Shibir in the holy presence of Sri Swami Dharmanishthanandaji of Headquarters Ashram, Rishikesh. Swamiji imparted practical demonstration of various Yogasanas, Pranayama, Kapalabhati, Surya Namaskar, chanting of 'OM' etc and got them practised by the trainees. Last day Swamiji explained 'What is Divine Life and How to Live in Society'. The trainees were highly impressed and satisfied for imparting them the Yoga training. Dr. H.G. Tanna, President expressed gratitude to Swamiji and others who extended co-operation for the success of the Shibir.

**Jeypore (Odisha):** Biweekly Satsanga was conducted by the Branch on Sundays and Thursdays. On 8<sup>th</sup> December, Sivananda Day was observed with Havan. On 23<sup>rd</sup> which was Ekadasi and Sri Bhagavad Gita Jayanti Day, Gita Yajna was organised at the residence of Sri Ashok Kumar Malhotra with the collective chanting of each Sloka of Gita and oblations were offered with the sacred Dwadashakshara Mantra as Samputa. About 80 devotees, members of DLS were participated. Three mobile Satsangas were also conducted.

**Kabisuryanagar (Odisha):** Besides daily Puja and Narayan Seva the Branch conducted biweekly Satsanga on Sunday and Thursday. Morning meditation class and evening Satsanga were held throughout the Kartika month. About 500 packets of Prasad along with Universal Prayer cards have been distributed to the wellwishers of the Branch and also others, on the eve of New Year's Day.

**Kantabanji (Odisha):** The Branch conducted the chanting of 'OM' (long) and reading of Gita and each devotee spoke on one Sloka of Gita on Sundays and it was concluded with Shantipath. All the programmes of Bhajan and Kirtan were guided by spiritual master Sri Radharaman

Das. On 23<sup>rd</sup> December Gita Jayanti was observed with Sri Guru Puja, Sri Krishna Puja and reciting of all the 700 Shlokas, Gita Puja, Arati, Homa and concluded with Prasad Sevan.

**Lanjipalli (Odisha):** Regular Satsanga continued on Sunday evenings every month with 60 members participating. A Sadhana Day was observed along with Narayan Seva, Vastradaan, etc., on Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj's 125<sup>th</sup> Birth anniversary with Narayan Seva, cloth distribution, tree plantation, Go-Seva, and dissemination of Guru Maharaj's teachings. The Branch also conducted school programmes.

**Lanjipalli Ladies Branch-Berhampur (Odisha):** Apart from the regular activities every evening, the Branch conducted a special Hanuman Chalisa chanting 108 times by the devotees on 15<sup>th</sup> December. About 400 persons were fed as part of Narayan Seva and 150 bedsheets were distributed to the 150 poor and disabled in the presence of Sri Swami Sraddha Swaroopanandaji. On 23<sup>rd</sup> December, on the auspicious occasion of Gita Jayanti, the devotees and local people chanted Srimad Bhagavad Gita Shlokas.

**Madhavapatnam (A.P.):** Regular Satsanga with Bhajan, Kirtan at Sivananda Kshetram and Sai Mandir was conducted. Free medical camp by Dr. M.S.R. Sastry continued and Narayan Seva for 25 poor and needy at Sivananda Kshetram was also continued. Members of Kakinada DLS Branch participated in Kartika Samaradhana at DLS Vishakapatnam Branch on their request on 2<sup>nd</sup> December. Vighraha Prathistha of Lord Rama, Sita, Lakshmana and Hanuman at Sivananda Kshetram was done. The idols were donated by Sri and Smt Ramamohan Rao. A Homa followed by 'Shanti Kalyanam' was

performed on 9<sup>th</sup> December and concluded with Mahaprasad. About 250 members took part in the programme.

**Moirang (Manipur):** Special Satsangas were arranged at the Branch on arrival of H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj, General Secretary, DLS Hq., Rishikesh and Sri Swami Sivachidanandaji Maharaj. On 5<sup>th</sup> October, they visited Moirang Bhavan DL Society. H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj delivered a brief speech about Divine Life to the members present which was very enlightening. On November 25, a Patha-Parikrama with Bhagavan Sri Krishna decorated with flowers and followed by 100 devotees on the auspicious 'HARI UTTHAN' from DLS Moirang Bhavan to surroundings of Moirang about 7km was conducted by the Branch, and it was celebrated with Bhajans and Kirtans.

**Nandininagar (Chhattisgarh):** Daily morning and evening Satsangas continued at Swami Sivananda Bhajan Mandir besides mobile Satsangas (weekly) and Matri Satsangas on every Saturdays. The Branch conducted 'Youth Camp' on 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> December under the guidance of Sri Swami Devabhaktanandaji with 50 students as participants. The Branch arranged school visits with the team of Sri Swami Devabhaktanandaji, Sri Br. Panduram of Gumergunda and Sri K.S. Thakar of Nandini Nagar Branch to 5 schools of Durg district, two schools of Dantevada district, to spread the teachings of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. A spiritual tour to different Branches of Chhattisgarh by the above mentioned team was also arranged. On 23<sup>rd</sup> December, Gita Jayanti was celebrated with Gita Parayan.

**Swami Sivananda Cultural Association, New Delhi:** Regular Satsanga activities continued with Gita Parayan, Sri

Vishnu-sahasranama Stotra Parayan, Guru Paduka Puja and Sundarakanda Parayan and meditation on the different Sundays. On 9<sup>th</sup> December, a Gita Sloka competition was arranged, and 70 students from different schools participated. Certificates and cash prizes were given. On 23<sup>rd</sup> December, Gita Jayanti Maha Yajna was conducted with Samput 'Om Namoh Bhagavate Vasudevaya' with a large number of devotees and concluded with Bhandara. Mrs. Mohini Giri who is a patron brought a group of 15 students and 2 professors of NKU American University and a special programme for 6 days was conducted. The American group was very much pleased.

**Rajkot (Gujarat):** Lectures on Sivananda literature and Srimad Bhagavat Katha were organised by the Branch. Lectures on Ramcharita Manas, recitation of Bhagavad Gita and other Sanskrit Slokas, Bhajans and reading of Gurudev's literature were organized. Eye Camps, Dental Camps, Physiotherapy and a special camp for the treatment of patients suffering from bone diseases, gynaecological problems and common diseases requiring surgery were arranged. Financial aid was extended to the needy. A Yogasan Shibir was conducted by Sri Swami Dharmanishthanandaji in the last week of Dec 2012, with the help of Bank of Baroda Recreation Club. One trustee of this Branch, stayed in Headquarters Ashram for 15 days for Anusthan, and during her stay she distributed sarees, dresses and other clothes to leper colony people at Laxman Jhula and Dhalwala. Ration worth of Rs.10,000/- was also distributed by her in the rehabilitation centre at Laxman Jhula. The Branch has started free coaching classes for the students of weaker sections and 10 students of higher secondary school were provided with free text/exercise books and other study materials.

**Rourkela Steel Township (Odisha):** 6 Mobile Satsangas were conducted by the Branch and Gurupaduka Puja on every Thursday morning. Three Sadhana days were observed with Gurupaduka Puja, Hanuman Chalisa, Gita Path, Bhajan, Kirtan and Mantra chanting and concluded with Prasad Sevan. Gita Jayanti was observed on 26<sup>th</sup> December.

**Salipur (Odisha):** Regular activities were continued at the Branch. Under health services, 91 patients were treated and given medicines free of cost by the Swami Sivananda Charitable Hospital every Sunday. Yoga training was imparted in the local school/college in which 32 staff/students participated. *Special activities:* Akhanda Mahamantra Japa was conducted on 28<sup>th</sup> October for 6 hours.

**South Balanda (Odisha):** Along with regular Puja and general Satsanga, the Branch conducted 'Akhanda Mahamantra Sankirtan' on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> December for 12 hours and 3 hours respectively for world peace and universal brotherhood. On 8<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> December, Sivananda Divas and Chidananda Divas respectively were observed with Shree Gurupaduka Puja and a special Satsanga.

**Sunabeda (Odisha):** The Branch conducted weekly Satsanga on every Thursday and Sunday with Paduka Puja, Bhajan, Kirtan, Japa, Puja, Arati and Swadhyaya of the holy books of Guru Maharaj. On Gita Jayanti, a special mobile Satsanga was held at Semiliguda with Sri Guru Paduka Puja, Archana, Havan etc. Smt Bijayalakshmi Ojha conducted the Yogasana classes.

**Sunabeda Ladies' Branch (Odisha):** Daily Satsangas continued in the Branch with Mahamantra Sankirtan, Srimad Bhagavat Path, Gita Path and

Mahamritunjaya Mantra Japa. General Satsanga on Sunday evenings, children's Satsanga in the afternoon, Narayan Seva on Tuesdays. Wednesday and Saturday Satsangas for Ladies, and Sivananda Study circle for youth continued weekly. Vishnu-sahasranama Path, Abishek on every Ekadasi, Chidananda day on 24<sup>th</sup> of every month with Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Japa for 12-hours, and Sundarakanda Parayana on every Sankranti evening in Ashram premises continued.

**Varanasi (U.P.):** The devotees of the Branch gathered at 'Vriddha Ashram' on 27<sup>th</sup> December for the Satsanga. Smt. Uma Sachdeva distributed Horlicks powder, Biscuit packets to all the Ashramites, after garlanding Gurudev's portraits, and Prasad was distributed at the conclusion. Yajna and Havan was performed on 5<sup>th</sup> December at the residence of Mrs. and Mr. K.C. Sachdeva. All the devotees of the Branch participated and were served with Bhandara.

## OVERSEAS BRANCHES

**Hongkong:** The Branch held one hour Maha Mantra chanting on every Saturday evening and Hanuman Chalisa on Second Saturday evening. A video show on the celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday anniversary of H.H.Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj held in Hongkong in 1987 was played. Regular Yoga classes continued. *Special Activities:* On 6<sup>th</sup> October, Mahamrityunjaya Mantra chanting was held at both Chung Sha Wan and North point Yoga centres for the victims and those who were injured in the Lamma ferry disaster and also for the world peace. On 7<sup>th</sup> October, a one-day workshop on 'Yoga for Beginner' was held. A Bhajan revision and practice session on October 20 and a course on 'Meaning and Significance of Bhajan' was conducted on that day by Sri Premji Samtani with 20 participants. □□□