



The DIVINE LIFE



Mind
is a fetter of the
soul. Purify the mind
through Japa, Kirtan and
selfless service. Fix the mind
on the supreme Atman, through
the practice of regular meditation.
It will lose its limiting and binding
power and you will attain Self-
realisation or liberation.

Sri Sri Sri Sivananda

MAY 2021

THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

O Adorable Lord of Mercy and Love!
Salutations and prostrations unto Thee.
Thou art Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient.
Thou art Satchidananda (Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute).
Thou art the Indweller of all beings.

Grant us an understanding heart,
Equal vision, balanced mind,
Faith, devotion and wisdom.
Grant us inner spiritual strength
To resist temptations and to control the mind.
Free us from egoism, lust, greed, hatred, anger and jealousy.
Fill our hearts with divine virtues.

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**

HOW TO CONCENTRATE

The vital point in concentration is to bring the mind to the same point i.e. to object again and again by limiting its movement in a small circle in the beginning. That is the main aim. A time will come when the mind will stick to one point alone. This is the fruit of your constant and protracted Sadhana.

There should be one line of thought. There should be continuity of thought like the steady flow of oil from one vessel to another vessel, like the continuous sound of a church bell.

Swami Sivananda



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PRASNOPANISHAD

PANCHAMA PRASNA (QUESTION V)

SATYAKAMA AND PIPPALADA

तस्मै स होवाच ।

एतद्वै सत्यकाम परं चापरं च ब्रह्म यदोकारः ।

तस्माद्विद्वानेतेनैवायतनेनैकतरमन्वेति ॥२॥

2. He replied: O Satyakama! Om is indeed the higher and the lower Brahman. Therefore, he who knows it by this means, surely attains either of them.

महागुरुवर्णमातृकास्तोत्रम्

MAHAGURU-VARNA-MATRIKASTOTRAM

Jnana Bhaskara Mahamahopadhyaya Sri S. Gopala Sastri

वश्याक्षं वामगात्रप्रसृमरमहसं विश्रुतं वीतमोहं

वन्द्यं विश्वैश्च वेदागमनिरतमतिं वैद्यराजं भवार्तेः ।

वंशीपाण्यंग्रिनिष्ठं विमलमुनिवृतं श्रीशिवानन्दमूर्तिम्

विद्यासिद्ध्यै च शुद्ध्यै गुणसुरभिसुमस्रगधरं भावयेऽहम् ॥२७॥

27. To attain wisdom and purity, I always meditate on Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj who has perfect control over his senses, whose body is shining with divine radiance, who is known worldwide, is devoid of delusion, is respected by all, whose intellect is ever absorbed in contemplating the truths propounded by the Vedas and Shastras, who is greatest among the physicians for earthly diseases, who has immense devotion towards the lotus feet of Muralidhar Krishna, who is ever encircled by pious sages and who is adorned with a fragrant garland of virtues.

शक्तायाखिलभक्तदुःखशमने शास्त्रे शठानां सदा

शिक्षाधूतमनोमलाय शुभशीलाढ्याय शुद्धात्मने ।

शूरायान्तरशत्रुसंघदमने शोकाद्रिदम्भोलये

शौचाढ्याश्रितशंकराय गुरवे भूयो नमः कुर्महे ॥२८॥

28. Prostrations and salutations again and again to Sri Gurudev, who is capable of removing the sorrow of all devotees and subjugating the wicked ones as well, whose mind has been purified by the practice of Sadhana, who is endowed with virtues, who is pure-hearted, who has conquered the internal foes, who is like a thunderbolt to the mountain of sorrow, and who bestows all prosperity on his pious devotees.

(To be continued)

Buddha Purnima Message

THE GREAT DEPARTURE

Sri Swami Sivananda

Twenty-five centuries have elapsed since Lord Buddha was born in this country, and yet the truth of his great message is more today than it was during his lifetime. In Buddhism we have religion, philosophy, ethics and psychology, all combined into one comprehensive system of thought with the direct and practical purpose of meeting the deepest needs and aspirations of human nature—a philosophy applicable to every aspect of our complicated individual and social life. Lord Buddha came to the world to show the path of righteousness, to destroy the path of error and to break down sorrow.

Benevolence and humanitarianism are the key-notes of all religious movements of the world. But the benevolence and humanitarian spirit and service of Lord Buddha stand, perhaps, unrivalled in the religious history of the world. His is, perhaps, the noblest and grandest humanism that has existed. The great invulnerable edifice of humanitarianism built by Lord Buddha on the rock-foundation of

Ahimsa and cosmic love is indeed his crowning glory. The essential principle which the Buddha, the Prince of Peace, inculcated was the principle of Ahimsa (non-violence) and Maitri (love). The cardinal principle of his ethical teaching is universal love, on which is built the magnificent edifice of humanism.

"It is sublime in the beginning; it is sublime in the middle; and it is sublime at the end." In these words, Lord Buddha described the essence of his teachings to Ananda and his own life bears ample testimony to these words. Every phase of the Buddha's life moves us by its beauty and its unsullied purity. Queen Maya's dream; the birth of Siddhartha in the garden of Lumbini; his education and attainments; his marriage with Yashodhara and the birth of Rahula; the witnessing of the four signs by Gautama and his departure from Kapilavastu; his struggle against Mara and his attainment of supreme enlightenment; the turning of the wheel of the Law; the conversion of Sariputta and Moggallana; the great

deliverance at Kusinara—each episode has a significance of its own and fuses with the others to form an aesthetic whole. And yet, while every part of the Buddha's eventful career is meaningful, the events connected with his great departure from Kapilavastu have a particular deep impact upon us. Even though, there is an abundance of the supernatural events in his legendary life, the importance is stressed on the essentially human aspect of his personality.

The nature of Ultimate Truth is beyond the reach of mind and speech. If Buddha refused to define the nature of the Absolute, or if he contented himself with negative definitions, it is only to show that the Absolute or the Ultimate is above all definitions. Buddha demands from you, faith in your own Self, in your own latent forces. Without this faith, nothing can be achieved. He says, "Be a light unto yourself, be a refuge unto yourself. There is no external refuge. All component things are impermanent. Work out your salvation in earnestness". The first words of Buddha after his enlightenment were – "Wide open are the gates of immortality. Ye that have ears to hear, release your faith".

The gospel of Buddha is simple

and yet wonderfully profound. Buddha analysed all experiences and the world process, as it appears to all of us, with a scientific frame of mind. He finds out that everything is mutable, changing, impermanent or transitory. It is the exceeding rapidity of continuous succession that gives us the idea of an enduring entity, just as a burning stick rapidly whirled round and round, presents to the view a circle of fire (Alatachakra). So also in this whirlpool of empirical existence, there is nothing abiding or immutable. Man also shares the same fate. His body decays and perishes. There are suffering, disharmony, discord and discontent everywhere in life on account of impermanence or transitoriness of things around. This universal experience of sorrow or Duhkha, is the starting point in Buddha's thought. Buddha did not preach pessimism; he was on the other hand wonderfully optimistic. He emphatically asserted that there is a way out of sorrow and a heaven of eternal bliss within the reach of every man.

The four cardinal truths which Buddha preached are - (1) that there is suffering (Duhkha) in the world; (2) that the cause of suffering is Tanha or craving (Duhkha Samudaya); (3) that the extinction of craving leads to

cessation of suffering (Duhkhanirodha) and (4) that this extinction of craving can be achieved by the noble eightfold path (Duhkha-nirodha-marga). The ten evils must be avoided. They are called 'Dasa-akusala'. Three pertain to the body, four to the speech and three to the mind. Not to kill, not to steal, not to do acts of sexual immorality, belong to the body. Not to utter falsehood, not to abuse, not to use harsh and vulgar words, belong to the speech. Greed and malice, sticking to the superstitious beliefs and unreasonable views, denying the law of cause and effect, belong to the mind.

The rules of conduct are – Charity, purity of moral conduct, thinking of good things, service of others with courtesy and politeness, nursing the sick and elders, requesting others to share with us in doing good, giving the merits of one's good actions to others, and hearing and preaching the good Law. Buddha insisted upon the inexorable Law of cause and effect. He said to the people, that they lived in a world in which causes always produce their natural and necessary effects, and that the consequences of their conduct would, therefore, follow them wherever they went. He said that virtue has its own reward and vice its own punishment, and that whatever is

done inevitably reacts on the character and through character affects, for weal or woe, the destiny of the soul.

One who is desirous of attaining Nirvana or Buddhahood must stand on the foundation of the four principles – intense yearning to attain Nirvana, cultivation of noble thought, the energy to do meritorious deeds and investigation of methods adopted, and develop the five psychic organs, viz., faith, power of recollection, strenuous indomitable energy, concentration of good, sublime thoughts and supreme wisdom. One must also develop the seven attributes of supreme wisdom which are – psychological attentiveness, analysis of the Skandhas, the seats of consciousness, the law of cause and effect, etc. One must destroy the fetters, viz., ignorance of the law of cause and effect and the four cardinal truths, pride, desire for sensual enjoyment, etc., and remove the hindrances such as hatred, anger, indolence, sleepiness, doubt, tossing of mind and restlessness. Armed with these, one must tread the eightfold noble path. Only then will he be able to attain Nirvana.

The five commandments, which are obligatory on all Buddhist monks as well as laymen are – (1) let not one kill any living being, (2) let not one take

what is not given to him, (3) let not one speak falsely, (4) let not one drink intoxicating drink and (5) let not one have unchaste sexual intercourse. These commandments correspond to the Yama or self-restraint prescribed by Patanjali Maharshi in his Raja Yoga Sutras.

One may ask, what is the goal of Buddhism? 'Nirvana' says the Buddha. The word literally means 'going out'. It signifies a spiritual experience, full of peace and bliss, which is characterised by the 'going out' from the heart of the three fires of lust, ill-will and dullness. The religion of Buddha is a pathway to the Nirvanic Beatitude. It is a way and not a creed. It is a scheme of spiritual development and not a set of doctrines. Nirvana is not total annihilation, but is a total extinction of all that is base in us.

The present day world needs very badly the teachings of Lord Buddha. Everywhere we see preparations for the destruction of the human race and its culture. The fear of atomic bomb is causing restlessness everywhere. Scientists and politicians have neither rest nor peace. There is mistrust among the leaders of the nations. Malice, hatred and prejudice have grown to such a large extent that the very structure of human

civilization seems to be crumbling. The one great ambition of every nation is, perhaps, to possess more atomic bombs. Scientists are working day and night in the laboratories, to release as much atomic energy as possible, capable of wiping out cities and towns from the face of the earth. What a horrible state of affairs! It is really shocking. The only way by which the world can be saved, is by a return to the great principles of Ahimsa and Maitri, inculcated by Lord Buddha and Maharshi Patanjali. Hatred can never be cured by hatred; it can only be cured by love. This is a lesson which the world has to learn again and again. Let us take a solemn vow now, to meet hatred with love, malice with goodwill. This is the best way to pay our homage to the great sage, Lord Buddha, the apostle of Love and Ahimsa, the Saviour of the world.

Let us bow down and offer our reverence to Siddhartha, son of queen Maya and king Shuddhodana, the ruler of Kapilavastu, father of Rahula, husband of Yashodhara, the Prince of Peace, Gautama, the All-merciful or Lord Buddha, the Enlightened One who showed the way to attain Nirvana! May there be Peace the world over.

Sivanandashram, 19th May, 1962.

Sri Sankara Jayanti Message

**EXPERIENCE THE TRUTHS BY
SINCERE PRACTICE
Sri Swami Chidananda**

The word 'Kali' means something positively injurious, or quarrel, or strife. An average Kaliyuga-Jiva (in contrast to his counterpart in the previous Yuga, Dwapara) is not confronted by doubts concerning the teachings of the scriptures and his preceptor—in which case it would at least mean and imply some degree of humility on his part – but he is so presumptuous that he feels sure that the scriptures and the teacher are in the wrong. Backed by his ego, inexperience and ignorance, he never hesitates to discredit them. He thoughtlessly asserts his own utterly unbaked views and right of say on every subject conceivable in this world. The result is that he naturally quarrels all the time with the scriptural injunctions and the teachings of the preceptors and foolishly lays authoritative claims to his own views even on matters with which he is not conversant.

This attitude of the generality of the people in the present Yuga therefore necessitated instructions on the lines of the Bhashyas—long,

detailed and elaborate works of highly polemical or dialectical nature, wherein all disputed subjects are analysed at great length, all opposite views are discussed threadbare and finally the right doctrine is established by means of such a lengthy and scholarly process. These methods are obviously calculated to silence all objectors and to convince the incorrigible and unmanageable intellects of the present age and bestow peace on the disturbed and agitated Jivas.

Due to the requirements and exigencies of the Kali Yuga, it is said that it was contingent for the Lord Himself to incarnate in the person of Jagadguru Sri Adi-Sankaracharya. During his phenomenal life, which was but a short span of thirty-two years, he entered into erudite and scholarly controversies with opponents of every description and defeated them all by sensible arguments and irresistible dialectics, and established once again the Sanatana Dharma which was very much on the wane. Sri Sankara also

established Vedanta-Siddhanta based on the Prasthanas Traya (the Upanishads, the Gita and the Brahma Sutras). Sri Sankaracharya was a giant intellect, and by virtue of his solid and pure understanding, he completely succeeded in upholding his own wonderful, brilliant and sustaining Advaita philosophy against all opposition and promulgators of wrong types of doctrine that were in vogue then. The Acharya not only defeated them at every step but subdued their obstinacy and forced them to submit to his own views.

It is roughly about eleven hundred years ago that this great Jnana-Guru of the Kali Yuga, Bhagavan Sri Sankaracharya, is believed to have taken birth on this planet and brought illumination to the ignorant minds. He elucidated to mankind the correct meaning of the Upanishads, the Gita and the Vedanta Sutras, etc. in his monumental works and left for posterity a beacon of divine wisdom, which burns with undiminished brilliancy even to this day. We also ought to remember in this connection the incontrovertible fact that in spite of the present-day degraded condition of humanity in every walk of life, India still holds great thinkers

of other lands captive, and it is because of Sri Sankara's impregnable Advaita philosophy alone. The brilliant intellects of the world have been compelled to bow their heads in reverence before India, on account of the supremely astounding and inexplicable phenomenon of this miraculous character, Sri Sankara-Bhagavatpada. To name some of the great works of the great Acharya (besides his brilliant commentaries on the Prasthanatraya) are: 'Vivekachudamani', 'Atmabodha', 'Shatasloki', 'Prabodhasudhakara', 'Aparokshanubhuti', 'Saundaryalahari' and the wonderful compendiums of wisdom namely, 'Dakshinamurti Stotra' and 'Dwadasapanjarika Stotra', etc. and they are veritable treasures.

Such great men of wisdom, God-like men, were before us, who had striven and trodden the right Path. By their visions and the experiences they had gained, great truths have been bequeathed to us for our benefit. But mere repetition of their sayings will not really help us. It will lead us nowhere, unless we ourselves practise the precepts taught by them and experience the truths in a practical way, by striving incessantly

to live the divine life. It can be intensely felt and realised only when it fully manifests itself through spiritual unfoldment.

Even if we take up a single Sloka (verse) and understand its deep implication and try to practise it in our daily life, there is no denying the fact that we will be immensely benefited. For example, let us consider the Sloka that occurs in the 'Vivekachudamani' of Sri Sankara:

*Durlabham trayam eva etad deva-
anugraha-hetukam*

*Manushyatvam-mumukshutvam
mahapurusha-samsrayah*

“Three things are difficult to attain (but by the grace of the Lord one attains), and they are human birth, intense longing for release and the company of saints.”

It is said that human birth is superior to all other species or beings on either side of the human being—the celestials and the subhuman beings. It is easy to understand that the latter are inferior to human beings, but what about the celestials? It is said that the privilege of attaining Immortality is not given to the celestials either. If they want to attain divine consciousness, they have to come down to this human plane. This human body alone is the Sadhana-Sharira. Though this life is

full of pain and death, we are in essence the Ever-pure, Infinite, Immortal Self. This only the human beings can realise.

But the vast majority of humanity does not take advantage of this human birth. That man who does not utilise this rare opportunity for the prime purpose that is given to him, is a veritable animal — human in form but in fact only a Pashu (beast). Manushyatvam (human nature) is the first great gift of God.

The second great gift which God gives man is Mumukshutva (desire for liberation). Look at the insects that fly around the lamp. A little while ago they were born, and they are running after something, they do not know what, but which attracts them to their doom, and a little later they get tired and die. Similar is man's life here. It is a wonder that with all the diseases, accidents, pain and misery, man is alive at all. Between the two terminals, birth and death, there is a little existence—that is this life. Yet, what does man do? He thinks that pleasure lies in a little comfort of the five senses. He runs after sense-objects, and before learning that the pleasure lies not in those, it becomes too late.

And that is why we must resort to the great ones, the Mahapurushas,

the sages. '*Tadviddhi pranipatena pariprashnena sevaya*'— we must surrender our lesser ego and must try to win the hearts of the saints, by sincere and earnest service. If we do this, then they will initiate us into the knowledge, which will take us beyond all sorrow and keep us ever immersed in perennial bliss. We must, with humility and sincerity, approach God-men and ask them for knowledge, after attaining which, nothing more remains to be attained. This contact with the great men of wisdom, is the third gift of God bestowed upon man—Mahapurushasamsraya.

This way of attaining Immortality is very simple, provided we are sincere. Every human being is an heir to this divine treasure. What he has to give up, for the sake of attaining this supreme treasure, is something very ordinary which will harm him ultimately. It is like this. Suppose you are having bread and pulses, and you are told by the host that a grand and sumptuous feast is under preparation and would be ready within half an hour. Would you mind waiting for a brief while and giving up the simple diet already with you? Similarly, what you are asked to give up is something (desires and pleasures) which is not only

ordinary but will ultimately harm you; what you will get is indescribably blissful.

The Infinite alone is Bliss ('*Yo vai bhuma tat sukham*'), and that is the goal of divine life. The greatest enemy of man and the obstacle on the way of attainment of this goal is not outside man; it is inside man, the mind which makes one think that which is painful is pleasant. You will have to non-cooperate with the mind, purify it, and then it will become your friend. Try to co-operate with the teachings of the great seers, the Bhagavad Gita and the Bhagavata, especially the eleventh Skandha.

*'Anityam asukham lokamimam
prapyā bhajasva mam'*

"This world is impermanent and full of miseries. Having somehow attained this, worship the Lord."

This is the final message! Detach the mind from that which is Anitya (impermanent) and Asukha (painful), and attach it to the lotus feet of the Lord, where alone Eternal Life, Bliss and Perennial Satisfaction are to be found.

May the Guru's Kripa be upon you all!

Hari Om Tat Sat!

THE MAKING OF A SCHOLAR-SAINT

Sri Swami Chidananda

Great is my happiness to express my homage and high regards to our most revered Swami Krishnananda Saraswati, my beloved spiritual brother and fellow-disciple at the feet of our most worshipful Guru Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, upon this joyful and auspicious occasion of his Platinum Jubilee Jayanti Utsav.

Sri Swami Krishnanandaji is the foremost spiritual personality of our Gurudev's holy Ashram, who has inspired, guided and enlightened countless spiritual seekers ever since his advent at the headquarters of the Divine Life Society in the year 1944. He has drawn to himself innumerable fortunate spiritual aspirants by the sublime spiritual quality of his life and his deep knowledge and rare wisdom.

Today, Swami Krishnanandaji is enshrined in the hearts of countless Sadhakas and students of Yoga and Vedanta all over the world by his loving disposition, his kindness to them, and his genuine keen interest in their spiritual progress and welfare. Thus, it is not only we, at the holy Sivananda Ashram, but also many thousands of spiritual people in many countries all over the world who will be rejoicing upon this very happy

occasion of his Platinum Jubilee.

Beloved Swami Krishnanandaji shines as the leading light of our monastic brotherhood at Sivananda Ashram, and as the foremost amongst the spiritual teachers of the Divine Life Society, whom Worshipful Gurudev left behind to carry forward his spiritual work. That he is a man with a mission in this modern age becomes clearly evident by the way in which he grew up in his young age and showed unmistakable signs of what was to come right from the very beginning of his life.

Birth and Infancy

Swamiji physically hails from the South Kanara district on the Western coast of South India. In his Purvashrama, he was the eldest son of a family of six children, four of them being his younger brothers and one a sister. Known by the name Subbaraya, he was born of orthodox Shivaralli Brahmin parents. The forefathers of Swamiji belong to one of the respected Brahmin families settled in the Tuluva Desa or South Kanara district by Maharaja Mayura Verma, ruler of Banavasi. This family was well-versed in the performance of religious rituals and in the knowledge

Taken from Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj's 75th Birthday Souvenir

BIRTH CENTENARY YEAR OF SRI SWAMI KRISHNANANDAJI

of Tantra-Sastra and was one amongst those authorised by the above ruler to practise Paurohitya and Tantra as their services to the religious life of the community. As such, devotion and worship of God was very much a tradition in the family.

As a child of two years of age, Subbaraya was taken on a pilgrimage to Tala-kaveri in Coorg district. This is a very holy place at the source of the sacred river Kaveri in South India. In those days, during the first quarter of the century, there were neither good roads nor motor bus transport services available. So, the pious parents trudged on foot the entire distance of the pilgrimage, carrying the little child Subbaraya. The very next year, the parents took him to the famous hill-shrine of the Lord of the Seven Hills at Tirupati. Little Subbaraya went once again in the company of his grandfather to holy Tirupati and had Darshan of Lord Venkateswara, when he was a child of five years. From then onward, he started his school career.

School Days at Puttur

In the educational field, he surpassed all of his classmates in every class. He had early education at St. Francis Xavier's School at Darbe in Puttur town. He studied upto 5th Standard in this school. His subsequent education was in the Board High School at Puttur. At this

time, the family was financially passing through a difficult period. But, thanks to young Subbaraya's brilliance in studies, he was fully exempted from school fees and similar dues by the school authorities who were highly pleased with his great proficiency in studies. Subbaraya used to score the highest marks in the class. He used to take part in the school debates which were being conducted in English. Once during the annual inspection, the District Educational Officer was stunned by the forceful oratory of young Subbaraya and was deeply impressed by the power of expression evidenced by the young scholar.

Subbaraya had great liking for the Sanskrit language and took keen interest in the study of Sanskrit. Not satisfied with what was taught in the class-room, young Krishnananda took to earnest self-study of Sanskrit with the aid of the Amara Kosha and other textbooks. He eagerly took guidance from any Sanskrit Pundit whom he happened to meet. He had a natural flair for the learning of this classical language and had an inborn genius for it. Consequently, he made rapid progress in this study, and even while at high school, he used to compose original poems in Sanskrit. Side by side with his studies in the school, he learnt Suktas from Rigveda, Pavamana, etc., from his father who

was himself well-versed in Sanskrit and in the sacred scriptures. But then, his was not a case of “all work and no play” and he was no mere bookworm. As a young student, Subbaraya was fond of playing at Ramayana with his younger brothers and friends. Subbaraya himself took the role of Rama, his brother that of Lakshmana or Sita, and the others were given other suitable roles. Thus they formed a troupe and he used to lead this play during the midday lunch-hour recess or after school hours, with bows and arrows prepared from the branches of trees. He enjoyed this play and so did the others too.

Love for Scriptural Studies

The deeper spiritual side of Subbaraya's nature began to shine in his conduct at this time. After he began studying Sanskrit, he took to the study of the Bhagavad Gita of his own accord. Such was his intellect and unusual memory that he soon learned it by heart and began to repeat the whole of the Gita daily. During holidays, he would explain the meaning of this sacred text to his mother and his younger brothers. One thing is noteworthy about his spiritual state at this time, and that was, that though the family belonged to the Madhva sect and the members were followers of Sri Madhvacharya's Dvaita Philosophy, yet somehow, young Subbaraya began to be drawn

towards Sankaracharya's absolute Advaita Philosophy. He began reading Sankaracharya's Viveka Chudamani and Upanishad Bhashyas. He developed monastic tendencies and a desire for solitude, an aversion to large gatherings and mixing with people.

At that time, there was at Puttur a very cultured and well-read gentleman belonging to the legal profession, by name Baidur Shivarama Holla, who had a good library of religious books. The aspiring young seeker Subbaraya used to meet the advocate and borrow from him the Vedas, the Upanishads and similar other books and delve into them to explore their inner meaning. Gradually, a certain change was wrought in his nature. The spirit of liberation and the spirit of renunciation were awakened in the youth's heart. Subbaraya began to feel more and more that the only thing worth striving for was Kaivalya Moksha or the divine state of spiritual liberation. At times, he used to give expression to his feelings by saying that some day he would renounce everything and go away in quest of Kaivalya Moksha. But the people at home did not take it too seriously.

Government Service—A Brief Interlude

Sometime in 1943, Subbaraya took up Government service at Hospet. But this phase lasted only for

a short period. Even during his service, the youth was said to have been conducting Gita classes for the earnest public. He took leave on grounds of ill health and was at home for a while, recouping his health. But after a month's stay at home towards the end of that year, he left, giving the impression that he would rejoin his government service at Hospet. But he straightaway went to the sacred city of Varanasi. There he studied the Vedas and Sanskrit for a little while. But the call to seclusion and Sadhana drew him further north and he left Varanasi for Hardwar and thence for Rishikesh, briefly informing his parents through a letter that he would now be going in quest of the higher knowledge.

As a Sadhaka in Sivanandashram

Arriving at Rishikesh in the year 1944, the brilliant young seeker came face to face with his Guru upon the holy banks of the sacred river Ganga. Filled with the spirit of renunciation, young Subbaraya met his Worshipful holiness Satguru Sri Swami Sivananda filled with the radiant light of Divine Realisation. The story of his first meeting with His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, in whom the young man saw his spiritual preceptor, is told in an interesting manner by Gurudev himself in his speech "He is a Wonder to me"*.

Though Subbaraya was devoted to the pursuit of Self-knowledge and was a Bala-Jnani, he did not hesitate to joyously undertake, willingly do, with the efficiency of a master and with the delight of one interested, any work that was allotted to him by the authorities of the Ashram. The Sivananda Charitable Dispensary needed an able hand to serve the sick that resorted to its medical aid; Swami Krishnanandaji was chosen for what he considered a blessed privilege. He used to conduct the Ashram Satsanga and play the most important roles in it, chanting hymns, reading from the scriptures and delivering lectures. He was well-versed in the Mantras and therefore he willingly undertook to conduct any ritual that was to be performed at the Ashram. It was he who culled out Mantras from several sources and codified the Sannyasa Diksha ceremony now adopted in the Sivanandashram. He became the Programme Director of all the Sadhana Weeks; he managed them most efficiently and won the admiration of the hundreds of Sadhakas who took part in each Sadhana Week, for his punctuality, regularity, and capacity for intense and hard work. Any department of work at the Ashram that needed an able organiser to set matters right claimed Krishnanandaji as its own.

* Published in April 2021 issue of 'The Divine Life' magazine

Beneath all this heavy load of strenuous work, he could put up a happy smile, and could, when not engaged in all this responsible work, meditate in absolute peace.

His needs were few, and wants were none. He had attained such a mental state that austerity was welcomed by him. His mastery over the senses and his hard work soon earned for him the admiration of H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji himself, who during the course of his talk to aspirants, on the 17th September, 1945, said: "Though he is a young man, he is full of Vairagya. He has controlled his tongue. I have tested him in so many ways. There is a fire in his speech. His words come from his heart. He is a young man with spiritual Samskaras. He who has done spiritual Sadhana in the previous birth is born with such Samskaras. He has done much work. He has translated several poems from Sanskrit."

Sannyasa Diksha and After

Subbaraya entered the Holy Order of Sannyasa on the 14th January, 1946, on the holy Makara Sankranti Day, and since then has come to be known as Sri Swami Krishnananda Saraswati. In his own words, he felt a mysterious change took place within himself when Sri Gurudev uttered the glorious Mahavakyas.

Though he continued to take an active part in the Ashram work even after this initiation, there was an almost imperceptible change in him. Automatically and miraculously, as it were, newer channels of work opened up before him. The service took a new turn. He took to lecturing and writing: no one knows how it came about—neither how the other departments of work dropped from him nor how the mantle of a Guru was thrown upon him. It is here that we see the mysterious hand of Providence unmistakably working His Will. Day by day, the young Swami grew more and more lustrous, more and more silent and reticent, more and more introspective and meditative, more and more a manifest man of God. He had long before become a master of the art of resorting to inner seclusion. Now he resorted to external seclusion also. The silence of the forests around the Ashram attracted him. The thought of God, God-consciousness, kept him awake many a night. He rapidly became blind to the world of names and forms, and deaf to all the talk of the world. His gaze fixed on the ground before him, he flitted about like lightning, whenever he had to move out of his Kutir. He eagerly discussed Vedantic truths; he listened to aspirants' doubts and delightfully

cleared them; but worldly topics dared not approach him. Living in the world, amidst men and women, yet he was living far beyond and above it, beyond the reach of the worldly. Frequently he went away from all human habitation, in order to commune more thoroughly with That. Such was the fire of his renunciation that no thought of hardships could ever deter him from seeking the seclusion of the densest forests. At other times, he plunged himself in intense activity. Meditation and study, seclusion and selfless service—they all went hand in hand.

Then came the great day, somewhere in 1948, when he had, what he termed “a lightning glimpse of Truth.” He was so lost in it, that for a considerable time after that he took no interest in anything. His behaviour—already reserved and serene—became still more austere. For several months, he confined himself to a room and uttered not a word to anyone on any subject whatsoever. He never asked for anything; there was no desire in him to express. He took what came to him unasked. He was ever blissful and peaceful.

Swami Krishnanandaji's emergence from this period of what we could only term as “concentrated God-consciousness” was hailed by the establishment of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy. Sri Swami

Sivanandaji Maharaj promptly appointed Sri Swami Krishnanandaji its Professor of Vedanta. There was “fire in his words” even before; now there was that clarity which clearly indicated a perfect perception of Truth. The words were illuminating. He spoke as one endowed with authority.

As He is Today

The story of Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj, after 1948, is just one of a Jivanmukta enjoying the Sahaja-Samadhi-Avastha. It is the story of Jada Bharata retold. Radiating peace and bliss, he lives in Sivanandashram in a state of Continuous Self-awareness. All service is welcome to him; though he does not desire to do this or that. When the flower blossoms, bees rush to it; they do not need invitation. Similarly, Krishnanandaji has without the least ostentation drawn to himself many aspirants and seekers after Truth from all parts of the world; to them all, he has become a Guru. He guides Sadhakas not only in Jnana-yoga and Vedantic Sadhana, but in other branches of Yoga as well. He is himself an adept in Hatha Yoga, a master of Raja-Yoga and a great Bhakta of Lord Krishna. He is a master of the Yoga of Synthesis propounded by His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj; and is today a wonderful replica of the Master.

Hari Om Tat Sat.

SANKARACHARAYA'S MESSAGE OF COHESION

Sri Swami Krishnananda

Today we bring to our memories the coming of a great savant, saint and sage whose advent took place in this country several centuries back. This coming, this advent, had not only a tremendous historical significance, but it paved the way for what may be regarded as a permanent cultural revolution in India. Not only was it in this country, but its impact has been indelibly impressed upon the culture of the world as a whole because the work of this genius, who was called Acharya Sankara, was actually the birth of wisdom of an insight into the reality of life as distinguished from the ideas that people entertain about the world through sensory perception and sensory contact with the world outside.

The complete overturning of the very process of knowledge became a necessity for the blessedness of mankind as a whole, since it also became necessary to point out that the truth of life cannot be known by the contact of the senses with the things in the world. Senses do not contact anything, as a matter of fact. We are under the wrong impression that the

senses come in contact with things in the world. What happens is not actually a contact, but a repulsion exerted by the objects upon the senses. When I love you and embrace you, it is a contact, but if I give you a kick in anger, that is also a contact.

Now, the contact of the senses with the objects is not a loving embrace of the objects in regard to the sense organs. It is indeed a contact, but it is of the opposite kind. They give a hit, a repulsive kick, and that we consider as a blessing. Those who know the meaning of social life, family life, and some element of psychology will be able to understand how we can consider even a kick as a blessing. Such is the life we live in this world.

It is impossible to understand the meaning of the situation that is taking place in our daily lives. If we enter into the mystery of this phenomenon of sense contact, we will be horrified to realise that every person in the world is an utter fool.

*Pītvā mohamayīm pramādamadirā
munmattabhūtaṁ jagat* (B.V.S. 43)

is a passage from the Vairagya-Shatakam of Bhartrihari: "Having

drunk deep the liquor of ignorance, people have gone mad.” This is what Bhartrihari says. The raving madness and the dance of ignorance may also be regarded as a blessing. Otherwise, why do people drink liquor and want to become unconscious and fall under the table? That is also a blessing. If it is not a blessing, who will go for it? But we know what kind of blessing it is.

Acharya Sankara had a great message which was not intended to be understood so easily, in the same way as there is not much benefit in telling a confirmed drunkard, “From tomorrow please don't drink. It is not good for you.” What impression will our advice create in his mind when he has been addicted for years to this habit? Our message will be like pouring water on a rock.

This is the reason why even today, with all the scholarship poured upon the writings of this great scholar Acharya Sankara, his message has not been properly understood. We have only academic gibberish which appears to be a kind of understanding of his message because professorial, academic, scholastic study of a philosophy of this kind is, again, confined to intellectuality only, which is a handmaid of sense perception. And we again come to the same point,

that the truth of life does not lie either in sense contact or even in intellectual apprehension, because the intellect is only a confirming medium of what we receive through the sense organs. The intellect is a judiciary which depends upon the evidence, and the reports come through the sense organs. So the senses are not our guides and friends, and neither is the intellect. It is direct intuition that is actually called for. *Anubhava*, experience of the fact of life, alone can bring to the surface of our experience, our consciousness, what Truth is.

What is Truth? In his great commentary on the Brahma Sutras, the great master said, “Whatever may be the truth of life, one truth is evident: that you are there, or I am there.” Is it not true that I am here? Is it not true that you are here? Let the other truths be there, whether they are clear to your mind or not, but this much at least is clear: You are sitting here. Have you any doubt that I am here or you are here?

This indubitable conviction that “I am here” is not a knowledge come through the sense organs. Even if my sense organs do not operate—I do not see, I do not hear, I do not taste, I do not smell, I do not touch—in spite of the

absence of all these sensory activities, I can know that I am existing. So there is one kind of knowledge which is different from the knowledge obtained through the senses. That you are here or I am here is a knowledge that has come not through sensory activity. It is also not an intellectual conviction. Do you require intellectual argument, logical deduction elaborately produced in order to know that you are existing? Do you want proof to know that you are existing? Neither do you want any proof, nor do you want any sense organ to operate, nor do you want logical deduction, yet you can know that you are. How do you know that? Let everyone ponder over this great fact of life. How do you know you are here if it is a knowledge come not through the sense organs, not through the intellect, not through the mental operations? It is existence speaking for itself. Nobody can deny oneself; nobody can doubt that one exists. Doubt all things in the world: The world may be there, the world may not be there, people may be there, people may not be there, God may be there, God may not be there, but are you there? You cannot doubt it.

I am. What is the meaning of this "I am"? I am existing. Where are you existing? The development of this

thought is the entire gamut of the philosophy of life. Once you are convinced that you are, you have to build an edifice, a palace on this foundation of the fact that you are existing. Suffice it to say that you are existing. Now tell me, where are you existing? This is the second question. You will find that the second question is more difficult to answer than the first one. Somehow you have understood, and it is clear to you: "Yes, I appreciate, I understand that I am existing, and I know that this not through the sense organs or the intellect. But you are asking me where I am existing. This is difficult for me to answer. Can I say that I am existing in Rishikesh, on this Earth, in the solar system, in this world? None of these answers seem to be adequate. No, I am not like that. My existence cannot be defined in this manner by saying 'I am here', 'I am there' and so on, because there is a difficulty in giving an answer to this question."

I am existing. Not merely am I existing, but I am also aware that I am existing. Therefore, existence goes with consciousness. Existence is consciousness; consciousness is existence. It is not that you exist minus consciousness; it is not that

you are conscious minus existence. Look at the beauty of it. You are conscious that you are existing, and you are not conscious of existence as an object outside. It is consciousness itself existing, or rather, existence itself being aware of itself. Be very careful in knowing what this matter actually is. I am conscious that there is a pillar in front of me, but it is not in that sense that I am conscious of my existence. The pillar is not the same as my consciousness of it, because it is outside. The existence of myself, of which I am conscious, is not like a pillar in front of me; it *is* me. So here is a great difference between the type of consciousness that I have about myself and the consciousness I have about other things in the world. This requires a deep concentration of mind in order to understand what it means. If you casually hear this and just let it pass, it will not enter your feeling and your heart. It is a very hard nut to crack.

What is all this? What does it mean, finally? It is a serious matter, and nothing can be more serious in life than this because it is a matter regarding yourself, and what is more important to you than yourself? Minus yourself, is anything in this world important? You are the key to the

importance of anything in this world. You go, and everything goes with it. So inasmuch as it is something connected with you and about you, you have to be very cautious in going deep into this mystery of what all this phenomena about yourself is. It is a consciousness of yourself, consciousness which *is* existence—consciousness not *of* existence. Language is limited here. We cannot use an ordinary style of speaking to explain what it is. There is no “of” between consciousness and existence. There is no “is”, there is no preposition, there is no conjunction, there is no verb. Consciousness is just existence. Existence-consciousness. We cannot express it in writing because language is limited.

Now, where are you existing? Wherever consciousness is, there you are. Now, where is existence? Everything is existing. There is nothing which does not exist. If it does not exist, then nobody will talk about it. So everything has an existence. Even a leaf in the tree exists. Where is consciousness? There is a quick, abrupt answer to this question which is generally given by people: “Consciousness is within me.” Is it really within you? If it is within you, you are inadvertently saying that it is not without you, that

it is not outside you. Then if consciousness is inside you, locked up within your body, as it were, how do you become conscious of things other than you, that are outside your body? So it is ultimately not true that consciousness is within the body only, locked up within the body. Consciousness has a permeating feature extending beyond the limitations of the bodily enclosure, touching everything outside, defying the law of outsideness, because existence has no externality. Existence is universally pervasive, and wherever existence is, consciousness also is.

So where are you existing? This answer will be a bombshell dropped on the mind of any person. You will be shuddering to give an answer to this question. Where are you existing? "I seem to be existing everywhere." Your heart will stop for a moment to say these words. You will hesitate a hundred times before uttering these words. "I seem to be driven to the conclusion that I am not just here, and I am not just anywhere else. If existence is everywhere, and if consciousness is inseparable from existence and I am existence, I have to be everywhere. What happens to me afterwards if I

am everywhere?" Any one of you seated here may close your eyes for a few seconds and feel for yourself what will happen to you if you are everywhere. You will melt into the substance of all things. All these buildings and structures, the entire heaven will melt into liquid and become you. This Atman will become Brahman, as the great message goes.

To tell this to you, the great master Acharya Sankara was born. Even today, nobody has understood him. Sankara was a great genius, to say the least. It is often said that he mastered the four Vedas when he was only eight years old. When he was twelve years old, he mastered all the philosophies—the Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Sankhya, Yoga, Mimamsa, Vedanta, the orthodox and super-orthodox philosophies. When he was sixteen years old, he wrote his magnum opus, a commentary on the Brahma Sutras, which is a great wonder for even the great scholars in this world today. And it is believed that he was to have passed away by the age of twenty-four. The story goes that Saraswati, the great goddess, extended his life up to thirty-two; she did not allow him to pass away at twenty-four because he had to give a message to

the world, to humanity.

Acharya Sankara's physical birth took place in South India, but he travelled far, to Badrinath, by the power of his yoga. At that time there were no buses, no airplanes, no vehicles of any kind, and not even a road. How did he go to Badri? By the yogic shakti only it must have been. He had a few disciples, of which four were very important: Suresvara, Padmapada, Hastamalaka and Trotaka. For the perpetuation of his message to this world, he established four centres of learning in India. One centre of learning is in Badrinath, with its centre located in Joshimath; another centre is in the east, in Puri, in Jagannath; another is in the south, in Sringeri; and another is in Dvarka, in the western part of India. Thus, Acharya Sankara covered the whole country with the establishment of these Maths, or centres, and each one was presided over by one of his disciples. That tradition of running these four centres continues even today. These centres have pontiffs, all also known as Sankaracharyas. To distinguish these Sankaracharyas from the original master, we call him Adi Sankaracharya. On Vaishakha Shukla Panchami his birth took place.

This philosophy is not merely

to be studied from a book, because it is concerned with you. Can you regard knowledge of your own self as a kind of theoretical knowledge? It is a vitality itself. It is a breath of existence, and it is impossible to describe its significance and value. You have to live this knowledge. You have to be this knowledge. That is to say, *Sat* has to be *Chit*. If the knowledge that you have is outside you like professorial knowledge or the knowledge that is in the library or in the classroom, and is not in you, that knowledge is not going to help you. That knowledge alone is a blessing to you which *is* you. "I do not *have* knowledge; rather, I *am myself* knowledge." Such a knowledge, which is existence itself, is going to protect you from all the ills of life and will bring you prosperity, here as well as hereafter. It will clarify the concept of the fourfold aims of life, known as *dharma*, *artha*, *kama*, *moksha*, the four-footed concept of the structure of existence.

Material values are known as *artha*. Vital and emotional values are called *kama*. Ethical and moral values are called *dharma*. Spiritual and ultimate values are called *moksha*, the last one including the other three. We have to live in this world with a blend of all these things into a concentrated focus, and not

keep *artha* somewhere, *kama* somewhere, *dharma* elsewhere, and *moksha* for after death. *Moksha* is not to come after death. It is to be there wherever you are, and you are not there only after death. Even now you are also there, so why not be free now? Are you going to be free only after death? A person who expects to be free after death is not free, really speaking, because bondage will persist, and it will be carried forward to the next life as a figure in a balance sheet is carried forward. So the blending of *dharma*, *artha*, *kama*, *moksha* has to take place just now, so that we live a perfect life from now, today. It is not that we want to be healthy from tomorrow only. "Let me be sick today, and let me be healthy from tomorrow onwards." No patient will say that. We want to be healthy today itself.

Therefore, would you postpone this great necessity—of blending the values of life into a single focus of perfection—to a future life? Actually, timeless is existence and, therefore, there is no such thing as a future life. It is eternal life that is really there. It is eternity that we are after, not a futurity of life. It is not a reincarnation through this psycho physical personality. It is a merging of Atman in Brahman, the Spiritual

Entity within in the Spiritual Reality which is everywhere.

This also has a social impact, and is not only psychological, philosophical and spiritual. It has revolutionised human society. Sankaracharya has brought about a powerful force of cementing humanity into a single whole of compactness. If the soul, the Atman in the individual, is the reality of life, and it is a spark of divinity aiming at union with the Universal Being, then humanity is one fraternity, one family under the fatherhood of the Almighty.

Thus, political cohesion, social cohesion, psychological cohesion, ethical cohesion and spiritual cohesion are all brought together at one stroke by the blow given to the mind of man by this injection that the great master Acharya Sankara has given by his message. If these few words that I have spoken to you have entered you in their true spirit, and if you can draw the necessary conclusions from what I have told you, I have no doubt that you will be blessed and you will continue to deeply ponder over these truths, meditate on them, revolutionise your outlook of life, and live a life of perfection, happiness and abundance.

GURUDEV

Sri Swami Venkatesananda

Once you begin to think of stereotyped behaviour, set Gurudev Sivananda, remember responses or rigid routines. In him, him and remind yourself of the way contradictions were reconciled in which he laughed and lectured, into complete wholeness, and the the way in which he smiled and changes blended into an frowned, your whole being is unchanging light that defied flooded by reminiscences which description. keep flowing as if a dam had burst.

Sometimes we are tempted to compare Gurudev with this or that holy man. But truly he was incomparable. In fact, he was indefinable and therefore unpredictable. He had no

There was no dogma in him, and yet he was not opposed to dogma. He was not opposed to anything – no, not even to opposition! He was incarnate love, but that love was unlike anything that you and I have experienced.

Taken from "Thoughts for Today, 9th July"

BIRTH CENTENARY YEAR OF SRI SWAMI VENKATESANANDA

Never despair. Life begins afresh each morning. Look not into the past. Be always hopeful. You will succeed. Hope is your companion. Hope is the mother of success. Hope is your prop to lean upon and hope gives you happiness. Hope pushes you to sublime heights of splendour and glory. Hope inspires and encourages.

Every man or woman in this world rests on hope. A medical student hopes to become a famous doctor with roaring practice. A young girl hopes to marry a handsome, intelligent, rich husband. A businessman hopes to become a millionaire. A munsiff hopes to become a district judge.

So, heart is the last organ that ceases its functioning. Hope is the last thing that dies in man. You live not on what you have, but on what you hope.

Swami Sivananda

THE IDEAL OF A SADHAKA

(Speech delivered by Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj,
on 26th December, 1954)

When we celebrate the birthday of Venkatesanandaji, we are celebrating the birthday of the Supreme Being. We worship, we remember the One Common Consciousness which, through the veiling power of Maya, appears as all these – like the blueness in the sky, like a snake in the rope. You will have to enquire – “*Eko devah sarvabhuteshu gudhah*” – That One Supreme Consciousness is hidden in all these beings, like butter in milk. He who is able to see the one Light of lights, he alone really sees. Otherwise he is blind.”

To have such a fiery renunciation and the spirit of service, what is it due to? There are people of fifty and sixty who do not get such ideas. What is it that made Swami Venkatesananda renounce the world and adopt this life? That is, I think, good Samskaras and virtuous qualities. He had been a Sannyasi in the previous birth, leading the divine life, leading a Sattvic life on the banks of the Ganges, studying the Upanishads, Brahma Sutras and Gita. I am not saying this to glorify him; but to point out to you that here is an example before you. Every one of you should in this life try to do virtuous deeds, practise

Ahimsa, Satyam and Brahmacharya to have aspiration, intense aspiration and burning Vairagya. You may not have it; but you will have to cultivate it by Satsanga, study, enquiry into the nature of the Self and reflection. That is your foremost duty!

These people may or may not deliver lectures. Look at Sri Krishna Ashram of Gangotri; the very life of such people you will have to watch – their simple food, simple living, their love of Japa, Kirtan and meditation and their Vairagya. Vairagya is the greatest wealth, the real wealth, which weans the mind away from the objects of the world, which is a strong weapon to cut off all the attachment that you have for the world. For such a man of Vairagya, there is no world, no object of sense-enjoyment can attract him. When you become a District Judge, you rejoice; when you get a little thing of this world, you rejoice; when you have accumulated a little bank balance, you rejoice. But look at these people – they know that you cannot have eternal satisfaction in these objects, but that you can have it only in the Atma, the Innermost Self that

Taken from 'Life of Swami Venkatesananda'

resides in the chambers of your heart.

*Jyotisham api tajjyotishtamasah
param uchyate*

*Jnanam jneyam jnana-gamyam hridi
sarvasya vishthitam*

That, the Light of all lights, is said to be beyond darkness, Knowledge, the Knowable and the God of knowledge, seated in the hearts of all. (Bhagavad Gita XIII/18)

These things of the world do not attract them, because they have got the spiritual wealth of good Samskaras through enquiry and reflection. You must possess Vairagya which will lead you to the attainment of this Atma, the inexhaustible spiritual wealth.

But you do not have aspiration! The mind is full of evil tendencies. You may be endowed with a little talent, and you will be puffed up. The mind is veiled. There is Avarana. In spite of your intellectual faculties and talents, you will not be able to understand and realise the Universal, Cosmic, Supreme Being, whose nature is Satchidananda (existence-knowledge-bliss). You can get many Oxford University graduates, but not many Jivanmuktas who have realised the Self – that is the supreme veiling power of Maya. You know, yet you will not be able to understand it! There is something beyond these senses, mind and intellect – the Supreme Soul, full of

Bliss, the Only Reality! How many educated people have understood this and are trying to realise it? How many have got even an aspiration to realise it? That aspiration is the real wealth.

Aspiration. Renunciation. Meditation. These will make you a king of kings, emperor of emperors, *Kaupeenavantah khalu bhagyavantah* (Blest indeed is the wearer of the loin-cloth).

Very few have realised this and very few are attempting to realise this because they are satisfied with the little toys of this world. They have not got the supreme subtle Vichara-Buddhi, which is the great wealth of man. That comes through selfless service, study, meditation, enquiry, Satsanga. Nobody wants this! How many people want the wealth of the Atma? How many are attempting to possess these qualifications which are necessary?

How many intellectual people try to sit in Padmasana and do Japa and meditation? People don't know what Padmasana is! They do not know what Prana is, nor the relation between Prana and the mind and the will. They want to become scholars. Their mind will run in that direction only. Their goal is an American degree. If a doctor becomes an 'America-returned' specialist, he will get Rs. 32 as his visiting fees. God has given you an

intellect. You must understand the magnitude of human suffering. What is the nature of this world? What is the mind? Ask yourself. Then only will you become a great man. He is a great man who tries to possess Vairagya, who tries to practise the Sadhana-Chatushtaya. Equip yourself with Viveka, Vairagya, Shat-Sampat and Mumukshuttwa. What is Viveka, people do not know. They will deliver lectures on engineering! Maya will make your mind work along the external grooves. It is its duty. Maya hides the real and makes the unreal appear as real. So you want only external things.

*Ye hi samsparsaja bhoga
dukhkheyonaya eva te*

*Adyantavantah kaunteya na teshu
ramate budhah*

The enjoyments that are born of contacts are only wombs of pain, for they have a beginning and an end. O Arjuna, the wise do not rejoice in them. (Bhagavad Gita V/22)

The pleasure that is derived through contact of sensual objects is verily the womb of pain. You will have to meditate upon this; then only will you get the discriminating intellect, which will make you bold with the power that is born of the wisdom of the Self. Cultivate discrimination and dispassion. That only will make you bold. Otherwise

moving along the sensual grooves, you will lose everything.

God has given you this chance – this human birth – to rise above sensual things and to realise the goal of life. How many of you are attempting to do so? Mere study of the scriptures will not do. You can talk. But have you got that burning Vairagya, the burning aspiration, which Lord Buddha had, which Raja Gopichand had? Then only can you become the king of kings. If you do not attempt to possess these, then you fail in your duty.

You forget this truth. It is difficult to give up, to renounce these sensual objects. But if you are sincere, the path will be easy; it is easy for those who resort to Satsanga, who close their eyes and make a little enquiry, "What is this world, what is the goal of life, what is mind?" Only such enquiry will lead you to everlasting peace. Very few people do this. You will have to generate these Samskaras now, just as Venkatesanandaji did, and so he has come here.

This clearly proves there is rebirth. You come down here with your Samskaras. You wanted to become an engineer; God has given you birth that will enable you to fulfil your ambition. But this will not give you satisfaction. In your old age, you will suffer from all sorts of diseases and lead a miserable

life. Your mind is full of evil Vasanas. How many selfless acts have you done?

How many people try to do selfless service? All are selfish. Close your eyes and practise self-analysis and find out for yourself what are the various kinds of impurities that are lurking in the mind, and what are the good qualities that you are possessing.

*Amanitvam adambhitvam ahimsa
kshantirarjavam*

*Acharyopasanam saucham sthairyam
atmavinigraha*

*Indriyartheshu vairagyam
anahamkara eva cha*

*Janmamrityujaravyadhi
dukhadoshanudarshanam*

Humility, unpretentiousness, non-injury, forgiveness, uprightness, service of the teacher, purity, steadfastness, self-control, indifference to the objects of the senses and also absence of egoism, perception of the evil in birth, death, old age, sickness and pain. (Bhagavad Gita XIII /7-8)

Are you trying to cultivate these virtues? Even to possess one virtue, to give up the little tea-habit, how difficult it is! How many good acts have you done today? Which evil quality is troubling you? You must know. That is the thing which will make you a real man, a Superman.

How many of you are keeping the spiritual diary? What is your spiritual progress compared with the

previous years? These are the things that matter. He is the greatest man, a real sovereign and emperor who is striving to answer these questions. He may not possess any wealth or treasury; but he who possesses dispassion, discrimination, serenity, spirit of selfless service, spirit of sharing with others what he has – he is the greatest man. Man is generous to himself. He can spend any amount on the Saree of his daughter; but his heart is very small, because he has not cultivated the spirit of charity. He cannot share with others what he has. He closes the doors and takes first class Bournvita.

To his friends, he may give a little. To servants, he will not give even water! Such is the nature of the great man who has got a number of factories! Analyse yourself. You have a small heart and a small intellect. Your world consists of only yourself and four or five relatives and perhaps a few friends who will help you when you are in difficulties. No. You must have a large heart. You must become one with the entire mankind. You must share with others what you have. Every day, as soon as you get up, ask yourself, "How many good actions was I able to do yesterday?" and resolve to excel the previous day by doing good to others. Thus would you evolve rapidly.

Practise patience, tolerance and endurance. These are the qualities you will have to develop. Then you can become fearless. He has practiced these already; so they have become the basic traits in him. If you cultivate these qualities and acquire the spiritual wealth, whatever you want God will give you. Spiritual wealth alone will make you king of kings. You will be freed from all sorrows when you see the One Common Consciousness everywhere. You must have Sarvatma-Buddhi. Then you will be free from sorrow, pain and delusion. Then you will enjoy supreme satisfaction, perennial joy and immortality. That is the goal.

The little sensual pleasure is no pleasure at all. When there is a patch of eczema, you scratch yourself and seem to enjoy it. Later it bleeds and you suffer from intense pain. Similar is the case with the pleasure derived from sensual objects here. You must have a bold understanding to ask yourself, "Is this really pleasure?" and arrive at the conclusion that it is no pleasure at all. Study the phenomenon of deep sleep; that itself will give you the knowledge that you can get real joy and peace only when you go beyond the objects of this world. In deep sleep, there are no objects, and there is no objective enjoyment. Yet, you enjoy great bliss and peace there. You say, "I slept well; I

enjoyed my sleep; but I did not know anything." In spite of the absence of the sensual objects, you got the homogeneous experience of bliss. This joy is not to be had in the sense-objects. The third cup of milk produces retching and vomiting. If it was really pleasure-giving, it ought to give you that homogeneous experience, eternal and everlasting. It is only to the dull-witted, gross persons that the worldly objects appear to be pleasurable. For a man of discrimination, they are no pleasure at all.

Real happiness you can have through meditation, with a pure, concentrated mind, filled with Sattva. People may write articles and theses; but how to convert Rajas into Sattva? No one knows this. Nobody practises introspection. As soon as you get up, you put on your suit and go to office. In the evening, you go to the club and at night, you go to sleep. Where is time for you to introspect? Only regular and systematic introspection will enable you to control the mind; and only he who has controlled the mind, will be able to enjoy real happiness. Only when the mind is filled with Sattva, you can have concentration of mind. In a Sattvic mind alone does real Atmic enquiry arise. He alone can discover the answer to the question, "What is my real essential nature?"

(To be continued)

WHAT IS DIVINE LIFE

Sri Swami Gurusharanananda

1st August, 1955

A student had Darshan of Swamiji, and asked the following questions. They were immediately answered by Gurudev.

Question: What is Truth?

Answer: Truth is God. Truth is your own Self. Realise this Truth.

Question: What is Divinity?

Answer: Truth and Divinity are one.

Question: What are the principles of Divine Life?

Answer: Ahimsa, Satyam, Brahmacharya and dispassion are the principles of Divine Life. Divine Life is Life in God. You can lead a Divine Life even while remaining in the world. What is wanted is renunciation of egoism, attachments, Vasanas etc. Give the hands to work and the mind to God. The practice of Brahmacharya is important. Japa is an important limb of Divine Life. You are already doing Gayatri-Japa. This is quite sufficient. This will give you prosperity and salvation. Continue your Sandhya and Gayatri-Japa. Everything is included in that. Sing the Names of the Lord. Have faith and devotion. Do

something practical. What will you benefit by counting the number of mangoes on a tree? You must pluck some and eat them. Do not worry about others' Sadhana. First perfect yourself. Stick to Gayatri-Japa. All your doubts will be cleared. You should study for five or six years books like Viveka Chudamani, Atma-Bodha, Tattwa-Bodha, etc of Sankaracharya, Upanishads and other books. Or study Gita alone — this itself is sufficient. Vairagya and Abhyasa are the foundation of Divine Life. You should renounce unholy desires. Control the senses. Don't see cinema, this will control the eye. Don't eat laddus, this will control the tongue. Don't wear fine clothes, this will control the sense of touch. DIGEST WHAT I HAVE TOLD YOU. Otherwise it will cause dyspepsia. Read my books: *Yoga in daily life; Practice of Vedanta*. You will be benefited.

Question: What is the difference between Moha and Love?

Answer: When your brother dies, you weep. But if a German brother dies, you are not affected by the news. If you

lose anything belonging to you, you are plunged in grief. This is due to Moha or attachment or sense of possession. Love Atma. Love all. Then you can get rid of Moha.

Question: Which is better — Dwaita or Adwaita?

Answer: Both are ideal for different temperaments. Bhaktas pray for devotion. Vedantins say 'Sivoham'. Emotional persons (moved by the heart) practise Bhakti. Intellectual ones practise Vichara (Vedanta). But both search the same Goal. Have you not heard of Tukaram, Mira, Tulsidas and other Bhaktas? Dwaitin feels that he is servant of the Lord. Adwaitin feels that he is one with the Lord. But the Goal reached is the same in both the cases. It is all a question of difference in taste, temperament, nature or

Swabhava. If you are afraid of a cat at night, you are not fit for Adwaita. Vedanta is for advanced people. You are a B. Sc. student. You are not Einstein now. But it does not mean that Bhakti is lower.

Question: What is the way to Samadhi?

Answer: Swamiji humorously replied: "Take a full meal with curd and other heavy dishes. Then lie down on a mat. You will get sound sleep. That is Samadhi." Then Gurudev replied seriously:—"By a life of self-control, service, devotion, Vichara, Japa, prayer and Dhyana, study, cultivation of virtues, by sincerity, patience, faith, perseverance—by these means you will get Samadhi. Begin now. Do something. You are sure to succeed. May God bless you."

Turn your gaze within. Look into your own heart. Find out your love. Cultivate it consciously and deliberately. Find out the thorns and bushes. By intelligent methods, throw them out. They have no place in the beautiful garden of your heart where the Lord dwells. See what great preparations you make for the reception of a king, a president or a big leader! How much more preparation is necessary for receiving in the temple of your heart, the Lord of the universe.

Swami Sivananda

ADJUST TO. ESCAPE FROM. SUFFER WITH.

Sri Swami Atmaswarupananda

The spiritual life has been described as a shift from an ego-centred life to a God-centred life. All traditions and all teachers have a slightly different way of bringing that about. But upon examination, no matter what the method is, there seems to be at least three stages that we should be aware of. Otherwise, we may leave something out, because even though they are vital, at the moment we can't see their importance.

The first basic step in this shift has to be done by the ego itself. It could be perhaps encapsulated by Gurudev's words adapt, adjust, accommodate. We first have to learn how to get along in this world, how to become a good human being, how to treat others the way that we would like to be treated. Thus, we must learn to adjust.

When we have learned to adjust, the ego will have perhaps overcome many of its tamasic qualities, and divine virtues may be appearing. We have become a better person. But our purpose is not just to become a better person, we are meant to know our divine identity. Thus, after learning to adjust, we must, in a sense, escape

from our ego identity, even though it has improved, and find the divine within. For this surrender is the key—offering everything to God. We must find that stillness within that never changes, that is neither sattvic, rajasic or tamasic, but is aware of them all and is the same no matter which one is present.

But then, finally, we must equally find that peace in the world, and here the secret is compassion, which means to suffer with. Originally, we adjusted to the world. Then, we escaped from it. Now we must enter into it, suffer with the world. In each practice, we accomplish a vital stage in the shift from the ego-centred life to the God-centred life.

We first make the mind fit for knowing that stillness within by becoming a good person. We then find the stillness within through surrender, escaping, in a sense, from the ego. And finally, we find that stillness in the world, not by escaping from it, but by entering into it, suffering both with the world and with individuals. Thus there are at least three stages: adjust to, escape from, and suffer with.

CHILDREN'S WORLD

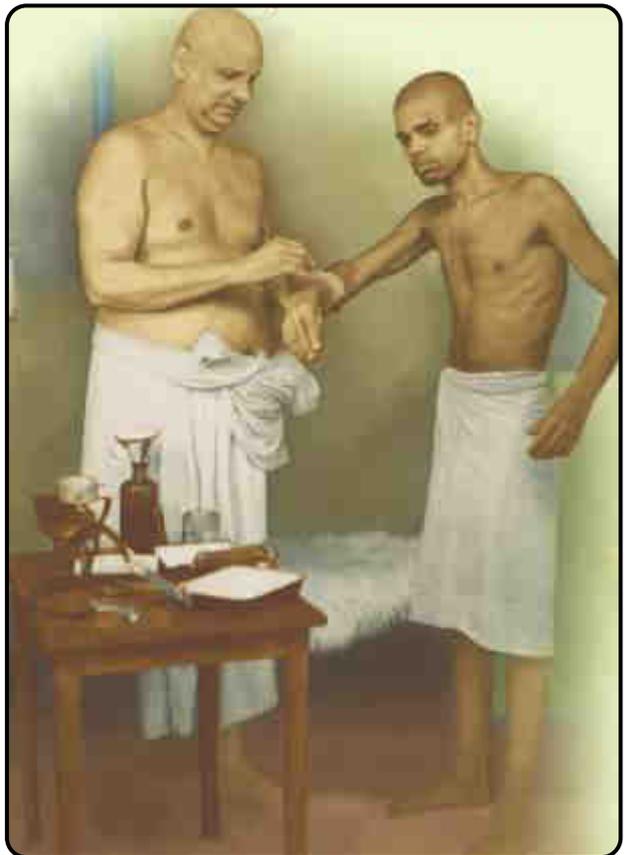
STUDENTS' SUCCESS IN LIFE SELFLESS SERVICE

Glorious Immortal Atman,

When you walk along the road or street, keep always some coins in your pocket and distribute them to the poor. Do not haggle with the porters on the railway platform. Be liberal.

Everyone of you should possess some elementary knowledge of the diseases and their treatment, first-aid to the injured and the sick, bandaging, etc. This knowledge will be of great help to you. If you are endowed with such a knowledge, you can help yourself and then the suffering humanity to some extent. This will help you in emergencies before you are able to get hold of a doctor.

Swami Sivananda



CULTIVATION OF VIRTUES

DETERMINATION

Determination is resolution, fixedness of purpose, decision of character.

Determination is the mental habit of setting upon some line of action with a fixed purpose to adhere to it.

If you have fiery determination only, you can attain success in all undertakings, in Self-realisation, too.

Doubt, faltering, fickleness, hesitation, indecision, instability, irresolution, vacillation, wavering are the opposite terms.

A man of strong, pure, irresistible will can have fiery determination.

Strengthen your will and cultivate determination.

Swami Sivananda

ERADICATION OF VICES

DEPRESSION

Depression is falling of the spirits. It is low spirits or dejection. It is a lowering of vital powers. It is a state of sadness. It is want of courage or animation as depression of the mind.

Depression causes pessimism. It stultifies all effort; it kills initiative, produces despair and sickness of mind and body.

Hope, courage and work can overcome all depression and fear, and convert your mountains of trouble into molehills. Things are never so bad as you believed them to be.

Chant OM. Do Pranayama. Pray. Do Japa. Do Kirtan. Meditate on the All-Blissful Atman. Cultivate cheerfulness.



Depression will take to its heels. You will be filled with new strength, joy and cheer.

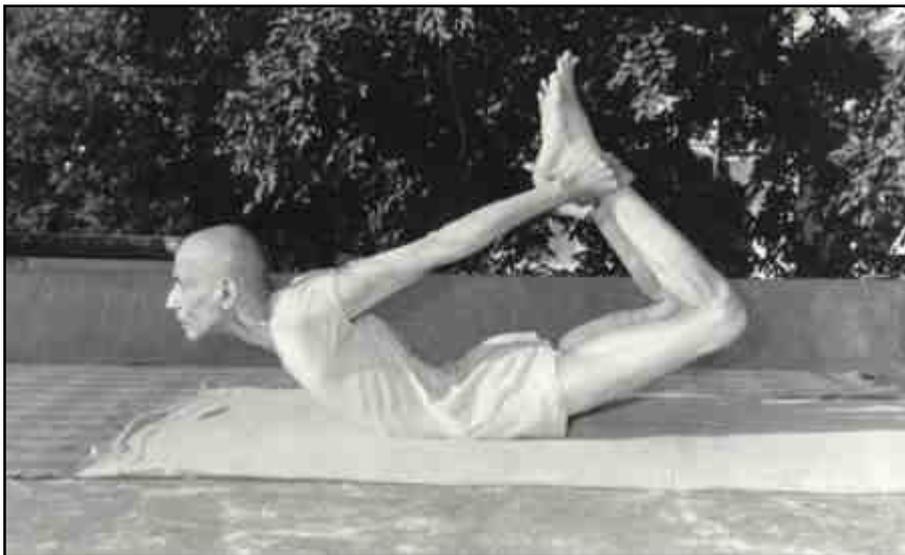
Depression is a negative state. It cannot last for a long time. Be cheerful. Positive always overcomes the negative.

Thy real nature is Satchidananda. Realise this and roam about happily.

Swami Sivananda

DHANURASANA (Bow posture)

Technique: Lie flat, face downwards on the floor. Keep the hands at your side. Breathe out and bend the legs at the knees, drawing the feet above the thighs. Stretch the arms back and catch hold of the right ankle with the right hand and the left ankle with the left hand. Make secure the position of the hands, with normal breathing. Raise the head, body and knees by tugging the



hands and legs, so that the whole weight of the body rests on the abdomen. Retain the posture for a few seconds. Gradually



increase the duration. While remaining in the posture, concentrate on the abdomen, thighs and back muscles. Release the ankles, stretch out the legs and bring the legs, chest and head to rest in a straight line on the floor. Relax in Makarasana for a few seconds. Repeat this Asana two or three times.

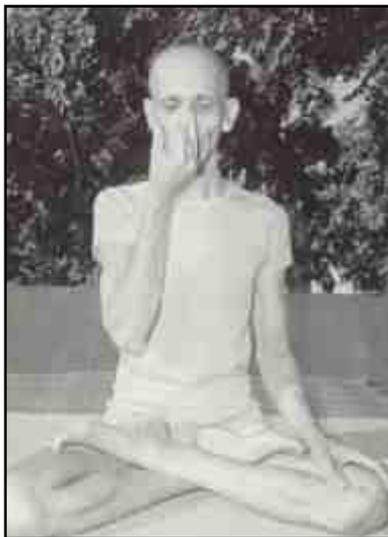
Benefits: This Asana relieves constipation and tones up the liver, pancreas and kidneys. The vertebrae of the lumbar and sacrum bones also get toned up. Proper blood circulation is effected and thus good health is promoted. This also renders the spine supple and elastic and minor pains in the spine are checked.

Swami Chidananda

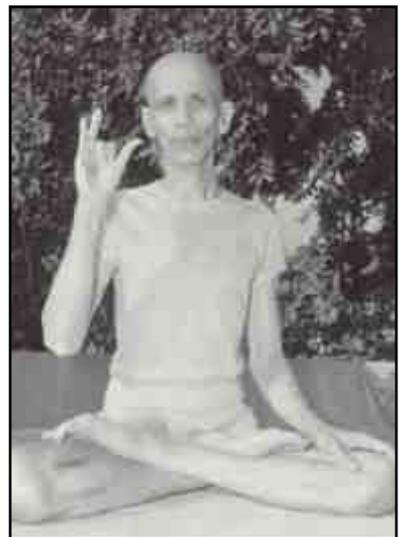
SUKHA PURVAKA PRANAYAMA

(Easy comfortable breathing)

Technique: Sit in a comfortable posture according to your convenience. Keep the spine, neck and head erect. Keep the middle and index fingers bent and the other three stretched. Close the right nostril with the right thumb. Very, very

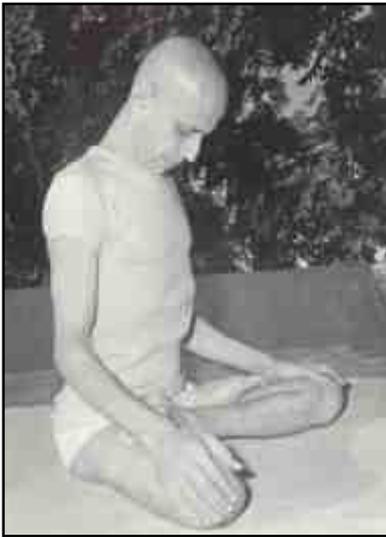


slowly inhale through the left nostril without producing any sound. Then close the left nostril with the little and ring fingers of the right hand. Then exhale very, very slowly through the right nostril, by releasing the right thumb. Now half the process is over. Slowly and harmoniously draw in air through the right nostril and exhale slowly through the left



nostril. This completes one round. The ratio for inhalation and exhalation should be 1:2. During the first fifteen days inhale for 5 seconds and exhale for 10 seconds. In the second fortnight increase the duration of time to ten seconds for inhalation and twenty seconds for exhalation. During inhalation and exhalation, expand and contract (respectively) the lungs, as much as possible.

After three months' regular and continuous practice, you can introduce retention of breath. The ratio in the time for inhalation,



retention and exhalation should be 1:2:2, i.e., if you inhale for 5 seconds, the retention and exhalation should be for 10 seconds each. As you advance in the practice, you may adopt the ratio 1:4:2. During retention, you may do Jalandhara Bandha. Its technique is as follows. After inhalation, slowly bend the neck and rest the chin on the collar bone while retaining the breath. This Bandha prevents the pressure of air moving upwards, towards the head.

Before exhalation, slowly lift the head, keep it erect, and then exhale. This is release of Jalandhara Bandha.

Warning: If you feel headache, heaviness of the head, giddiness, uneasiness, etc., it means, you are exerting and giving much pressure on the lungs. You should therefore reduce the duration of time of retention. The first symptom of correct practice of Pranayama is, the feeling of freshness, energy and lightness of the body and mind. If you feel any negative result, avoid the practice of retention of breath immediately and consult an expert.

Benefits: This Pranayama removes all diseases, purifies the Nadis, steadies the mind in concentration, increases the digestive fire and appetite, and helps to maintain Brahmacharya.

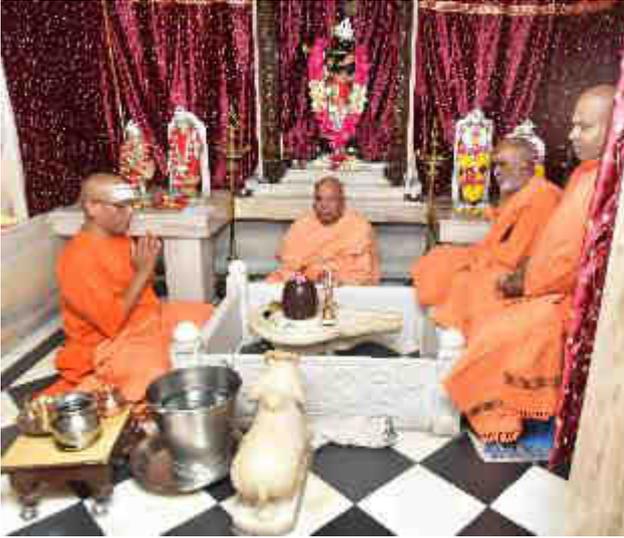
Swami Chidananda

SRI RAMANAVAMI CELEBRATIONS AT THE HEADQUARTERS ASHRAM



सान्द्रानन्दपयोदसौभगतनुं पीताम्बरं सुन्दरं, पाणौ बाणशरासनं कटिलसत्तूणीरभारं वरम् ।
राजीवायतलोचनं धृतजटाजूटेन संशोभितं, सीतालक्ष्मणसंयुतं पथिगतं रामाभिरामं भजे ॥

I devoutly worship Lord Rama who is on his way to forest accompanied by Sita and Lakshmana, whose graceful form is bliss personified, whose body is dark and beautiful as a raincloud, who is clad in yellow apparel, who carries a bow and an arrow in His hands, who has a well-equipped quiver shining at His back, whose eyes are charming like lotus-petals and who is adorned with matted locks.



The sacred day of the advent of Lord Sri Rama on this earth plane was celebrated with great devotion at the Headquarters Ashram on 21st April 2021. As a prelude to the celebration, the Mula Parayana of Sri Valmiki Ramayana was done at Sri Divya Nama Mandir from 29th March to 16th April by the Sannyasis and Brahmacharis of the Ashram. Then, from 17th to 20th April, the chanting of Divine Mantra “Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram” was done daily for two hours in the holy premises of Sri Vishwanatha temple.

With prayers and meditation in the Samadhi Shrine, the auspicious day of Sri Ramanavami day commenced. From 9 a.m. to 12 noon, a grand worship was offered to Lord Sri Rama enshrined in Sri Vishwanatha temple with the chanting of Vedic Mantras and singing of melodious and soul-elevating Bhajans and Kirtans. After the worship, the Avatar Sarga describing the Lord's advent was read from Sri Valmiki Ramayana and Sri Ramcharitamanas by H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj and Sri Swami Hariharanandaji Maharaj respectively. The celebration concluded with Arati and distribution of sacred Prasad at Annapurna Dining Hall.

During the night Satsanga, two books of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and one booklet of Birth Centenary Series of Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj were released. The Satsanga concluded with the Arati and distribution of Prasad.



May the blessings of Lord Sri Rama and Sadgurudev be upon us all.

CELEBRATION OF 99th BIRTHDAY OF WORSHIPFUL SRI SWAMI KRISHNANANDAJI MAHARAJ

The sacred day of 99th Birth Anniversary of Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj was celebrated with great devoutness and spiritual rejoicing at the Headquarters Ashram on 25th April 2021.

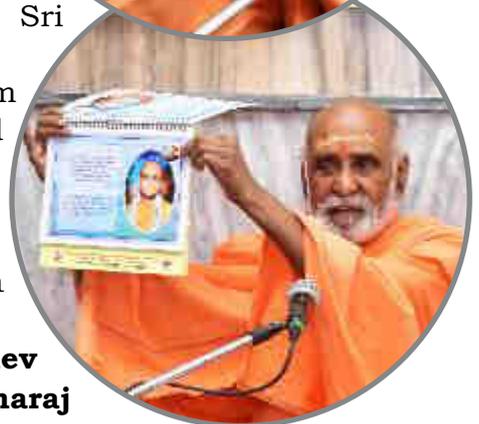
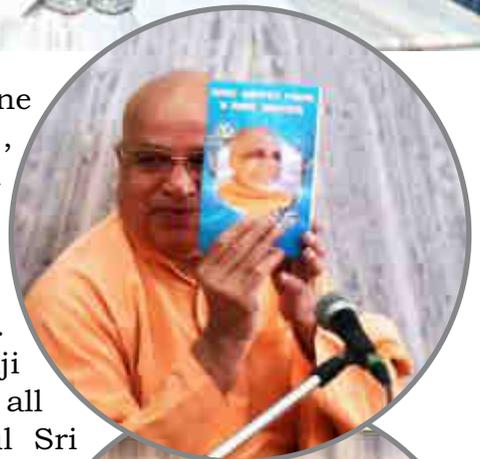


To mark the auspicious day, special worship was offered to the sacred Padukas of Sadgurudev Sri Swami

Sivanandaji Maharaj in the holy Samadhi Shrine wherein Senior Swamijis, Sannyasis, Brahmacharis and Sadhakas of the Ashram joyously participated. After the Paduka-Puja, Sannyasis and Brahmacharis sang Bhajans and Kirtans as their loving homage to Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj. Then, H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj in his brief message inspired one and all to emulate the ideal example of Worshipful Sri Swamiji Maharaj and follow his teachings.

'Timeless Calendar' comprising Param Pujya Swamiji Maharaj's beautiful photos and inspiring quotes, three books, three booklets and one bookmark were also released to commemorate the blessed day. The Satsanga concluded with Arati and distribution of Jnana Prasad and Prasad.

May the abundant grace of Sadgurudev and Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj be upon all.



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: the people who are homeless, temporary or permanent, fell sick, got lost or were abandoned'.

(Swami Chidananda)

Only a few blocks away from the Home, a Sadhu had collapsed. Neighbours came to ask if this Baba could be admitted. It was already evening time and with the help of four people, the patient was lifted and accommodated in the segregated area. The next morning immediately swabs were taken by the lab for Covid 19 test; fortunately, the report turned out to be negative. The body of the sadhu was completely swollen up; he had an infected wound on his foot, a rocket high blood pressure, urine infection, intestinal worms with infection in the intestines too. Injections and oral medicines were administered and after a few days, he recovered gradually and started to feel better. He was not unknown to the people of the Home; quite a few times earlier during the years, he had been admitted for a short while, for more or less the same kind of troubles.

It happens regularly that Sadhus who stay on the roadside, or wandering Sadhus are admitted in Sivananda Home for a certain amount of time; they often have a physical disease, an injury or any kind of gastrointestinal trouble. After their treatment they leave; their way of life is not within the walls of any institution; they enjoy their freedom, their independence and their solitude. For medical aid though, they can get some medicines from here and there, that is not the problem; but proper rest for the body, a fresh and healthy diet and clean drinking water are of prior importance to become physically alright again – Basic amenities, often taken for granted, but not available for one and all. Besides, admission in any hospital without an attendant for the daily needs, for collecting food and medicines, for the patient care and vigilance, is almost impossible, it seems.

By Gurudev's Grace, this patient had a minor retreat, just a while to spend in a room, before he would leave again, burning in the scorching heat, under the open sky, with complete faith and in total surrender that *"Cosmic Grace is always at hand"*.

"There is no greater courage and strength than that which comes with the awareness of yourself in your essential nature. It will enable you to overcome all ups and downs of life, and to face all sorrow and grief with inner strength and an unshaken steadiness of your interior: Immortal Atman I am".

(Swami Chidananda)

"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

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING DONATIONS

Due to administrative reasons, and also to simplify the existing complex accounting system, it has been decided in the 'Board of Management' Meeting held on 10th March 2021 and subsequently in the 'Board of Trustees' Meeting held on 11th March 2021 that any donations to The Divine Life Society will be received only under the following 'Heads of Accounts' with effect from 1st April 2021: –

General Donation

1. Ashram General Donation
2. Annakshetra
3. Medical Relief

Corpus Donation

Sivananda Ashram Corpus (Mooldhan) Fund

Therefore, devotees are requested to send donations to the above mentioned account heads only.

Further, it is hereby conveyed to all the devotees and well wishers of the Ashram that

- The income from the **ASHRAM GENERAL DONATION** shall cater to all the spiritual, religious as well as charitable activities of the Divine Life Society viz. care for the homeless and destitute through Sivananda Home, serving leprosy patients through Leprosy Relief Work, providing educational aid for poor students, running of Yoga Vedanta Forest Academy, printing of free literature, dissemination of spiritual knowledge, worship in Ashram temples, maintenance of the Ashram and Goshala, conducting regular religious and spiritual activities of the Ashram and also to any other spiritual, religious or charitable activities taken up by the Society from time to time.
- The donations for the **MEDICAL RELIEF** shall be utilised towards the treatment of sick and needy patients at Sivananda Charitable Hospital and also towards other medical relief works undertaken by the Society.
- Similarly, Interest income generated from **SIVANANDA ASHRAM CORPUS (MOOLDHAN) FUND** shall be utilised towards all the activities (spiritual, religious as well as charitable) of the Society.
- It is to be noted that the Society is not dispensing with any of its

activities; it will continue to conduct its regular Ashram activities and Charitable activities as usual, though the 'Heads of Accounts' to receive donations have been reduced.

- Donations towards the Divine Life Society may be made through 'Online Donation Facility' by accessing directly to the web address **<https://donations.sivanandaonline.org>** or by clicking the 'Online Donation' link provided in our website **[www. sivanandaonline.org](http://www.sivanandaonline.org)**.
- Donations can also be sent through cheque/D.D. /E.M.O. drawn in favour of '**The Divine Life Society**', **Shivanandanagar, Uttarakhand**, payable at Rishikesh. A covering letter mentioning the purpose of donation, Post Mail Address, Phone No., Email Id and PAN should accompany the same.
- Further, devotees are informed that Puja in Ashram temples shall be done free of cost for all those who would like to perform Puja in their name or in their family members' name. They may do so by sending a written request well in advance with requisite details either by email or letter addressed to the General Secretary or the President.
- There is no change in guidelines regarding Remittance towards Fee for Membership, Admission, Life Membership, Patronship, Branch Affiliation and SPL advances as well.

**MEMBERSHIP FEE AND BRANCH AFFILIATION FEE OF
THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY HEADQUARTERS
SHIVANANDANAGAR—249 192, Uttarakhand**

1. New Membership Fee*	₹ 150/-
Admission Fee	₹ 50/-
Membership Fee	₹ 100/-
2. Membership Renewal Fee (Yearly)	₹ 100/-
3. New Branch Opening Fee**	₹ 1,000/-
Admission Fee	₹ 500/-
Affiliation Fee	₹ 500/-
4. Branch Affiliation Renewal Fee (Yearly)	₹ 500/-

* Application for Membership should be sent with Photo Identity and Residential proof of the Applicant.

** Prior written permission has to be obtained from the Headquarters for opening a New Branch.

⇒ Kindly send Membership Fee and Branch Affiliation Fee by Cheque or by DD payable at any Bank in Rishikesh.

REPORTS FROM THE D.L.S. BRANCHES

INLAND BRANCHES

Angul (Odisha): Guru Paduka Puja was continued on Sundays. Maha Sivaratri was celebrated on 11th March with chanting of "Om Namah Sivaya".

Bhimkand (Odisha): Daily Paduka Puja and weekly Satsang on Sundays were continued by the Branch.

Chhatrapur (Odisha): The Branch continued daily Puja and weekly Satsang on Thursdays. Monthly Jayanti ceremonies were held on 8th and 24th with Archana. Sadhana Day was observed on 7th February and four special Satsangs on 6th, 20th, 21st and 23rd were arranged at the residence of a devotee.

Gaham-Angul (Odisha): The Branch provided free medicines to 336 needy patients through Chidananda Centenary Charitable Dispensary from 14th February to 28th March.

G.Nuagam (Odisha): The Branch arranged Satsang on 23rd February at the residence of a devotee.

Khatiguda (Odisha): The Branch continued its daily Puja and weekly Satsang on Thursdays. Annual day of the Branch was celebrated on 14th February with Nagar Kirtan, Paduka Puja, Bhajan and discourses. Recitation of Vishnu Sahasranam was held on Ekadasis. Maha Sivaratri was celebrated on 11th March with Rudrabhishek, Paduka Puja and chanting of Panchakshari Mantra.

Lucknow (U.P.): The Branch had special Satsang at Lekhraj Homes on 7th and 28th February and 21st March with Prayer, Bhajan, Mantra Japa and Swadhyaya etc.

Nandininagar (Chhattisgarh): The Branch had daily morning prayers with Gita Path, chanting of Hanuman Chalisa, and Parayan of Vishnu Sahasranam. There was Mahamantra Kirtan on 3rd March. Besides this, weekly Satsang was held on Thursdays and Matri Satsang on Saturdays with recitation of Sundarakanda and Hanuman chalisa. Maha Sivaratri was celebrated on 11th with Abhishek, Bhajan and Kirtan.

Nayagarh (Odisha): The Branch conducted Satsang on 12th February with Paduka Puja, chanting of Hanuman Chalisa and Sundarakand Parayan. Besides this, weekly Satsang was held on Wednesdays. Maha Sivaratri was celebrated on 11th March with Abhishek and chanting of "Om Namah Sivaya". There was Akhanda Maha Mantra Sankirtan on 28th.

Panchakula (Haryana): Under the guidance of Sri Swami Akhilanandaji and Sivashritananda Mataji, the Branch conducted Satsang on 20th February. It was followed by Prayers, Swadhyaya and chanting of Mahamrityunjaya Mantra for world peace. Besides this, mobile Satsang continued on Sundays.

Puri (Odisha): Daily Satsang, weekly Satsang on Sundays, Paduka Puja on 8th and 24th of every month were the regular programmes of the branch. Besides this, recitation of Hanuman Chalisa was done on Sankranti day and Gita Path on Ekadasi day. The Branch arranged spiritual talks on 3rd, 6th, 15th and 21st.

Rourkela (Odisha): Weekly Satsang on Thursdays and Sundays continued with Paduka Puja, Archana and chanting of Vishnusahasranam etc. Viswanath Mandir Prathistha Diwas was observed on 5th March.

South Balanda (Odisha): The Branch continued daily Puja, weekly Satsang on Fridays, and Guru Paduka Puja on 8th and 24th of every month. Mobile Satsang was held on 6th February. Besides this, Ekadasis and Sankranti days were observed with Gita Path, recitation of Vishnu Sahasranam and Hanuman Chalisa. There was also an Akhanda Mahamantra Sankirtan on 28th for World Peace and Universal Brotherhood.

Sunabeda (Odisha): The Branch had daily Yoga class, weekly Satsang on Thursdays and Sundays with Paduka Puja, Bhajan, Kirtan and Swadhyaya, and Matri Satsangs on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Ekadasis were observed with recitation of Vishnu Sahasranam and Archana on Sankranti day. Sundarakanda Path was arranged on 14th and Akhanda Nama Japa on 28th and 29th.

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By H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj

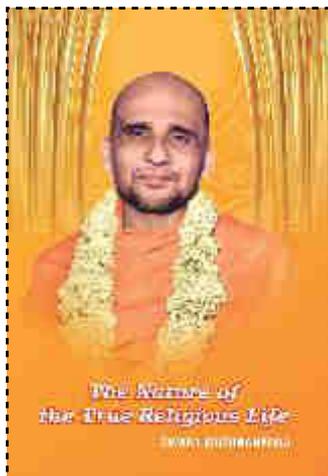
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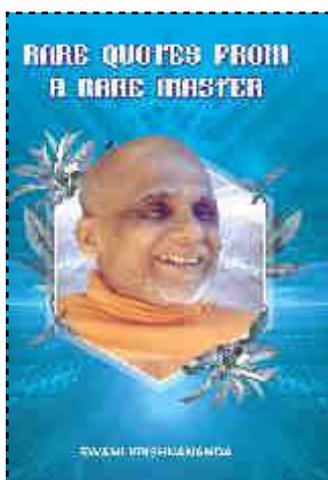


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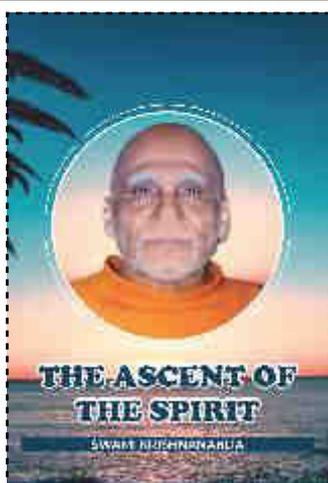


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TWENTY IMPORTANT SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTIONS

By H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj

- 1. BRAHMA-MUHURTA:** Get up at 4 a.m. daily. This is Brahmamuhurta which is extremely favourable for meditation on God.
- 2. ASANA:** Sit on Padma, Siddha or Sukha Asana for Japa and meditation for half an hour, facing the east or the north. Increase the period gradually to three hours. Do Sirshasana and Sarvangasana for keeping up Brahmacharya and health. Take light physical exercises as walking, etc., regularly. Do twenty Pranayamas.
- 3. JAPA:** Repeat any Mantra as pure Om or Om Namō Narayanaya, Om Namah Sivaya, Om Namō Bhagavate Vasudevaya, Om Saravanabhavaya Namah, Sita Ram, Sri Ram, Hari Om, or Gayatri, according to your taste or inclination, from 108 to 21,600 times daily.
- 4. DIETETIC DISCIPLINE:** Take Sattvic food, Suddha Ahara. Give up chillies, tamarind, garlic, onion, sour articles, oil, mustard, asafoetida. Observe moderation in diet (Mitahara). Do not overload the stomach. Give up those things which the mind likes best for a fortnight in a year. Eat simple food. Milk and fruits help concentration. Take food as medicine to keep the life going. Eating for enjoyment is sin. Give up salt and sugar for a month. You must be able to live on rice, Dhal and bread without any Chutni. Do not ask for extra salt for Dhal and sugar for tea, coffee or milk.
- 5. MEDITATION-ROOM:** Have a separate meditation-room under lock and key.
- 6. CHARITY:** Do charity regularly, every month, or even daily according to your means, say six Paisa per rupee.
- 7. SVADHYAYA:** Study systematically the Gita, the Ramayana, the Bhagavata, Sri Vishnu-Sahasranama, Lalita-Sahasranama, Aditya Hridaya, the Upanishads or the Yoga Vasishtha, the Bible, the Zend Avesta, the Koran, the Tripitakas, the Granth Sahib, etc., from half an hour to one hour daily and have Suddha Vichara.
- 8. BRAHMACHARYA:** Preserve the vital force (Veerya) very, very carefully. Veerya is God in motion or manifestation—Vibhuti. Veerya is all power. Veerya is all money. Veerya is the essence of life, thought and intelligence.
- 9. PRAYER SLOKAS:** Get by heart some prayer Slokas, Stotras and repeat them as soon as you sit in the Asana before starting Japa or meditation. This will elevate the mind quickly.
- 10. SATSANGA:** Have Satsanga. Give up bad company, smoking, meat and alcoholic liquors entirely. Do not develop any evil habits.
- 11. FAST ON EKADASI:** Fast on Ekadasi or live on milk and fruits only.
- 12. JAPA MALA:** Have a Japa Mala (rosary) round your neck or in your pocket or underneath your pillow at night.
- 13. MOUNA:** Observe Mouna (vow of silence) for a couple of hours daily.
- 14. SPEAK THE TRUTH:** Speak the truth at all cost. Speak a little. Speak sweetly.
- 15. PLAIN LIVING:** Reduce your wants. If you have four shirts, reduce the number to three or two. Lead a happy, contented life. Avoid unnecessary worry. Have plain living and high thinking.
- 16. NEVER HURT ANYBODY:** Never hurt anybody (Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah). Control anger by love, Kshama (forgiveness) and Daya (compassion).
- 17. DO NOT DEPEND UPON SERVANTS:** Do not depend upon servants. Self-reliance is the highest of all virtues.
- 18. SELF-ANALYSIS:** Think of the mistakes you have committed during the course of the day, just before retiring to bed (self-analysis). Keep daily diary and self-correction register. Do not brood over past mistakes.
- 19. FULFIL DUTIES:** Remember that death is awaiting you at every moment. Never fail to fulfil your duties. Have pure conduct (Sadachara).
- 20. SURRENDER TO GOD:** Think of God as soon as you wake up and just before you go to sleep. Surrender yourself completely to God (Sharanagati).

Om Santih Santih Santih!

This is the essence of all spiritual Sadhanas. This will lead you to Moksha. All these Niyamas or spiritual canons must be rigidly observed. You must not give leniency to the mind.

MAY 2021

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TROUPE OF SORROWS ATTENDANT UPON EACH SENSUOUS ENJOYMENT

Sensual enjoyment is attended with various defects. It is attended with various sorts of sins, pains, weaknesses, attachments, slave mentality, weak will, severe exertion and struggle, bad habits, cravings, aggravation of desires and mental restlessness. Therefore, shun all sorts of sensual enjoyments. Look out for an unchangeable, infinite and supreme happiness which must come from a Being in whom there is no change.

Swami Sivananda

To