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# *The* DIVINE LIFE

2021

No. 08

This world is illusory, evanescent— it is full of miseries, pain and sorrows; it is a play of colours and the mind only. Be cautious, get Vivek, do Vichar. Take refuge in the feet of Hari.

*Sri Sri Sivananda*

**NOVEMBER 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

## **IDENTIFY YOURSELF WITH ALL**

There is no such thing as inanimate matter. There is life in everything. Life is involved in a piece of stone. Matter is vibrant with life. This has been conclusively proved by modern science.

Smile with the flowers and the green grass. Play with the butterflies and the cobras. Shake hands with the shrubs, ferns and twigs. Talk to the rainbow, wind, stars, and the sun. Converse with the running brooks and the turbulent waves of the sea. Keep company with your walking stick, and enjoy its sweet company. Develop friendship with all your neighbours, dogs, cats, cows, human beings, trees, in fact, with all the creations of nature. Then you will have a wide, perfect, rich, full life.

*Swami Sivananda*



# THE DIVINE LIFE

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## PRASNOPANISHAD

SHASHTHA PRASNA (QUESTION VI)

SUKESA AND PIPPALADA

अथ हैनं सुकेशा भारद्वाजः पप्रच्छ । भगवन्हिरण्यनाभः कौसल्यो राजपुत्रो मामुपेत्यैतं  
प्रश्नमपृच्छत षोडशकलं भारद्वाज पुरुषं वेत्थ । तमहं कुमारमब्रुवं नाहमिमं  
वेद यद्यहमिममवेदिषं कथं ते नावक्ष्यमिति समूलो वा एष परिशुष्यति योऽनृतमभिवदति  
तस्मान्नार्हाम्यनृतं वक्तुम् । स तूष्णीं रथमारुह्य प्रवव्राज । तं त्वा पृच्छामि क्वासौ पुरुष इति ॥१॥

Then Sukesa, son of Bharadvaja, questioned him: O Bhagavan! Hiranyanabha, a prince of Kosala, came once to me and asked this question, 'O Bharadvaja, knowest thou the Purusha of sixteen Kalas (parts)?' I said to the youth, 'I do not know him. If I knew him why should I not tell thee? He who tells that which is not true, is dried up verily root and all. Therefore I dare not utter untruth.' Having ascended his chariot, he went away in silence. That I ask you. What is that Purusha?

# करुणानिधिः KARUNANIDHI (शिखरिणीसप्तकम्)

*Jnana Bhaskara Mahamahopadhyaya Sri S. Gopala Sastri*

कलौ कामक्रोधाद्यरिनिवहपीडाकवलिते  
उपादेयत्याज्याहितहितविवेकाद्विगलिते ।  
महादुःखाम्भोधौ निपतितजनोद्धारणकरी  
कृपा सर्वेशस्य प्रभवति शिवानन्दवपुषा ॥१॥

In this Kaliyuga, people being troubled by the inner foes such as passion, greed, anger etc., and having lost the power of discrimination between the acceptable and unacceptable, beneficent and maleficent, have sunk into the deep ocean of agony. To redeem and uplift them, the divine grace of the Lord Almighty is working in the form of Holy Master Sivananda.

कफश्वासावेशप्रबलजठरव्याधिविवशान्  
जनान् भैषज्येन प्रशमितगदान् साधु कलयन् ।  
अशान्तिक्षोभादीन् हितसदुपदेशैर्व्यपनयन्  
भिषग्वर्यो योगी लसति खलु धन्वन्तरिव ॥२॥

Gurudev Swami Sivananda, a Yogi-Physician shines here as Lord Dhanwantari, who cures the patients suffering from physical ailments like phlegm, breathing-problem and stomach-pain etc., with medicines and also cures their emotional ailments such as restlessness and agitation with his loving and inspiring teachings.

**(To be continued)**

## **KARTIGAI DEEPAM**

**Sri Swami Sivananda**

On the full moon day of the month of Kartigai i.e., Kartik (November-December) which falls on the ascension of the Kritigai, i.e. Kritika star, the Hindus celebrate the Kartigai Deepam. It is on this day that the huge beacon is lit on the holy hill Arunachala, in South India.

Once, Lord Siva assumed the form of a hill at Tiruvannamalai, in South India. Here He quelled the pride of Brahma and Vishnu who were quarrelling as to their relative greatness. One day, when Lord Siva was in meditation, Parvati left Him and went to the hill of Arunachala. There She performed penance. She was the guest of the sage Gautama. It was during Her penance here that Mahishasura was killed by Durga hidden in Parvati. Parvati saw Siva as Arunachaleshvara. She was taken back by the Lord to His side, and made His Ardhangini once again, that is, She occupied half of the body of the Lord.

Arunachaleshvara is Tejo Lingam. Arunachala or the Tiruvannamalai Hill is the place that represents the fire element. (The five elements are represented by five holy places in India.)

When the light on the top of the Tiruvannamalai Hill is unveiled on the Kartigai Deepam day, people see the big light and worship it. They recite again and again in a loud voice "Harohara". The esoteric meaning is that he who sees the Light of lights that is burning eternally in the chambers of his heart through constant meditation attains immortality. The light on the Arunachala brings the message to you that the Self or Lord Siva is self-effulgent, He is the Light of lights.

On the Kartigai Deepam day in South India, people make bonfires in front of temples in the evening. It is said that Lord Siva burnt the chariots of several demons who were torturing sages and celestials. This bonfire symbolises this legend.

People place rows of earthen lamps in front of their houses on the evening of Kartigai Deepam and worship the Lord. They also light a variety of fireworks.

Annihilate the three impurities, namely, egoism, selfish action and delusion. Burn the mind, senses and the desires in the fire of knowledge of the Self or Siva-Jnanam. Attain full

illumination and behold the Light of lights, which illumines the mind, intellect, sun, moon, stars, lightning and the fire. This is real Kartigai Deepam.

May the Light of lights illumine you all! May Lord Siva bless you with more light! May you merge in this Supreme Light and attain the eternal abode of bliss and immortality!

O Ram! The Light of lights, the self-luminous inner light of the Self is ever shining steadily in the chamber of your heart. Sit quietly. Close your eyes. Withdraw the senses. Fix the mind on this Supreme Light and enjoy the real Deepavali, by attaining illumination of the soul.

He who Himself sees all but whom no one beholds, Who illumines the intellect, the sun, the moon and the stars and the whole universe but Whom they cannot illumine, He indeed is Brahman, He is the inner Self. Celebrate the real Deepavali by living in Brahman, and enjoy the eternal bliss of the soul.

The sun does not shine there, nor do the moon and the stars, nor do lightnings shine and much less fire. All the lights of the world cannot be compared even to a ray of the inner light of the Self. Merge yourself in this Light of lights and enjoy the supreme Deepavali.

Many Deepavali festivals have come and gone. Yet the hearts of the vast majority are as dark as the night of the new moon. The house is lit with lamps, but the heart is full of the darkness of ignorance. O man! wake up from the slumber of ignorance. Realise the constant and eternal light of the Soul which neither rises nor sets, through meditation and deep enquiry.

May you all attain full inner illumination! May the Supreme Light of lights enlighten your understanding! May you all attain the inexhaustible spiritual wealth of the Self! May you all prosper gloriously on the material as well as spiritual planes!

**Swami Sivananda**

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## LIVE IN THE LIGHT

**Sri Swami Chidananda**

Homage unto Thee, Thou Universal Presence Divine, Thou Who art the origin and source of all existence, the substratum and support of all existence and the ultimate fulfilment and goal of all existence. To Thee, worshipful homage of this servant of the Master in the Master's divine spiritual presence in the sacred Samadhi Shrine of his holy Ashram.

Loving adorations to Thee, O Gurudev, Thou who art the light of our lives. Thou hast shown us light in the darkness of our spiritual self-forgetfulness, in the darkness of our ignorance of our divine mission in life, and Thou hast illumined our life with a light of the Divine Life ideal of living, being and doing.

Radiant Atman! Beloved Sadhakas and devotees of the Lord assembled here! Let us offer our heart's gratitude to the Divine, the Cosmic Being, Who has conferred upon us the rare and blessed status of being-thinking, feeling and reasoning human beings-upon this planet earth. For this great

blessedness, let us offer our gratitude by utilising this great gift in the highest, noblest and most sublime manner as long as the last breath is in the body.

And let us offer our heart's gratitude to Gurudev who is to us the ideal, both for our own subjective inwardness of conduct, character, thinking and feeling as well as for our attainment, that of a Jivanmukta, a Jnani, a Parama Bhakta, a Yogi established in the inner Self, inner consciousness of Self-awareness, and a Karma Yogi par excellence, a being filled with universal love, compassion, kindness and dynamic goodness. He has thus placed himself before us as a manifold ideal for our living, both in our subjective inwardness as well as our endeavour upon the outer field of our day-to-day living.

Children of Light! The sacred invocation that has come down to us from times immemorial is *Tamaso ma jyotir gamaya*— from darkness enable us to ascend into the Light. That we should not enter into

darkness but should move towards the Light is made abundantly clear by the Ishopanishad. We should ever face the Light. We should live in the Light, because we are of the Light.

If we do not make Light our supreme destiny, if we do not make ourselves votaries of that Light of lights beyond all darkness, then we run the danger of going from darkness to greater darkness— *andham tamah pravisanti ye avidyam upasate* (they who worship Avidya fall into blinding darkness). Those who direct their attention to that which is ephemeral, fleeting, that which is not the Eternal Reality, they enter into blinding darkness. For, if we make all our life a pursuit of the lesser knowledge, which only increases vanity and confirms the error of outer appearances being the reality, then we enter into deeper darkness.

Worshipping either Avidya or Aparā Vidya (lesser knowledge) is fraught with danger. Both lead from darkness to denser darkness. Therefore, to ever strive for Para Vidya, the greater knowledge, the supreme knowledge that illumines, enlightens and liberates— that should be our life. We must ever move towards that great Light of lights that

is beyond all darkness, attaining the region of which one does not return to this realm of pain and death and rebirth. *Yadgatva na nivartante taddhama paramam mama* (Going where they do not return— that is My supreme abode).

That should be well pondered. That should be reflected upon. That should be meditated upon, and that should be attained. Hence it is that we pray that our intellects may be illumined— to bring light into the darkness of Avidya that prevails within. It is perhaps to remind us every day that our life should always be a continuous striving to bring light into the darkness.

And it was perhaps to remind us to never forget this great task, to ever keep before us this great ideal that our wise ancestors have conceived the festival of lights, Dipavali, when the darkness of the new moon night, Amavasya, is illumined by millions and millions of bright twinkling lights from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari, where the whole of India would be one great light if you were to observe it from a satellite. It is to ever remind us that we should make our life a constant process of moving from darkness into light, or making ourselves a living

light of the Divine.

If He is Paramjyoti Svarupa Paramatma (having the nature of Supreme Light and being the Supreme Self) and we are His Amshas, as the Lord Himself states in the Gita, then we are also Paramjyotis in a lesser way. We are the transcendental light in our essential nature. Our true identity is light and not darkness. Our true identity is effulgence and not gloom. Our true identity is radiance.

Therefore, let us arouse within ourselves the light of this consciousness and be as a lamp unto darkness. That was the parting admonition of the great enlightened sage, Buddha: "Be, O Bhikhus, each one of you as a light unto yourselves and as a lamp unto the feet of others."

We reiterate that admonition at this moment. We re-invoke a special awareness of the invocation: *Tamaso ma jyotirgamaya*. Let us strive diligently by all the powers at our disposal to ever make ourselves a centre of radiant, divine effulgence, a centre of shining character and sublime good conduct, a centre of awakened spirituality and a dynamic manifestation of that awakened spirituality in the form of a divinely lived life. For, that is the great need of

this benighted world of ours. More than half of it has rejected God, rejected the scriptures as superstition and rejected this quest of the human spirit towards the Supreme Light. It has instead taken to hedonism— eat, drink and be merry, have a good time, satisfy the senses and fulfill desires.

That is the great darkness— a total misconception regarding the very fundamental purpose and meaning of life on earth, and, therefore, a headlong plunge in the wrong direction. And the deplorable results, the widespread ignorance and confusion brought about by this blind pursuit of pleasure is everywhere to be seen in the human world upon this planet earth today.

Will you not be lights in this darkness that is spreading over the human world? Will you not make use of the supreme privilege of Mahapurusha Samsrayah (protecting care of a perfected sage) that God has blessed you with and so be each one of you a shining light, and strive humbly and simply to be a lamp unto the feet of others? Awaken the light within and let it radiate through your every thought, word and action. And thus make this life a purposeful and a glorious ascent into

the fullness of light where one becomes an enlightened being, an illumined being, shining with the light of spiritual consciousness, divine consciousness.

That is the goal. That is to be striven after. That is your great privilege and good fortune to be able to strive towards that attainment. That is your great blessedness. Avail of this privilege. Avail of this golden opportunity. Avail of this blessedness. Avail of this supreme good fortune. Turn away from darkness and move towards the Light.

Make your life a mass of divine radiance— *Tamaso ma jyotirgamaya*. Make of yourself a radiant light. Be a light unto yourself and a lamp unto the feet of others. Fill your life with the effulgence of the divine quality that is your birthright. That is the central thrust of the message that beloved and worshipful Holy Master, Gurudev, has left for us—for our being and doing and living. God bless you!

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Lakshmi not only bestows wealth and all sorts of material prosperity, but also imparts divine wisdom to all Her devotees. She is Vidya Shakti. She introduces Her devotees to Her Lord. She recommends them to Her Lord for their salvation.

She is the power of Lord Narayana who is also known as Lord Vishnu or Lord Hari. Narayana is God's aspect of preservation. He is an embodiment of Shuddha Sattwa. Lakshmi is His causal body. She is Maya, the illusory power of Nature. She deludes the whole world by Her veiling power and projects it through Her projecting power. She Herself as Vidya-Lakshmi enlightens the spiritual aspirant. Beauty, grace, a picturesque scenery or charming landscape, modesty, love, prosperity, music, the five elements and their combinations, the internal organs, mind, Prana, intellect—all these are Her manifestations.

**Swami Sivananda**

## MAN'S ASPIRATION FOR GOD

**Sri Swami Krishnananda**

The idea of God in man's mind is mostly a jocular picture of his imagination which he conjures up in himself for his convenience and emotional satisfaction. This concept of God is entirely in his hands and he can handle it in any way he likes. He may even bundle it up and consign it to the limbo if the time for it is not opportune. With many people, even those who are very sincere and honest in their attempts, the position which God occupies in their lives is so weak that he can be deposed at the slightest provocation from outside. The love of God which people speak of is, more often than not, a kind of hobby for leisure hours of the day, an after-dinner talk, when one has nothing more serious to do. And we expect such a poor God to come to our aid in moments of dire need!

Such is our God and such is our religion! The engineer's God is a gigantic machine, and the workman's perfection is the best that he can humanly make with the tools available on earth. The child's God, the businessman's God, the blacksmith's or goldsmith's God, the frog's God or a buffalo's God are all

strange types of apotheosis which their own instincts or minds can project into the world of space and time. And even the best of men cannot escape this necessity to delimit his God to the workings of his mind.

There is, thus, no wonder that religion today has become a kind of fancy and even a mockery in the eyes of many. The resort to religion is akin to a Sunday offing from one's office duties or a holiday which one enjoys after the tedium of one's profession. The reality is the profession, not the holiday. And our God is only a convenient mechanism to lever up our imagination of the fullest satisfactions of sense and ego that we would be in a position to conceive at present. We say the world is sinking, society is rotting and the hearts of men are being torn into shreds of an unknown fear of some dread spectre whose whereabouts we have not yet been able to trace properly.

The God who can save man cannot be a creation of man. What we think in our minds is what our imagination has been able to produce, and God cannot be regarded as a product; for, all that is produced is

subject to wear and tear in the passage of time and is doomed to come to an end one day. That which is thus destined to be ruined some time cannot save us from danger. He who is to protect us has to be stronger than we are and should contain energies and capacities which far surpass the resources of man. God should be prior to man, if God is to be the saviour of man. If this is going to be the truth about the matter, man cannot think God, for, to think Him would be to reduce Him to the position of a product of his thought, a 'something' which comes after and not before Him, an effect rather than a cause, inferior rather than superior to the status of man who asks for protective aid from it. The concept of God is therefore involved in a fallacy of putting the cart before the horse, a ridiculous procedure of any enterprise of any worth in it. To think God would mean a transposition of oneself anterior to God and man becomes the father of God instead of God being the Father of man.

The situation is indeed frightening and startling. Our usual gods of the daily business of our life, the gods of the marketplace and the shops of religion, are not going to redeem us from this impasse and psychological muddle. We are so

much accustomed to make a machine of religious practice that to us today religion is only a matter of some daily routine of getting up at some time in the morning and going to bed at a prescribed hour, of bowing our heads in some way, fasts and vigils, feasts and ceremonies, pilgrimages and offerings before shrines, a holiness that is put up again on holidays from the realities of life. Well, here the cat is out of the bag! Religious observance is a holiday affair, not the stark truth of one's profession, business or 'duty' in life. This is exactly the reason why religious men have been unhappy men mostly, and temple-goers are not always the examples of a really holy life. Religion born of fear can have little scope to rescue falling man. Dread or suspicion is not natural, even as a mechanistic routine is lifeless.

Also, there is a strange expectation that our God should do to us whatever we want Him to do. This is the very purpose of our daily adorations and prayers. Our longings and hatreds should be made to fructify at the earliest opportunity, nay, just now. If this could be achieved, God is really great, and He does exist. Else, we entertain doubts in regard to Him and might even deny His existence. He does not exist,

because we do not see our passions materialising even with prayers to Him towards this end. 'God is dead,' was the headline of a feature that is said to have appeared recently in an American literary circle. One could not have done better. He should die even if he happens to be there, by chance. Bury him alive, and let not even his ashes be available to anyone.

Can human egoism go further? When the devil dances to the tune of the maddening liquor of sensuousness, the gods flee from their heavens and the rule of lust, greed and ego has its sway over the quarters of the world. Man can kill the god whom he has made,—this is quite as it should be. For, he is only one of the many inhabitants of the world, as man himself is. Our gods are in temples, churches and mosques; in scriptures, routines and celebrations; in words, symbols and images. But He is never in our hearts. Hence we can destroy Him if we like. The prejudice of the scientific trend of thinking, which always wishes to probe into reality through calculations, experiments and observations with the senses, and which threatens to exhaust all available means of human knowledge, permitting no other avenue of approach as valid or reasonable, has gone away with the notion that God is

one of the objects of scientific investigation and we can see God as we see an electron, or better still, as we see our bank balance or a cow grazing in the field.

The folly of science is that, it is wedded to the habit of forgetting itself in the process of the investigation of truth. Science has seen many dying or perhaps dead gods, but it has not seen the living God. The eyes of man have not been able to behold life; they have only seen corpses. The religious man, the social worker, the politician, the businessman, the scientist, the teacher, the student, the parent, the child, man and woman,— all alike are seen to be griping with a restlessness and displeasure which seems to be the beginning as well as the end of one's life. It starts with a cry and ends with a sob. No one has lived happily. There has always been a deep dissatisfaction at the end that one's hopes have gone to the dust and one's ambitions have turned to ashes. Man dies without achieving anything substantially. The ignorance of childhood, the blindness of adolescence, the vanity of youth, and the disconsolate grief of old age do all lead finally in the dark night of death. The potentates that trod this earth with the thud of their pride of power have been pounded to powder. None

will be spared, king or beggar. Everything has to go, and go after a humiliating adventure of the sheer boast which loudly announces that the nose is up, though the body has fallen prostrate in utter defeat at the icy hand of that fierce master of all creation,—Death.

But where does one go? And, why? None has answered these questions, and none can. For, the question demands that the answer be given by each one for oneself and not in terms of what is extraneous to one's concern. A proxy cannot plead the case of the being of man, for being precludes any association with non-being. To look through the microscope and make the observation, it is first of all necessary to ascertain if the one that looks and observes is in order. But what is the test? And who is to make the test? Self-test is never heard of, for, here the process of testing is stultified by the absence of an object before it. If one cannot behold one-self and observe if one is all right oneself, God, too, cannot be seen or observed, for, the term 'God' merely signifies a meaning which is identical with what we term the 'Selfhood' of things. Though a thing can be seen, its selfhood cannot be seen, because what is called the self is opposed to the activity of seeing in space and in time.

Hence, God is spaceless and timeless. The Self cannot die, for, to conceive of death, there should be a selfhood behind that conception. The state of transition, change or destruction is what is 'known'. The knower of it cannot, therefore, die. If the knower of death is also to die, there could be no such thing as death. God, thus, is immortal.

To learn to know or realise God would, then, be to undergo the training necessary to know anything at all in its reality, for, nothing can be more real than the 'selfhood' of a thing. This would be the true education of man, since no other system of study would give us a greater meaning of life. In fact, every other system of education should be regarded as a mere play with unrealities, for, these themes do not touch the self of any thing or object, while they are busy with the forms and shapes it takes in space and time. The world we live in is one of general mortality everywhere, because all that we know, including our own bodies, is a form in space and time, and, thus, bereft of 'selfhood', which is neither a thing nor an object in the space-time manifold. God-realisation would become, thus, the only goal of all beings. Instead of doubting the existence of God, we have really to

doubt if anything else exists at all.

If God is the Self of all things, the Supreme Self (Paramatman), why do we not see him? Merely because He is the Self. The Self is not meant to be seen, for, the Self is the Seer. Who is to see the Seer, asks the sage Yajnavalkya, in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. Since the Self is the knower, the Self cannot be known. God cannot be seen with the eyes or contacted through any other sense organ. Not only this; the Self is the thinker and understander, and hence the Self cannot be thought or understood. God is beyond mind and understanding.

Then, what on earth does one mean by realisation of God? Here we come to the crux of the whole matter, a difficult task before us, something which we have not heard of and cannot easily appreciate with the intellect. When we ask for God, we really want to see God as God and not as something else. To see God as God would be to see Him as the Self of all things, for, that is His real nature. But to ask for a God who can be seen with the eyes of flesh would be to ask for a thing of the world, of which we have already plenty. What, then, are we asking for? God, as He is. Well, then, it is to see the Self. Who can see the Self? Because, the Self is the seer!

While the Seer sees not anything else, he really sees, says sage Yajnavalkya. And he sees in a very special way, and not as we see things here. He sees by non-objectification or non-externalisation, for, the Self ceases to be what it is the moment it is externalised. In fact, the externalised form of the Self is this world of objects, which we see with the sense-organs. To know God, who is Supreme Self, the non-Self character in our knowledge of things has to be abandoned and the Selfhood in it retained in consciousness. This is the way of sense-control (Pratyahara) and retention of consciousness in its Selfhood (Dharana) as well as a perpetuation of this state of consciousness-retention (Dhyana). The Self, here, returns to its original state of Supreme Being or Godhood, which is the universal reality of all things (Samadhi).

“No one can behold Krishna, who has not controlled his senses,” says Sanjaya to Dhritarashtra, in the Udyoga-Parva of the Mahabharata. To see Truth is to participate in its character which is non-objectivity and non-externality, for, Truth is That which is, and what is cannot be an object to itself. This is all the difficulty in the effort at the realisation of God,—it is impossible to come

anywhere near Him unless one is prepared to sacrifice all that the senses and the mind hold as real, good and beautiful. For, what is truth, goodness and beauty to the senses and externalised mind is the form and the shape that the universal Self has taken in the externalisation of space-time. It is tantamount to veritable death, to try to realise God. It is forbidding to anyone who takes this world as of any value. A unification of all perceptions and concepts in a Selfhood which knows no exterior to itself, which is inclusive of all forms and shapes, which lies not outside or inside but which is the very being and self of anything and everything, is the art of Yoga, the way to God. Man does not seem as yet to be prepared for this ordeal of fire.

But there is no other way (*Na anyah pantha vidyate*). This is the fate and fortune of man that he has to weep before he rejoices in the bliss of

Godhead. His very individuality and personality gets disintegrated in the sorrow of his separation from all things he held up to this time as dear and near. Yes; this disintegration of form is the precondition of that integration of soul in the Universal Person (Vaishvanara), who, in his relentless majesty, soars beyond the piteous cry of earthly love and delight and the crushing pain of mortal power and the shell of the world's learning. Glorious and splendid is that supernal State of God, who is thy very being and self, here and now. But, Yoga is the path that leads to Him. Tapas is the way. And it is the mustering in of the powers of sense and mind away from viewing and assessing what is outside, for the sake of being inundated in the flood of That which is everywhere as the truth and selfhood of all things. Nothing should be more clear, and nothing a greater need.

Who is God? What is God? Is there a God? Where is God? How to realise God? Man wants an answer to these eternal questions. Certainly there is God. God exists. He is the only reality. God is your creator, saviour and redeemer. He is all-pervading. He dwells in your heart. He is always near you. He is nearer to you than your jugular vein or nose. He loves you. He can talk to you. You cannot find God by the intellect. But, you can find Him by feeling, meditation, experience and realisation.

**Swami Sivananda**

## **THE DIVINE DIAMOND**

**Prof. Vasudev Randev**

Swami Krishnanandaji is considered to be a concise walking encyclopaedia of secular and spiritual information due to his vast and intense knowledge of multifarious fields. In his morning Darbar, you may talk to him on any subject but at the end, you feel that Sri Swamiji knows better than even the specialists of that subject. Though saturated so much in Jnana, yet like Ulysses of Greek mythology he has always a great thirst of new knowledge and respects the learned ones.

He is a renowned author who is read with great interest and wonder in whole of the world, not only by the spiritual seekers but also by the students of Philosophy and Spiritualism.

Swami Krishnanandaji is an alloy of Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Karma Yoga. As the result of his many years of Tapas, austerity and meditation, in pursuit of Self-realisation he may be termed as a great spiritual master of the day, in whom the spiritual Indian culture pulsates and finds manifestation in his each action and every breath. People from every nook and corner of

the world come and sit near his feet to quench their spiritual quest. Thus, anyone who comes near him feels that Swami Krishnananda is his mentor.

He is of the view that work and worship are not contradictory but complementary to each other. That is why when Sri Swamiji sits in his morning audience, one wonders how this Sannyasin caters to so many diverse spiritual and secular matters. At one time, he is talking to a foreigner on the intricacies of Dhyana, the other moment he attends to the accounts clerk and asks him the details of the cash vouchers and just at that time someone asks Swamiji for the extension of his stay in the Ashram. Sri Swamiji rings the Reception office. But this is not the end of the story, just at that very moment some needy person comes for donation and Swamiji passes orders to help him and cracks jokes with him, and then and there somebody wants his blessings for his newly married son. Sri Swamiji does all these things like the Great Videha King Janaka. The people who see this feat of Swamiji for the first time feel bewildered and say

jokingly, “not two in one, not three in one but he is so many in one.”

Sri Swami Krishnanandaji is basically an exponent of Sanatana Dharma and is proud of this heritage from Rishis of Bharatavarsha. But he is a firm believer of “open door” spiritual society based on the universal truth. Like his master Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, he does not profess to be a founder of any new thought. He has simply interpreted for us and the world, the Indian religious treasures of the past. His speeches and writings are thus fortified by quotations from the Indian scriptures, sayings of his great master and his own Anubhavas (experiences).

The greatest contribution of Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj to the spiritual realm is that he has tried to bring our spiritualism from the shelf of dogmas. According to him, “An educated mind cannot accept the canons of faith without rational evidence, whatever we are called upon to accept, must be justified by reason otherwise religious beliefs will be reduced to wishful thinkings.”

The most obvious aspect of life is that everything in the world passes away. The vast mountains, the beautiful places, the strong castles, the great civilisations, all these are subject to decay and become the

part of hoary history, but according to Sri Swami Krishnanandaji, there is something beyond this time and space, which no doubt is inspiring and unifying this universe but this great power is in it but is beyond it. In his views, “there is that being before this “becoming” and that being is the eternal truth.”

Sri Swami Krishnanandaji is a man of universal approach to religion without subjugation to any type of barriers. According to him, “Intolerance is an expression of religious conceit and not a spiritual spark.” He believes in the freedom of conscience. Each soul has a right to choose its own path and see God in its own way. Secularism does not merely require us to tolerate but to understand and love other religions. That is why praying in the mosque of Mohammedans, kneeling before the fire of Zoroastrians or performing Puja in a temple are equally important for Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj.

Let us pray to God and Sri Gurudev to bless this spiritual son of mother India with a very long life and a radiant health so that he may continue to carry on the torch of the Divine Life for many decades of the twenty first century also which is knocking at the doors of humanity.

## ARE YOU OFF-COURSE?

**Sri Swami Venkatesananda**

"If you are sure that you will have peace, happiness and God-realisation by being wicked, then be vicious throughout the day!" was the challenging message of a song I heard for the first time during a Satsang in Dehra Dun.

I think this is plain and simple common sense. Why does man "sin"? Not because he wants to sin, but because he seeks peace and pleasure and he thinks that by indulging in certain acts, he can gain them. Once he has embarked on such actions, he is so busy adding one to the other that he has no time even to stop and reflect: "Has this brought me peace and pleasure?" Surely, they have not.

Similar is the case with our religious or even spiritual activities. We embark on them in order to gain peace of mind, spiritual progress and Self-realisation. Soon we are so busy with our routine religious activities that we have no time to stop and reflect: "Has this brought me peace and holiness?"

If not, what has gone wrong and where?

Take for instance even the simple practice of Japa or repetition of

a Mantra. It can confer peace of mind and Self-realisation on us. But not if we repeat the Mantra mechanically! When you repeat your Mantra, especially in the early morning hours, you are able to recapture the peace of deep sleep, without sleeping. The mind is kept alert by the Mantra, without disturbing this peace. Now is the greatest moment: if you are vigilant, you can discover the dynamics of mental disturbance. How does a disturbing thought arise, and what is it? If you are able to avoid such disturbance, you can go beyond and discover the content of thought (which is the same as the content of the "Mantra"). That itself is the key to the solution of all the problems that arise in life.

Instead, if you keep on mechanically repeating the Mantra, you find that you are off-course! Nothing happens in your life which therefore becomes more and more complicated and miserable.

This principle applies to everything that we do. During the two Satsangs in Delhi before I left India, we discussed Guru-Bhakti and Guru-Seva, devotion to and service of the

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Taken from 'Unity in Diversity'

BIRTH CENTENARY YEAR OF SRI SWAMI VENKATESANANDAJI MAHARAJ

Guru. All these words are so heavily loaded that the original meaning is totally lost and in its place we have masked concepts.

Guru is a word of two syllables. The syllable 'Gu' stands for 'Andhakara' (darkness of ignorance). This Andhakara is nothing but Ahambhavana (the feeling "I am Mr. So and so"). This feeling "I am so and so" is so deep-rooted that we do not stop and reflect if there is any such real personality. We say, "This is my body" and "My mind is clear" etc. But somehow we fail to recognise that neither the body nor the mind obey us: if they are "mine", how is it, that they rule me?

When a man realises that "I am able to do nothing worthwhile and that 'I' am at the mercy of all sorts of forces beyond my control, there arises in him true humility and perplexity. He has exhausted his own resources and found them inadequate. At that point, he comes into contact with someone or something which dispels this darkness of ignorance, the shadow of ego-sense. The remover of that darkness and that shadow is the Guru ('ru' stands for remover).

In the light of that Guru, there is an inner experience of the reality that is beyond the ego-sense (Ahambhavana). Guru is that unique enlightening experience which

happens when the humbled ego-sense receives the grace of God, often in the person of a great and divine master.

When this happens, it is impossible for one not to love that Guru with all one's being. Never again is the impotent and puerile ego-sense allowed to appear. The surrender is complete. The devotion is full and meaningful.

Life itself takes on a very different character from then on. It is dedicated to the Guru. It is regarded as service of the Guru. There is great joy in the service of the Guru; in fact, nothing else is meaningful.

If however this inner experience has not happened, devotion to the Guru is reduced to mockery and service of the Guru is an ostentatious task (a duty discharged, a job done), the more painful, if it is not appreciated, rewarded. When any of these is felt, it is better to stop and reflect: "Why does love of Guru become so dull and spiritless, why is there such inner resistance in the service of the Guru?" (This inner resistance may even take the form of pride in such service!)

Surely, one is off-course. The Guru-Bhakti itself has become a piece of furniture on which the ego-sense reclines quite comfortably, proclaiming "I love my Guru", "I serve my Guru".

## SOME PROMINENT FEATURES OF SWAMI VENKATESANANDA

**Sri Swami Harisharananda**

*“Parthasarathy' is Sri Krishna's Name. Sri Krishna's work was to drive the chariot of Arjuna during the Mahabharata war. Here too, our Parthasarathy is driving this Divine Life Chariot.”*

Swami Sadanandaji said that Venkatesanandaji can type without light. That is no wonder. Here in Sri Swamiji's Ashram, everything is done that way. The press is working without paper; the kitchen without provisions; the treasury without cash; the entire Ashram without money! From the day Sri Swamiji Maharaj came to Rishikesh till today, he has been going on in this manner—without keeping any money with him, spending that very day, whatever comes on that day. It is a miracle that everything grows near him—the number of inmates, income, work and expenditure too!

Whose 34th Birthday are we celebrating today? Not Venkatesanandaji's; for,

Venkatesanandaji was born in September 1947. Not even Parthasarathy's because Parthasarathy ceased to exist as such, in September 1947. But if it is anything, it is Parthasarathy plus Venkatesananda's 34th Birthday, because it was Parthasarathy who was born in 1922.

There are some unique features in Parthasarathy's birthday. He was born on the Amavasya day, the dark day; and you know that it is from that day that the Shukla-Paksha or the bright fortnight commences. Darkness is ignorance; to remove this, the light of Knowledge is necessary. On this day therefore, a light was born to remove the darkness which was prevailing at that time.

‘Parthasarathy' is Sri Krishna's Name. Sri Krishna's work was to drive the chariot of Arjuna during the Mahabharata war. Here too, our Parthasarathy is driving this Divine Life Chariot. He has done everything

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Taken from 'Life of Swami Venkatesananda'

BIRTH CENTENARY YEAR OF SRI SWAMI VENKATESANANDAJI MAHARAJ

that lies in his power to enhance and spread the glory of Sri Swami Maharaj and the Divine Life Society. You know that it was Lord Sri Krishna who protected and sustained the chariot of Arjuna, though it was burnt by the arrows of the enemies. Similarly, our Parthasarathy will guard the Society against all sorts of obstacles and impediments.

The value of Swami Venkatesananda lies not in how he appears, but in how really useful he is. This fact is illustrated by a parable. A tailor was at work. He took a piece of cloth and with a pair of shining costly scissors, he cut the cloth into various bits. Then he put the pair of scissors at his feet. Then he took a small needle and thread and started to sew the bits of cloth into a fine shirt. When the spell of sewing was over, he stuck the needle on to his turban. The tailor's son, who was watching, asked him, "Father, the scissors are costly and look so beautiful. But you throw them down at your feet. This needle is worth almost nothing; you can get a dozen for an Anna. Yet you place it carefully on your head itself. Is there any reason for this illogical behaviour?"

"Yes, my son. The scissors have

their function, no doubt; but they only cut the cloth into bits. The needle on the contrary unites the bits and enhances the value of the cloth. Therefore, the needle to me is more precious and valuable. The value of a thing depends on its utility, son, not on its cost price or appearance."

Similarly, there are two classes of people in the world— those who create dissensions and disharmony, who separate man from man; and those who bring about peace and harmony, who unite people. The former are generally the rich people, powerful politicians and kings; the latter are generally the poor devotees of God, the penniless wandering monks, the mendicants. The Lord makes use of both to carry on His function of providing the field for the evolution of the individual souls. He throws down in the dust the mighty kings and millionaires who create wars and disharmony; and He keeps the poor, pious devotee over His own head. In His eyes, the scale of values is entirely different! Swami Venkatesananda is a unifying factor like the needle and his value is inestimable. His appearance is one, his reality another.

Swami Venkatesananda is very intelligent and shrewd in managing affairs and presenting things. He will not present even facts in an unpleasant way. Listen to a parable: Raja Ranjitsingh was blind in one eye; one eye-ball had been removed. Yet, he was a powerful ruler.

It occurred to him that he should have a life-size painting of himself hung in the Durbar Hall. He announced a rich reward for the painter who would do the work satisfactorily. Many painters applied for the commission. He entrusted the work to a very famous painter. The painter thought that though the Raja had only one eye, he would like the painting to look beautiful and whole; and therefore he painted as though the Raja had two beautiful eyes.

"What have you painted?" roared Ranjitsingh. "This is not my portrait at all!" And he ordered that the painter should be imprisoned.

The work was entrusted to the next best painter. This man had heard about the fate of the previous painter. Nervously, he accepted the job. He painted an almost life-like portrait exactly as the Raja was, with one eye blind. When the Raja saw it, he turned

away in disgust: "Oh, it is horrible to look at! Put this fellow in jail!" He too was jailed.

The work was again entrusted to a third painter. He was on the horns of a dilemma. He had heard what had happened to the previous painters. He prayed to God for a way out of this danger. He received Light from Above. He set to work. He painted an action-picture in which Ranjitsingh was shooting a lion. The lion was trying to pounce on him and he was aiming the gun at the lion. Naturally, the eye with which he could see was taking the aim and the other was therefore closed! The painter had presented the truth, without offending the aesthetic sense of the Raja. The Raja rewarded him with costly presents.

Always use your intelligence and be tactful. Even if you have to tell an unpleasant truth (and you cannot keep quiet), tell it in such a way that it may be pleasant to all concerned. Then you will be successful without swerving from truth, and truthful without courting failure. Swami Venkatesananda possesses a tremendous knack in presenting truths in a pleasant way.

Swami Venkatesanandaji is an

ardent devotee of Sri Swamiji Maharaj. He is to some extent like the Pandit who praised as well as censured Brinjal in front of the king.

A king held a Brinjal in his hand, and as he was in a pleasant mood, began to admire its beauty. The court Pandit was with him. The king said, "O Pandit! How beautiful is this Brinjal!" "Yes, Maharaja," replied the Pandit, "look at its lovely colour. It is like the colour of the peacock's neck. How can I adequately describe the beauty of the grand cap that the Brinjal wears on its head? It is like a splendid crown that a Raja wears on his head. So lovely. So lovely!"

The next day the Raja ate a dish prepared of Brinjal and got stomach-ache. He remarked, "O, this Brinjal is very bad." The Pandit joined in the discussion and said: "Certainly, Maharaj, it is very bad. Therefore, its name is Begun [without virtue] and it has an ugly colour and a nail driven on its head."

The Maharaja was amused. He asked: "O Pandit! Yesterday you extolled the greatness of the Brinjal. Now you have begun to condemn it outright. How can you do so?" The Pandit replied: "Maharaja, I am your

Majesty's humble servant and not the servant of the Brinjal. You admired; so I admired; now you are condemning it, so I also condemn it." Swami Venkatesanandaji is all "Yes" to Sri Swamiji's "Yes" and all "No" to Sri Swamiji's "No". Great surrender indeed!

Venkatesanandaji always speaks sweetly; he displays great tactfulness in speaking to others. He never utters harsh words. He nicely adapts himself to people and circumstances. He is ready to play any role assigned to him by Sri Swamiji. He dressed as a lady and assumed the pen-name 'Venkateswari' for the purpose of writing an article in 'Women's Light and Guide', in which his picture is printed in a woman's dress!

He always tries to unite people and to bring about peace. Thread and needle, borax and saints always bring things and people together; shovel, axe and evil-minded men separate people and bring about disharmony. Venkatesanandaji belongs to the former category!

He is patient, tolerant, forbearing and humble. So, he is regarded as great!

## MEDICAL WISDOM AND HUMOUR

Chronicler: Yogi Anand

17th November, 1958

A surgeon came for Swamiji's Darshan. Swamiji, smiling sweetly said to him, "A doctor did such a beautiful operation. The operation was successful, but the patient died on the table". Then lovingly suggested: "Before you take the knife, pray to the Lord."

The doctor immediately replied, "Nowadays, I do it".

Swamiji then graciously asked him, "Who pumps the blood into the artery?"

The doctor said, "Heart".

Gently turning his head towards the doctor's wife, Swamiji gracefully gesticulated to her to answer.

She quickly replied, "God".

Swamiji joyously said, "First prize. Heart has no strength of its own".

### BE ABOVE CRITICISM

A talk arose about public criticism, and Swamiji, with a radiant expression, kindly said:

"Many saints are afraid of public criticism. But I don't bother", and humorously gesticulating with his

face, sweetly added,

"So they are keeping only this kind of face, castor-oil faces, Sunday faces, etc."

Then politely said, "this kind of face I cannot keep, but I receive all people".

A devotee who was about to leave the Ashram prostrated at Swamiji's feet for his blessings and instructions. As Swamiji began giving his instructions: "Serve, love, give, meditate, realise", the devotee lifted his head saying, "I want it in my astral body".

Then prostrating once more with his forehead touching Swamiji's feet.

Swamiji closed his eyes for a few seconds infusing his silent grace to the devotee, afterwards inspiringly said, "Detach, Attach." "D.I.N." (meaning Do It Now)

### SO PEOPLE LIKE ME

An aspirant came to the office, and asked Swamiji, "Why people like you so much? What is the secret?", and went on explaining, "At first, my family did not like me staying here, and now they like you more than me."

Swamiji humorously said, "I am tall, I give biscuits", making us all cheerful with his good humour. Then began revealing some of his divine characteristics, "I am child-like, I talk sweetly, so people like me".

At this point the aspirant graciously asked, "You love children, why?"

Swamiji: "Because they are innocent", continuing, "I always smile. I always radiate joy. I distribute books free. So people like me. I always praise people and see the good things. So people like me."

A devotee then added, "What about the deeper inner things you give us?"

Swamiji simply smiled.

### **MY DEAREST DISCIPLE**

A copy of a telegram for

despatch was handed to Swamiji. After reading it, he gently handed it to an aspirant sitting facing him, sweetly saying, "My telegrams are always fifteen and twenty rupees".

Then, reflecting for a while, softly mentioned, "I spent more than two thousand rupees in establishing the telegraphic office".

The aspirant said, "I heard that one man took away five thousand rupees".

Swamiji, smiling, added, "Ten thousand rupees, my dearest disciple".

The aspirant, amazed, quickly remarked, "And still he is your disciple".

Swamiji, laughing, joyously said, "Why not. He is still my dearest disciple."

The Guru is God Himself manifesting in a personal form to guide the aspirant. Grace of God takes the form of the Guru. To see the Guru is to see God. The Guru is united with God. He inspires devotion in others. His presence purifies all.

The Guru is verily a link between the individual and the Immortal. He is a being who has raised himself from this into That, and thus has free and unhampered access into both the realms. He stands, as it were, upon the threshold of immortality; and, bending down he raises the struggling individuals with his one hand, and with the other lifts them up into the imperium of everlasting joy and infinite Truth-Consciousness.

**Swami Sivananda**

## REST IN GOD

### Sri Swami Atmaswarupananda

One of the best known symbols of Sivananda Ashram and The Divine Life Society is the Sivananda Pillar located near the Bhajan Hall on the same level as the Samadhi Hall. It contains the essence of the teachings of both Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji and Vedanta. As it was built during Gurudev's lifetime, we can presume that whatever is on there had his approval.

This is an interesting thing to consider, because one prominent panel on the pillar is dedicated to just six English words. These six words are not usually seen anywhere else, which makes for the question: Why did Gurudev put them on the Sivananda Pillar? They must have some important significance for our spiritual life.

Those six words are: Seek, Find, Enter, Rest in God. When we consider them, we understand that we have to seek and that our goal is to find God, but that's only two of the six words and only two of the four instructions. Gurudev goes on to say Enter, and finally, Rest in God. All four instructions must have a deep significance. We can understand the

seeking and the finding, but what does it mean to Enter, and what is the special significance of the phrase, Rest in God?

Gurudev continuously reminded his disciples that the goal of life is God-realization. God-realization means to make God real. We have three methods or degrees of making God real. The first is with our intellect. With our intellect, we can ultimately become sure, against all the evidence of our senses, that Brahman alone is real, and, therefore, we are That. That is not an easy task, but the intellect can become convinced, which is the result of seeking for the truth, seeking to make God real, a conviction that He alone is.

But what about finding Him? The next step in making God real is with our feeling nature. Our intellect never has the power to make us really feel that we have found God. Only the emotions, the feelings, can do that. It can be any spiritual experience that convinces us that what we have learned with the intellect is true. In fact, when we are having the experience we often feel that we have found God. The problem is that the

experience ultimately fades away. Frequently, it is followed by other feeling experiences, and once again we think that we have found God, but of course, they are simply more experiences.

What we actually want is direct experience, which means to enter into God, to become like God. That is not something that we can control in any way. Suddenly, the triad of knower, knowing and known disappears. Objects are still there, but all sense of separation has disappeared. We have entered into the likeness of God.

But then, why is the last instruction, Rest in God? Because sooner or later a sense of separation will return; the ego will return. It now

understands a different dimension, but it is still present. How much it is present depends upon the purity of our being. So Gurudev's last instruction could be interpreted: You have, in a sense, spent your whole life resting in your ego. Now practise resting in that experience that you have had of oneness until you become God.

That is the goal. Not just to find God through spiritual experiences, not just to enter God through direct experience, but to rest in God: "That is the Reality, that is who I am, that is where I must rest. I must not go back to resting in the ego." Therefore: Seek, Find, Enter, but, especially, Rest in God.

What is God? It is hard to tell. But, when I look at the Ganga, I know it is God. When I see the jasmine, I know it is God. When I behold the blue sky, I know it is God. When I hear the chirping of birds, I know it is God. When I taste honey, I know it is God.

The Supreme is indefinable, though scholars give intellectual accounts of It which are not absolutely true.

Every man has his own conception of God. The God of a military man wears a helmet. The God of a China-man has a flat nose and a pipe for smoking opium. The God of a Hindu has marks on his forehead, and wears a rosary and a garland of flowers. The God of a Christian wears a Cross. For some, God has wings. A buffalo will think that God is a very big buffalo.

Such an anthropomorphic conception of God is obviously puerile. The greatest and most important thing in all the world is to get a right concept of God, because your belief about God governs your entire life.

**Swami Sivananda**

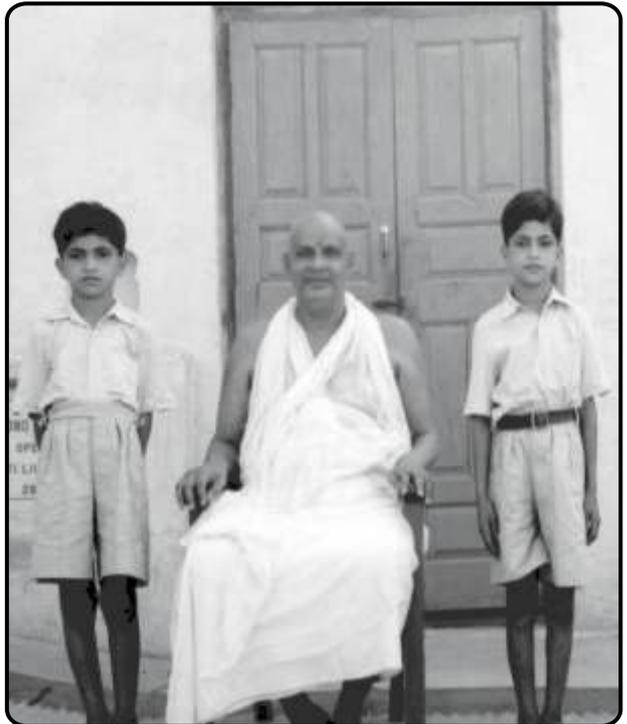
# CHILDREN'S WORLD

## STUDENTS' SUCCESS IN LIFE MEMORY CULTURE

Glorious Immortal Atman,

Memory culture is very, very important. It brings success in God-realisation as well. A forgetful man always fails in his endeavours, commits serious mistakes again and again. A student who has retentive memory will get success in all his examinations. A man with strong retentive memory gets sanguine success in all his ventures and undertakings. Intelligence is only nine-tenths of memory. A knowledge of working of the subconscious mind is very necessary for those who want to develop their memory. Most of the mental operations take place in the subconscious mind. In olden days, Sanskrit scholars got by heart all the Vedas. The Gurukula

system of education has its own advantages. It develops memory to a marvellous extent. Our students of modern universities cannot compete with the students of Gurukula system.



Brahmacharya, dietetic adjustment and discipline of Indriyas are very essential for developing memory. The seminal energy has a direct, intimate connection with the cells of the Chitta (subconscious mind) and brain. Bad memory is due largely to heavy loss of seminal energy. Young school and college students do not realise the vital importance of Brahmacharya. They grope in utter darkness. Their minds are filled with passion by daily looking at the nude picture and embraces in the film shows. They indulge in novel-reading that excites passion. They eat whatever they like. They have no idea of Sattvic diet and the effects of unwholesome food on the different compartments of the brain. Hence they fail in their lives and lead a cheerless, gloomy life in darkness and despair.

**Swami Sivananda**

## **CULTIVATION OF VIRTUES**

### **FORGIVENESS**

Forgiveness is pardoning.

A man who is endowed with forgiveness is merciful and compassionate.

To err is human; to forgive divine.

Pretence of forgiveness is common. Real forgiveness is rare.

If you practise forgiveness, you will become strong and noble. You can control anger easily.

Forgiveness saves the expense of anger, the cost of hatred, the waste of spirits.

He who practises forgiveness ceases to cherish displeasure or resentment towards a man who has injured him.

**Swami Sivananda**



## ERADICATION OF VICES FAULT-FINDING

This is a detestable old habit of man. How can he think of God, when his mind is ever engaged in finding the faults of others?

Why do you poke your nose into other people's affairs, when you yourself have a thousand and one faults? Correct your faults first. Others will take care of their own faults. Mind your business. Do not interfere with other people. You can enjoy peace.

Develop the good-finding nature in others. Every man has his own virtues and good points which can be appreciated. The fault-finding nature will perish.

**Swami Sivananda**

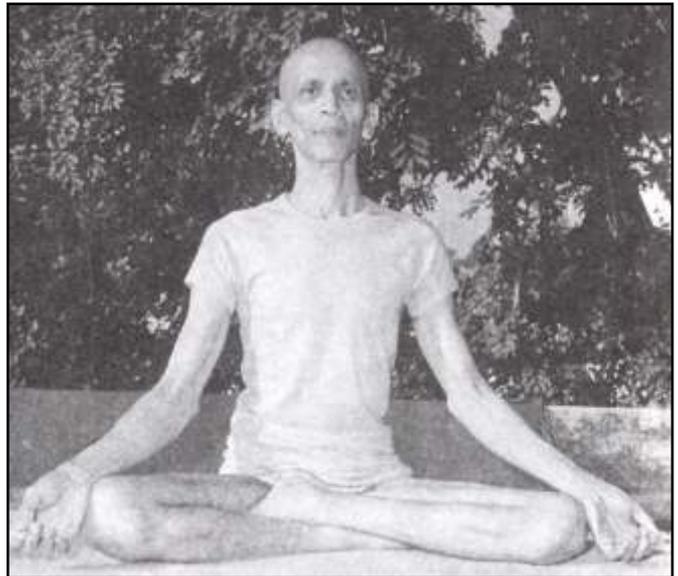
## SIDDHASANA

(Adept's posture)

**Technique:** Place one heel at the anus, the terminal opening of the alimentary canal or digestive tube. Keep the other heel at the root of the generative organ. The feet and the legs should be so nicely arranged that the ankle-joints should touch each other. Hands can be placed as in Padmasana.

**Benefits:** By sitting in this posture, the body acquires stability which results in the harmonious flow of blood and Prana (vital force) in the entire system, which is prerequisite for meditation. This sitting posture strengthens the waist, tones up the nervous system and balances the vital forces.

**Swami Chidananda**



## SIVANANDA'S PRANAYAMA

**Technique:** Sit comfortably on a chair, sofa or easy-chair. Draw the air through both nostrils, as long as comfortable. Retain as long as comfortable. Repeat your Ishta Mantra or 'OM' while retaining the breath. Then exhale as long as comfortable. You need not observe any ratio between the inhalation, exhalation and retention; but let the inhalation and exhalation be deep and full.

**Benefits:** The benefits of this Pranayama are incalculable. All the muscles are relaxed. All the nerves are toned. Rhythm and harmony are established in the entire being. Mind is calmed. Circulation is promoted. An inexpressible peace and bliss come to reign within you.

You can do it in the morning while lying in bed. Your mind will become alert for commencing Japa and Dhyana. You can do it when the mind is about to lose balance on account of the setting in of lust, anger or other evil Vrittis; the mind will be filled with a great power that will prevent the evil Vrittis from disturbing it. You can do it just before commencing your study; the mind will be concentrated easily and what you study will be indelibly impressed in your mind. You can do it during your office-work; you will get new strength every time and you will never be tired. When you return home from the office, you can practise this Pranayama and you will be recharged with fresh energy.

The greatest advantage is that once you start doing it, you will do it very often; and your mind can never find an excuse for not practising this Ati-Sukha-Purvaka Pranayama, very easy and comfortable Pranayama which has all the advantages of Pranayama, without its 'rules and regulations'. Do it from now without fail.

**Swami Sivananda**



# NAVARATRI AND VIJAYADASHAMI CELEBRATION AT THE HEADQUARTERS ASHRAM



The Divine Mother's grace is boundless. Her mercy is illimitable. Her power is immeasurable. Her glory is ineffable. Her splendour is indescribable. Make total, unreserved ungrudging surrender to Her. Worship Her with faith and unflinching devotion. She will give you Bhukti (material prosperity) and Mukti (liberation) also.

**Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj**

The Navaratri is the blessed occasion of the nine-day worship of the Supreme Being as Divine Mother. As in yesteryears, the Navaratri was celebrated with great sacredness at the Headquarters Ashram from 7th to 14th October 2021. The beautiful portraits of the Divine Mother in Her three aspects— Sri Maha Durga, Sri Maha Lakshmi and Sri Maha Saraswati were



installed in the specially prepared and beautifully decorated altar at Sri Vishwanath Mandir.

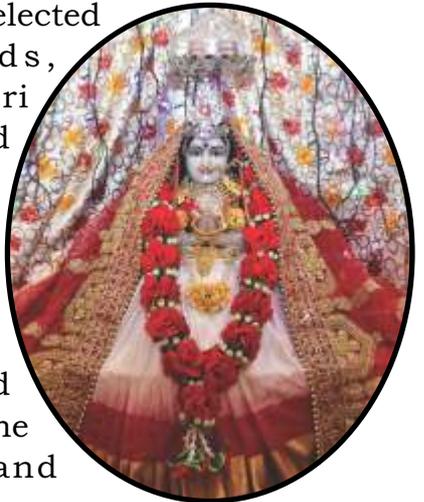
In the forenoon, the members of Sivananda Matri Satsanga Group of the Ashram chanted Sri Lalitasahasranama Stotra and Sri Mahishasurmardini Stotra as their worshipful offering at the feet of the Divine Mother. During the night Satsanga, Sri Durga-Saptashati was recited in Sanskrit by H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj. Thereafter, the Hindi and English meaning of Sri Durga-Saptashati was read by Sri Swami Dharmanishthanandaji Maharaj and Sri Swami Krishnabhaktanandaji Maharaj respectively. It was followed by the chanting of Tantrokta Devi Suktam by Sri Swami Vaikunthanandaji Maharaj.

On 14th October, Navaratri message of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was read by H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj after the regular chants. Thereafter, H.H. Sri Swami Nirliptanandaji Maharaj in his blessing message spoke on the significance of Navaratri worship. One book of Worshipful Sri Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and one booklet of Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj's Birth Centenary Series were also released to mark this auspicious occasion. All these days, the Satsanga concluded with the floral Archana to the chants of Ashtottarashata-Namavali of the



Goddess, Arati and distribution of Prasad.

On 15th October, the Vijayadashami Day, the programme commenced in the forenoon with Jaya Ganesh prayer followed by Archana of the Divine Mother. As Sri Vijayadashami is the blessed day to commence the study of sacred scriptures, the selected portions from the Vedas, Upanishads, Brahmasutras, Srimad Bhagavad Gita, Sri Valmiki Ramayana, Mahabharata, Srimad Bhagavata, Patanjali Yoga Sutras and Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj's book Sadhana were read by H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj. The celebration concluded with the blessing message of H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj; Arati and distribution of Prasad. With devout joy, all the inmates participated in the Navaratri and Vijayadashami Celebrations.



May the blessings of the Divine Mother and Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji 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 home-less, temporary or permanent, fell sick, got lost or were abandoned.'*

*(Swami Chidananda)*

Losing the ability to speak—not an easy reality to face! It had happened to the newly admitted patient this month, after he suffered from swelling in his brain and became half-sided paralyzed. He was discharged from the emergency room of one of the local hospitals and had no place to go. He is just 31 years old. Frustration had taken the precedence, as he could not express himself, trying to say something, but just some unrecognizable sounds came out. Hard times for this gentleman, as he has to be fed, cleaned, bathed, and clothed. Under medical treatment, he is recuperating, his condition improved slowly, and his blood pressure is now stabilized. As per the advice of the consulted physician, exercise program has been started, and he has begun trying to form words and to make himself heard.

Inability to speak is a phenomenon more residents in Sivananda Home have to deal with! Sometimes the understanding is there, but sometimes it is also absent; some people have their own vocabulary, sometimes only a few words are known. A challenge for the people around them, requiring patience and perseverance to find out what is being wanted to be said or conveyed. But how interesting, once the barriers of language are broken through, a complete new form of communication arises!

All the residents in Sivananda Home were fortunate to receive their second Covid 19 vaccination this month. A miracle indeed, since all hail from different areas and localities, with mostly unknown background and origin, and where often names are given only at the time of admission in the Home. But where human-wise things seem impossible, from High Above and deep within answers are always heard!

Om Sri Sat Gurudevaya Namah! Om Namo Bhagavate Sivanandaya.

*“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 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and subsequently in the 'Board of Trustees' Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021 that any donations to The Divine Life Society will be received only under the following 'Heads of Accounts' with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

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**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

**Bargarh (Odisha):** The Branch conducted daily Puja, Rudrabhishek on Mondays and Guru Paduka Puja on Thursdays. Birth Anniversaries of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th September and of H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on 24th, and Srimad Bhagavata Jayanti on 20th were celebrated by the Branch with Paduka Puja, Rudrabhishek and Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Japa.

**Bhismagiri (Odisha):** Weekly Satsang continued on Sundays. Birth Anniversaries of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th September and of H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on 24th were celebrated by the Branch with Paduka Puja, Bhajan, Kirtan, Gita Path and Narayan Seva. Special Satsangs were arranged on 17th, and on 20th with recitation of Srimad Bhagavat.

**Bhimkand (Odisha):** The Branch had daily Guru Paduka Puja and weekly Satsang on Sundays. The 134th Birth Anniversary of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th September and the 105th Birth Anniversary of Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on 24th were celebrated with Prayers, Paduka Puja and Bhajans.

**Bikaner (Rajasthan):** Daily Puja,

Yoga class, Sundarakanda Path and recitation of Hanuman Chalisa on Saturdays and Hawan on 24th of every month were the regular programmes of the Branch. The 13th Punyatithi Aradhana Day of H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj was observed on 5th September with Hawan, Bhajan and Kirtan. The 134th Birth Anniversary of Worshipful Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th and the 105th Birth Anniversary of Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on 24th were celebrated with Paduka Puja, Japa, Bhajan and Kirtan. The Branch distributed Scholarships to the needy students.

**Chatrapur (Odisha):** The Branch continued daily Puja, and weekly Satsang on Thursdays. Monthly Jayanti ceremonies were held on 8th and 24th with Paduka Puja. Punyatithi Aradhana Day of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was observed on 2nd August. Tulasidas Jayanti on 15th and Sri Krishna Janmashtami on 30th were celebrated by the Branch.

**Dhenkanal (Odisha):** The 13th Punyatithi Aradhana Day of H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj was observed on 5th September. The 134th Birth Anniversary of

Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th was celebrated with Paduka Puja, Bhajans and discourse on life and teachings of Gurudev. Besides this, weekly Satsang continued on Mondays.

**Khordha (Odisha):** The Branch conducted daily online Satsang with Guru Stotram, recitation of Hanuman Chalisa, Bhajan and Kirtan. The 13th Punyatithi Aradhana Day of Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj was observed on 5th September. The 134th Birth Anniversary of Worshipful Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was celebrated on 8th with Paduka Puja, Bhajans, discourse and Narayan Seva.

**Lucknow (U.P.):** Birth Anniversaries of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th September and H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on 24th were celebrated by the Branch with Prayer, Bhajan, Mantra Japa and Swadhyaya etc. Besides this, Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Japa was done for world peace.

**Nandinagar (Chattisgarh):** The Branch had morning prayers with Gita Path, chanting of Hanuman Chalisa and Parayan of Vishnusahasranam, and Siva Abhisheka on Mondays. There was Mahamantra Kirtan on 3rd September. Besides this, weekly Satsang was held on Thursdays, and

Matri Satsang on Saturdays with recitation of Sundarakanda and Hanuman Chalisa. Birth Anniversaries of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th September and H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on 24th were celebrated with Paduka Puja. Sri Ganesh Chaturthi Puja was arranged from 10th to 19th with daily Puja, and Poornahuti was performed on 19th with Havan.

**Puri (Odisha):** The Branch continued daily Paduka Puja and weekly Satsang on Thursdays. There were recitation of Hanuman Chalisa on Sankranti day, and chanting of Vishnu Sahasranam and Gita Path on Ekadasis. Special Satsangs were conducted on 22nd and 24th August at the residences of devotees.

**Rourkela (Odisha):** Weekly Satsang on Thursdays and Sundays continued with Paduka Puja, Archana and chanting of Vishnusahasranam etc. As usual, free Accupressure treatment and medicines were provided to needy people. The 13th Punyatithi Aradhana Day of Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj was observed on 5th September. Birth Anniversaries of Worshipful Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th and H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on 24th were celebrated by the Branch.

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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.

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## **THE TORMENT OF TANTALUS**

Craving is the “will-to-live” of Schopenhauer, “tanha” of Lord Buddha, “Abhinivesa” of Patanjali Maharshi. Craving is Trishna; it is intense inner sense-hankering; it includes thoughts and desires. Craving is the germ of personality. It is the flame of the life of appetites. It is the cause for pain, sorrow, unhappiness and births and deaths. It builds the false ego. It strengthens and fattens the ego. There is no end to craving in the life of a worldly man; for this reason, he is, despite his wealth and comforts, ever restless. Quench this flame through dispassion, renunciation and meditation and attain the bliss of the Eternal.

Live for God. Boldly face all the difficulties and tribulations of this petty, earthly life. Be a man. With courage, struggle for the Great Attainment. Climbing a mountain, crossing a channel, bombing a city, or blasting a fort these are not the true acts of heroism. Controlling your mind and senses, and overcoming anger, passion and egoism by attaining self-mastery—these constitute the real heroism in man. How long will you be a slave of passion and the senses? Assert your real divine nature, and your mastery over your lower nature and lower self. This is your most important duty.

*Swami Sivananda*

**To**