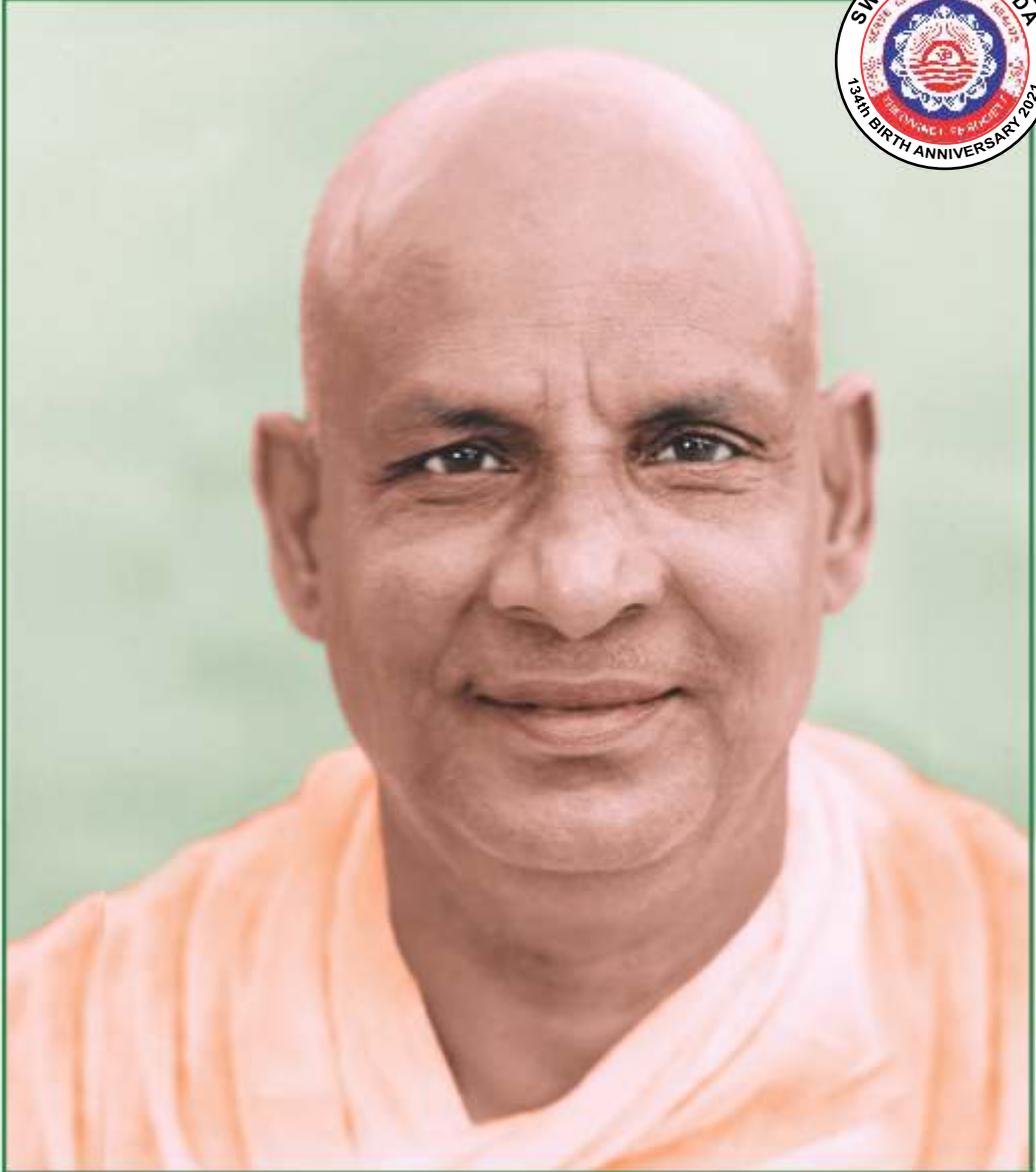


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THE DIVINE LIFE



Live to love all. Live to serve all. Live to realise the Truth.



134th Birth Anniversary
September 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

WAY TO BEATITUDE

You cannot attain final beatitude by mastering a million scriptures, by practising rigorous austerities. Brahman can be realised when all Vasanas and Trishnas perish, when word ceases and thought dies, when the veil of ignorance is rent asunder, when the mind is absorbed in its Source, when the senses are curbed in toto, when the Brahmakara Vritti rises, through constant Nididhyasana and through the Grace of the Guru.

Swami Sivananda



THE DIVINE LIFE

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No. 06

PRASNOPANISHAD

PANCHAMA PRASNA (QUESTION V)

SATYAKAMA AND PIPPALADA

तिस्रो मात्रा मृत्युमत्यः प्रयुक्ता अन्योन्यसक्ता अनविप्रयुक्ताः ।

क्रियासु बाह्याभ्यन्तरमध्यमासु सम्यक्प्रयुक्तासु न कम्पते ज्ञः ॥६॥

The three Matras when employed separately are mortal; but (when they are) connected with one another, they are not wrongly employed. (When they are) properly employed, in all the internal, external and middle functions, the knower trembles not.

महागुरुवर्णमातृकास्तोत्रम्

MAHAGURU-VARNA-MATRIKASTOTRAM

Jnana Bhaskara Mahamahopadhyaya Sri S. Gopala Sastri

रेरे भक्तिविवर्जिताः खलजनाः ! मा यात शैलान्तिकम्

नित्यानन्दकुटीरकन्दरमुखे पापेभविद्रावणः ।

गर्वामर्षमुखान् मृगान् प्रशमयन् गम्भीरवीक्षोल्बणः

दुर्धर्षः खलमर्दनोऽत्र यतिशार्दूलो हि विक्रीडति ॥३५॥

O Impious and unrighteous Ones! Don't go near the mountain. A tiger in the form of a saint dwells in the cave of Ananda Kutir, who drives off the elephants of sins, vanquishes the beasts of pride and anger, whose look is majestic and dreadful, who is unconquerable and who punishes the wicked.

विशिष्टभक्तिस्वरमुख्यवर्णक्रमानुसारं ग्रथिता गुणाढ्या ।

विचित्रवृत्तास्तुतिरूपमालासमर्पितेयं गुरुपादपद्मे ॥३६॥

The floral garland in the form of this Stotra glorifying Sri Gurudev, composed with great devotion in the sequence of the seven cases (grammatical), vowels and consonants, describing virtues and various incidents (metres), is devotedly offered at His lotus feet.

ज्ञानभास्करदासेन गुरुपादाब्जरेणुना ।

समर्पितमिदं स्तोत्रं पठतामस्तु भव्यदम् ॥३७॥

Let this Stotra worshipfully dedicated by a devotee, the Jnana Bhaskara, who is a particle of dust at the feet of Sri Gurudev, give all prosperity to those who chant it with devotion.

श्री शिवानन्द स्तुति

SRI SIVANANDA STUTI

Sri Swami Krishnananda

हिमाद्रिप्रोत्तुङ्गामरसलिलसारामृतमया।

जगन्माता गङ्गा वहति यत एनोहतवहा।

महादुःखध्वान्तरुण ऋषिवरो भाति जगतः

शिवानन्दः स्वामी जलधिहृदयो जीवतु चिरम्॥१॥

Where the world-mother Ganga, with her immortal waters flowing from the heaven through the lofty Himalayas, rushes forth like a fire destroying all sins, there shines the supreme sage who is a sun to the darkness of the great sorrow of the world! May that Sivananda, the Swami, possessed of a heart wide like the ocean, live long!

ददाति प्रीणाति ज्ञ उरुकरणो ध्यायति मुनि-

र्दयासिन्धुः स्वात्मोदितसुखनिमग्नोऽखिलगुरुः।

क्वचिद्बालो रामः क्वचिदपि युवा वृद्धधिषणः

शिवानन्दः स्वामी जलधिहृदयो जीवतु चिरम्॥२॥

He gives, loves, knows and meditates. He is the source of wonderful divine activity. He is a Muni. He is an ocean of mercy. He is merged in the joy derived from his own Self. He is the Guru of all. Sometimes he is like a child. Sometimes he is very pleasing. Sometimes he looks like a youth and at other times like a mature brained person. May that Sivananda the Swami, possessed of a heart wide like the ocean, live long!

महात्मा संन्यस्तद्वितीयमतिसच्चित्सुखधनः

पराद्वैतब्रह्माम्बुधि भृदमृतत्वानुभवधीः।

जगद्वन्द्यः स्वामी जयतु परमानन्दमुदितः

शिवानन्दः स्वामी जलधिहृदयो जीवतु चिरम्॥३॥

He, the great soul, has renounced the sense of duality and has immersed himself in the Mass of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. He floats in the ocean of the Supreme Non-Dual Brahman. He has no thought except of the immortal Experience. May that Swami rejoicing in the Supreme Bliss, praised by all, triumph! May Sivananda, the Swami, possessed of a heart wide like the ocean, live long!

परो योगी योगध्वजपरमहंसो विजयते

शिवः शान्तोऽद्वैतः प्रमुदितसमस्तात्मवदनः।

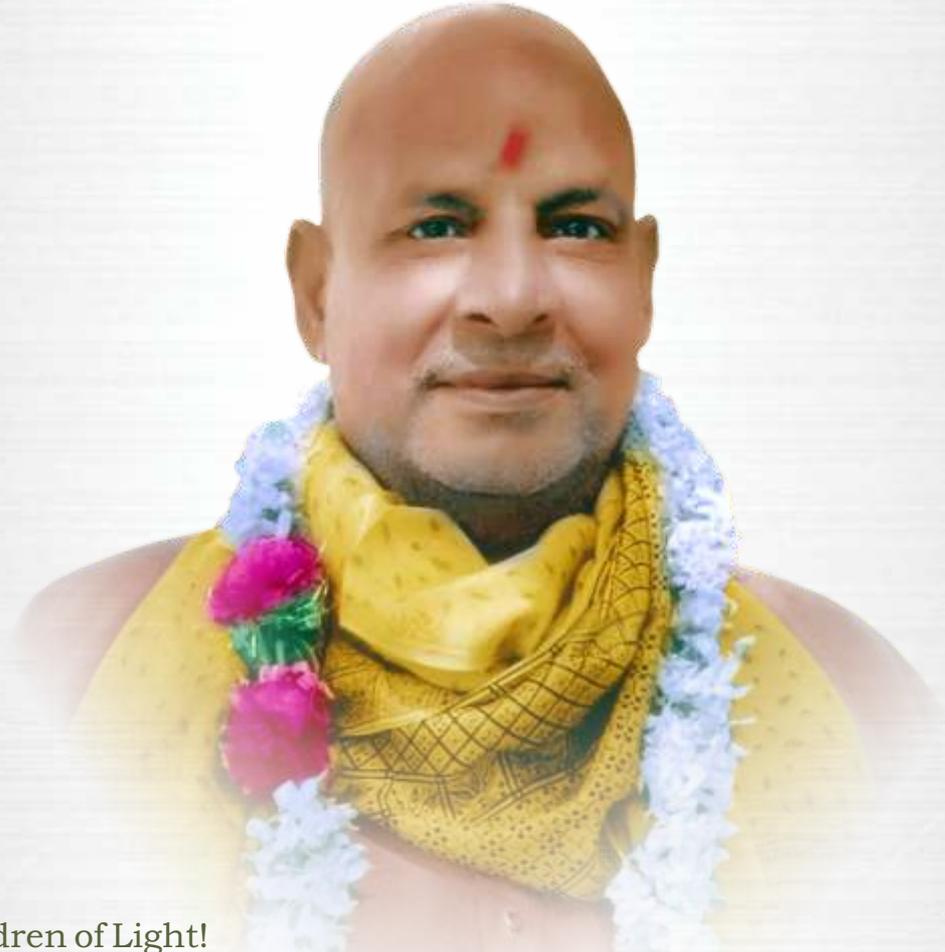
अहोरात्रं लोकोद्धरणहृदयो योऽमृतपथे

शिवानन्दः स्वामी जलधिहृदयो जीवतु चिरम्॥४॥

There glories the supreme great Yogi, with Yoga as his support, the Paramahansa who is blessed, peaceful and non-dual, who brings joy to all through his smiling face! Day and night, he engages himself in lifting up the world towards the path to immortality. May Sivananda, the Swami, possessed of a heart wide like the ocean, live long!

Birthday Message

SELF-REALISATION



Children of Light!

Behind this world-show, behind these physical phenomena, behind these names and forms, behind the feelings, thoughts, emotions and sentiments, there dwells the silent witness, thy immortal friend and real well-wisher, the Purusha or World-teacher, the unseen Governor or Master, the unknown Yogi, the invisible Power or consciousness or hidden Sage. That is the only permanent Reality and living Truth. This is Brahman or the Supreme Being or the Absolute. That is

Taken from DL 1943

Atma. That is Self. The goal of human life is to realise the Reality behind the changing phenomena. The summum bonum of human aspiration is to attain Self-realisation. Self-realisation alone can break the bonds of Karma. Self-realisation alone can make you absolutely free and independent. Trust not your body, mind and the senses. Have inner spiritual life. Attain knowledge of the Self through steady devotion and discipline. Drink the nectar of immortality, quench the flames of Samsar and allay the tortures, miseries and sorrows.

Friends! Is there not a higher mission in life besides eating, sleeping and talking? Is there not any higher form of eternal bliss than these transitory and illusory pleasures? Is there not a more dignified life than the sensual life? How insecure is our existence in this earth-plane with various kinds of fear? How painful is this mundane life? Should we not attempt diligently now to reach a place—the Immortal Abode, your original sweet home of pristine purity and divine splendour—where there is eternal sunshine, absolute security, perfect peace and where there is neither disease nor death nor war?

Come, come, become a Yogi. Come out of your narrow holes or ruts. Crush all sorts of superstitions. Aim high. To become an advocate or a doctor or an engineer or a professor is the height of your ambition! Can this give you freedom? Can this give you eternal bliss? Can this give you everlasting peace? Can this make you immortal? Do you not like to attain perfection or immortality? Do you not wish to achieve the summum bonum of existence—Kaivalya or independence—Atma Swarajya? Then come, struggle for higher things. Be bold. Look not back. March forward. Enquire "Who am I?" Hear, reflect, meditate and realise the Atmic splendour!

OM is Satchidananda. OM is Infinity. OM is Eternity. OM is Immortality. Sing OM. Chant OM. Feel OM.

Sri Sri Sivananda

SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

Sri Swami Sivananda

1. Some persons take a fancy to question the existence of God. Existence of God is not dependent on intellectual conviction. Even if you doubt about God's existence, you cannot deny it. Even if you deny all forms of existence, you continue to exist, and admit to yourself your existence. It is existence, the life-principle that sustains all. This sustaining principle is God. Human mind cannot conceive of It in Its true state. Therefore, one has to ascribe to It names and forms such as the various deities. Absence of a particular concept of God need not be a form of denial of God. Everybody wants kindness, sympathy, affection. Everybody wants to be happy. God is mercy, love, happiness. God is the fragrance in flowers, warmth in sunrays. God is truth. Everybody wants truth, whether one resorts to it or not. No one likes to be deceived. Why should one worry about the existence of God? Lead a good life, and be at peace with yourself and with others. If you tread the straight path, and live amicably

with others, if you cultivate mental poise, emotional balance, goodwill towards all, if you expect less and try to give more, if you think of yourself less and think of others more, you will surely find the way to peace.

2. Even this will pass away. Keep this motto always in mind. You have to be emotionally and spiritually mature and strong-minded. Be bold. Be brave. You cannot achieve anything without hope. Be full of hope for the good. Be sprightly. Be a little more interested in things around yourself. Be active and never resort to self-pity. Life has no mercy for the weak. In strength lies happiness. In determination lies progress. In effort lies success. Cheer up, and lead a good life. A good life is a godly life. A good life assures happiness.

3. You should experience more peace and happiness during meditation. There should be a permeating sense of well-being. The mind should be unruffled, and one-pointed. These are the marks of progress in meditation.

4. The most important of all, spiritual practices should find their practical materialization in one's daily life, i.e., in the form of thought, behaviour, action. You could easily spot a spiritual aspirant by the way he behaves, talks, and lives, especially his private life. One cannot be spiritual at heart and yet worldly outside. Spirituality is a living experience.

5. It is not that one finds Yogis only in the mountains. They could be found in busy cities as well, leading a normal life of mundane activity. They do their duties as instruments of God without expectation of reward or binding attachment. Find happiness in the divine path, which is open to all, in every condition of life.

6. The Lord is the best judge. Accept His will. Even this will pass away. Everything that exists in this world must pass away some day. Life is full of inner happiness and fulfilment if one turns one's mind more and more towards God. Blessed are they that have suffered, for they shall find happiness in the divine.

7. Moksha in the relative plane is freedom from mundane

desires, attachment, and evil qualities. Moksha is fruition of holy aspiration, blossoming of virtues, balance of mind, and spiritual happiness. When this is attained, through spiritual enlightenment, complete desirelessness and exhaustion of Karmas, one merges in the Absolute.

8. I will detail some of the main factors in judging one's spiritual attainments. There should be inner happiness and spiritual fulfilment. The mind should not run after worldly objects. It should be more steady and one-pointed. There should be unruffled peace and inner harmony. The most fundamental of all, one should be continuously steadfast on the path of truth, one should be completely devoid of anger, hatred, attachment and selfishness. The mind must be perfectly balanced in all conditions. The effects of distress or worldly animation should be conspicuous by their insignificance. If you do not find a measure of these qualities, spirituality has failed to have its effect.

(From Sri Swami Sivananda's replies to letters of spiritual aspirants)

SWAMI SIVANANDA'S MORAL AND SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE FOR HUMANITY

Sri Swami Chidananda

The leading Lights of Bharatavarsha from time immemorial have ever striven to guide the stream of spiritual life along the lines of Dharma towards a progressive realisation of integral perfection. Dharma supports man's life here on earth. Dharma bestows prosperity. Dharma brings all-round fulfilment of man's aspiration here. Finally, Dharma becomes the means for the attainment of the great goal of life, of Supreme Freedom or Moksha.

The refinement of the human nature and the gradual evolution of the human consciousness, from its state of grossness and impurity into an ideal state of purity, goodness and Divine Perfection, has been the life's endeavour of numerous great souls who have adorned this hierarchy of men of living wisdom through succeeding generations. Their idealism has not been otherworldly. They have striven for the transformation of man's life here on earth from a state of animalistic quest after the constant appeasement of his lower sensual appetites unto a state

of higher, nobler aspiration and a loftier seeking after the attainment of sublime, eternal values. They have dedicated their lives to the task of endowing the human being with a loftier vision, inspiring and enthusing him to earnestly endeavour for the achievement of ethical and spiritual perfection, which is the true and worthwhile goal of human life. A truly and inspiringly representative of this unforgettable galaxy of blessed awakeners of humanity in this material-minded twentieth century is the sagely Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh.

To bring about the recognition and an acceptance of the spiritual purpose of man's life, to reinstate the moral law and a consciousness of moral values in all spheres of human activity, to guide modern men and women of both hemispheres, through a life of practical idealism towards a harmonious and integral unfoldment, and to admonish, exhort and urge them to live in willing conformity with universal ethical standards— such is the noble task being carried out by

Taken from DL 1969

NOTE: This article was written during the lifetime of Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj.

this saintly man of wisdom. He has dedicated himself completely to the above task. Swami Sivananda and his mission have been ceaselessly doing this noble work for more than thirty-five years. His work is dynamic. Ceaselessly and tirelessly this holy man of God has kept himself at this sublime Mission, until a gradual revolution has been brought about in the outlook on life, sense of values and attitudes and ideals of countless thousands of sincere men and women literally all over the world.

Swami Sivananda is a unique phenomenon in many ways. Stepping into this field of spiritual life, at what is undeniably a turning point in the near history of early twentieth century, the period immediately after the conclusion of the First World War and the tremendous boom that followed it, Swami Sivananda saw before him a world suddenly released from strife and tension, plunge into an unrestrained round of "eat, drink and be merry". The intoxication of prosperity and the glitter of gold and silver made people everywhere to shelve higher idealism and immerse themselves in the pursuit of material acquisition and a life of sense-satisfaction.

Filled with the strange inward power of the Divine, a result of his Spiritual Illumination attained

through a decade of intense penance and meditation, Swami Sivananda rose to the role of an awakener and a leader at the juncture when the inevitable reaction of this sudden boom came with the equally sudden Wall Street crash and its aftermath. It left the whole world bewildered. And in the years that have followed, the world has never had a chance to recover from its bewilderment and find its moorings. For, there followed the disastrous Second World War on a global scale, that has now given place to the even more torturous and nightmarish cold war, which is stifling all people in its ruthless grip.

During all these years this one man, more than anyone else, has sustained the spirit of humanity with his heartening and rousing message of strong positivism, intense spiritual optimism, hope and active endeavour to spiritual attainment. Though living his simple life in his quiet Ashram retreat, nestling on the slope of the Himalayan foothills, he has yet entered into the life-stream of humanity the world over. The force of his teachings, the inspiration of his idealistic life and the magnetic influence of his powerful personality have come to be felt as a living transforming presence in the lives of men and women of this century. His presence is felt as a saving-grace and

a redeeming power in their frustrated lives, racked by the uncertainties and insecurity of this precarious post-atom period.

The people of today's world, people in all walks of life, high and low, find in Swami Sivananda a humane philosopher, a man though uncommon, yet possessed of a fund of common-sense, sympathy and deep understanding of not only their inward spiritual problems and intricate mental conflicts, but also of their simple practical daily difficulties as well as the intimate personal problems of their everyday life. Being guided by him, in private as well as public affairs, men of eminence, leaders and administrators and persons holding high positions and carrying heavy responsibilities, have acquired a new vision and learnt a simple technique of harmonising the claims of the world of matter, in which they live, with the eternal inner call of their essential, higher, spiritual nature, the unfoldment and perfection of which is the great task man is here to achieve.

By coming into contact with this spiritual luminary, even hard matter-of-fact men of action, have had light thrown upon the affairs of their lives and the secret revealed to them of adhering to the path of virtue and righteousness even in the midst

of the chaotic, unethical activities. When truthfulness, selflessness, honesty, purity, moral rectitude, etc., seem to be fast vanishing from human society, the gentle and persuasive, but insistent and persistent message of this towering man of wisdom has replanted them in the life of man through his simple, universal concept of Divine Life.

Swami Sivananda's entire philosophy and outlook is based upon his direct spiritual realisation and the resultant deep and unshakable belief in the Supreme Almighty that governs and guides man's life here. This Supreme Presence is to him the most tremendous fact of life. A vibrant living faith in this Divine Presence pervades all his life and enters into each and every thought and action therein. His contact with IT is vital and perennial and is unhampered by his perception of and his participation in the normal affairs of men and things of this outside world of matter. This is because, to him the whole world stands transfigured as a grand manifestation, a glorious and visible expression of the Divine Substance, into which he has perfectly entered and with which he has perfectly integrated his own being. No wonder then that the Light and the Wisdom that flowed forth from him were the power and the

illuminating quality of the Divine Source with which he ever lives in unbroken inner union.

His Holiness' act of renunciation and Sannyasa, done thirty-five years ago, has served during these years as an incontrovertible proof positive that this ancient tradition of holy Bharatavarsha, that this ancient heritage received from our by-gone seers and sages is not a negative lapsing into a selfish and careless quiescence (as it is sometimes thoughtlessly misconstrued) or an unfeeling retreat from realities; but, on the contrary, it is an utmost positive step, pregnant with the possibilities of unlimited human welfare and containing within it the seeds of selfless service of the most glorious type. It is a step by which man breaks out through the barriers of his little, limited and narrow life of selfishness and attachments and soars high into the empyrean of world consciousness, cosmic love and vision of world oneness. It transports him into the field of world service or Loka Seva. This is the dynamic structure of genuine renunciation and true Sannyasa. It is vibrant with love and compassion, dynamic with worshipful service and divinely pervaded by Karma Yoga in the spirit of the gospel of the Bhagavad Gita.

Such has been the exemplary Sannyasa life of our holy Gurudev Sivanandaji Maharaj and such is the significance of his Tyaga done full three and a half decades ago. The giving up of his secular life has come to mean the bestowal of a lofty new Divine Life to countless people in this present age of restlessness and warfare. His renunciation or Sannyasa has been a blessedness, not merely to him as the renouncer, but a blessedness to countless thousands who have come into contact with his teachings.

The cultural genius of Bharatavarsha, her wondrous heritage of Yoga and Vedanta and the ideals of Sanatana Dharma received a tremendous fillip and became infused with a new life through the life and teachings of Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. To those who could perceive it, it is an act according to the Divine Plan.

May the world respond to his Divine Life message! May the Master's radiant life and teachings inspire one and all! May this birthday anniversary mark the dawn of a new day in the life of modern man, wherein the spirit of selfless service and self-giving may replace that of greed and selfishness and bring happiness and joy into the lives of all humanity!

Hari Om Tat Sat!

SIVANANDA'S VISION OF DIVINE LIFE

Sri Swami Krishnananda

(Extempore talk given on the inaugural day of the 30th All-India Divine Life Conference, held at Shivanandanagar on the 28th of September, 1979)

This is the first session of the Divine Life Conference which inaugurates the proceedings to be conducted for three days, from now onwards. Many of you, or perhaps all of you, might have attended similar conferences at different times in many places in this country. And you must all be having some idea as to what a conference would be or has to be. It is the Divine Life Conference and naturally ideas of such conferences, get associated with living a religious life, pursuit of the way of the Spirit, the art of divine living and the like, which are our concepts of the aims and objectives of conferences of this type. And conferences come and conferences go and we go on in the same way as we were, due to peculiar difficulties which speak from within us in a language in which conferences are not addressed. The discourses are spoken in one language, but our problems are expressed from within us in a different language. Our

difficulties are not expressed in Sanskrit or Hindi or English, or any known human tongue. There is an agonising welling up of a controlling organisation from within us which is a language by itself, and each one of you may try to find a little time to think over this mysterious aspect of the life of each one of us. Our personal language is not anything that is known to the world. We do not speak in any known human tongue to our own selves, and our sorrows are not expressible in English, Sanskrit, Hindi or any language. Therefore, if any enterprise or project along the line of divine living is to be vitally connected with the redress of human sorrow, it has to be expressed in a language which is acceptable to the human sentiments. Thus it is that we find that we have not been able to strike a rapprochement between our own personal lives and the congregational life that we live in the world.

This conference, especially that which is held here this time, in my opinion, has a special significance of its own. It has a distinctiveness from ordinary Satsangas or the prayer-meetings, the worships that we

conduct in which we pour forth our feelings to God the Almighty as our Maker and the Maker of all things. If I am right, this conference has the specific purpose of evoking the dormant powers in responsible representatives of divine living who are gathered here in the cause of a noble and exalted purpose which includes the good of the individual as well as the good of society. We have a double purpose in holding these conferences – to do good, in the way in which it has to be done for the wellbeing of mankind, and to prepare ourselves for this arduous task. The spreading of the gospel of divine life is possible only from a source which lives a divine life and we all may be under the impression that we are divine-lifers. We belong to Divine Life Society Branches, we do Japa and prayer, we read scriptures and we believe that God exists. We also believe that God is a great power. The belief in God with which we associate ourselves somehow or the other, may make us feel that we are thoroughly religious people and spiritual stalwarts. But the world today requires a new weapon to launch forth the energy of divine living. Unless we are fully equipped with the power of counter-forces in this world, our efforts would not be of much avail. Your imagination that you are a

student of the Bhagavad-Gita or that you are a devotee of God may be worth its while, genuine no doubt, but your knowledge of the circumstances of the world may be very poor due to which the strength that you have in yourself may not be upto the mark.

If you read the Ramayana of Valmiki or Tulasidas or read the Mahabharata, or epics of this type, you will find that the counter-forces to divine aims were terrific and the epics like the Ramayana and the Mahabharata are great examples before us to demonstrate that these opposing forces were not of a mean nature. They were strong enough. The strength of counter-forces arises due to a conviction which goes deep into the soul of the person or the group of people concerned and the force becomes inseparable from the soul of the person. The strength of the enemy or the strength of anything that is invincible, lies in the union of the conviction of that person or the organisation of persons remaining inseparable from their souls. The more your conviction becomes a part of your soul, the more is your strength to implement it and the strength does not lie in the practice of any religion in an official sense. Your energies, your powers, your capacities are not in the length of time which you have spent in the study of the Gita, or the rolling of

the beads. But your strength depends upon the extent to which your concept or notion of divinity has been driven into the bottom of your soul. Today the counter-force can be called materialism. It is not anything else but this. The strong opponent of the divine power is called the material power. That which goads you to hold Divine Life Conferences and sets your minds thinking along these lines of conferences of religion and spirituality, all these are stimulated by the presence of material powers. If they do not exist, these conferences would not be necessary.

Now, we, who are all seated here, may be under the impression that we are religious people or spiritual seekers, not materialists of course. But, I may have to tell you that, to come to a conclusion, whether we are materialists or not, is not an easy affair. Because, we have to know first of all, what materialism means, to come to a decision as to whether we are that or something else. There has been a perpetual harassment we have been experiencing in our lives, in spite of our religion and so-called spirituality. This harassment comes from material forces, I have mentioned to you already. Now these troubles in us, in our personal lives and in our society, should be identified somehow

or the other, with a kind of secret affiliation of ourselves with material powers. We are not wholly nonmaterial. Materialism does not mean the doctrine of Epicurus or Charvakas. We may not be paying any tribute to Charvaka or the materialist philosophers of ancient Greece etc., but we may be materialists in a different sense, and which is a more important sense. Materialism is a belief that life is impossible without depending on something outside us. Now, if we have such a belief, we are certainly materialists. Who amongst us can have the guts to feel from the bottom of oneself that one can live independently, totally, without hanging on external powers which are certainly material? You cannot hang on material powers as your support, unless you believe in the reality of those forces; and one who believes it is a materialist. And we can judge for ourselves whether we are all materialists or something else.

Now this peculiar, subtle entry of an unbecoming circumstance into our personal lives, has been the woe and the sorrow of every one of us. Unless you are able to diagnose the inner structure of your own psychological life in a very honest and sincere manner, believing that you are doing this analysis in the face of God,

in the Presence of the Almighty, in the court of the Universal Judge of the cosmos, not having a subtle diffidence caused by an unfortunate feeling simultaneously that God may not be seeing you,—I am sure that we have a subtle feeling of that type also in us—you cannot be happy. Who knows that we cannot hide certain aspects of our life from the Omniscience of the Divine Eye. We are not fully convinced about the Existence of God, and Divine Life Conferences merely of a social type will not cut ice before the problems of human nature, unless you dear friends seated here, though very small in number compared to the large population of the humanity, are able to gird up your loins in the cause of God and not have a subtle affiliation, as a fifth columnist, with material powers also and I have already told you what these material forces are.

Friends, I will tell you once again, it is not easy to love God and we should not have any kind of foolhardy notion that we are already that. If we had been that, we would not be shedding tears. The problem is that, we have not been able to convince ourselves as to the supremacy of God's existence. What to speak of our learning and our philosophies and our religions! The religion of God has not

been the way of our living. We have a social and political religion, to put it in a proper way, which we have been following in our outward life; but we have a secret materialistic living in our own hearts. Because, it is not true that we are always working through our souls. We work through the body and through the senses. We have a great affection for the friends of the senses and the body and though it is true that the soul can take care of us, if we entirely depend on it, we are not in a position to lay full trust in it. The trust in God or the trust in soul cannot arise so easily, because of the suspicion that our wishes may not be fulfilled by such a kind of total surrender to the Self or what you call God. We have immediate requirements, and these immediate requirements are of such a pressing nature that we have a suspicion whether that wish, that requirement, can be fulfilled by a remote so-called creator. This is the truth of things and you will see, if you touch your own hearts, that this is a fact and you cannot deny it. And, considering the whole situation in this light, I should appeal to you all, as followers of the great path, laid before you by Worshipful Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, that you are not going to be merely members or delegates of conferences, but you are

going to be representatives of divine power. Your very existence is a divine living and it is a Divine Life Society.

The Divine Life Society is not any kind of social organisation; it is not a show of buildings, gardens or motor-cars, equipments and flying planes. It is an ardent fervour that you feel within you and I have heard with my own ears Sri Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj telling us in a small Satsanga that every devotee of God is a Branch of the Divine Life Society. It is not in Orissa, it is not in Lucknow, it is not in New York. It is in the heart of every searcher or seeker of the truth of things. A person who really leads a truly religious life, is a Branch of the Divine Life Society, which does not mean Hinduism or any kind of religion in the commonly accepted character of denomination. It was the imperative emphasis of the Founder of the Divine Life Society that Divine Life is not Hinduism and in a sense it is not even religion, if you are associating religion with a cult, or a creed or a faith or anything that has to abrogate something other than itself. It is an all-embracing, absorbing, oceanic parent, which is ready to redeem anything that requires succour and which establishes an inward friendship with creation as a whole. The life of Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj himself was an

ostensible commentary on the gospel of Divine Life. Again I have to reiterate that you are not expected merely to look at your watch and just feel the time when you have to get up for your lunch and for another session of the delegates' meeting etc., as if it is a kind of business, as a kind of transaction or something that you have to do and then forget it. Not so is religion. Not so is Divine Life. Divine Life is not something that you have to do and then forget it. As a matter of fact, it is not something that you have to do at all. It is a thing that has to be yourself. And Divine living is living; underline the word living. It is not a mere external expression or demonstration of a social character so that you may receive encomiums or certificates from people. To be conscious, that you are in the presence of God perpetually, would be a true divine living. And you can know very well what would be your feelings and attitudes, if you are always to be awfully conscious of your proximity to the great Creator of the Universe. There is no need to expatiate on this theme. If you are to be in the presence of the Creator and then to think and feel and act, what would be the type of your thinking and feeling and acting? But, if you think and feel and act today, in your public life or private life, in a manner which would

be different from the way in which you would be conducting yourself in the presence of God, you cannot regard yourself as a religious person, or a spiritual seeker. And that would not be Divine Life. The very conviction of your being a true divine-lifer in the light in which I have tried to place it before you, would create a surge of satisfaction from inside. You would be an unbounded source of happiness even if you are absolutely alone in a corner of this earth and you would not be seeking a friend to speak to. You would not be requiring an audience to address yourself. You would be immensely feeling a flood of joy within you, on account of an indescribable immanence and proximity of something which is invisible and you will be feeling it.

I think I am trying to voice forth the feelings of Sri Gurudev. Again I try to hammer these ideas on your minds, that unless you are god-men and divine souls and not merely business people or people interested only in transaction, give-and-take, if your idea is rooted in mere human and social relationships, minus that integrating and inundating power of God, that would not be a proper respect that you pay to the great Founder of the Divine Life Society. To be true disciples of this great Miracle of this Modern Age, Revered Sri Swami

Sivanandaji Maharaj, would be to live as he lived and to think as he thought. Very few of us will be in a position to think as he thought. That large-heartedness which is uncanny and unveiled in a personality of his type, very few of us can have. We are born business people, which means to say, we always like to take things and go on calculating how much has come. This kind of economic and arithmetic striking of balance sheet from one side only and not from other side, considering only the income and coming in and not the duties that you owe to creation, would not be the characteristic of a true disciple of Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj.

We, a few blessed souls here, had the occasion to live with him physically for a considerable number of years. And we really feel like shedding tears, if we even think of him, not because he gave us bread and butter and jam to eat or gave us anything comfortable in the material sense of the term, but because he demonstrated before us a possibility of living in the presence of God by an example which he set before himself,—an art which human beings are not usually acquainted with. God is the greatest giver. He takes the least, perhaps He takes nothing. And, in my humble opinion, Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was a replica of

this oceanic flood of giving. Again let each one of you seated here think for yourself, within yourself, dive into yourself, go into your feelings, your souls and see to what extent you have been able to appreciate and live by this great gospel and the practical living of Sri Gurudev. If your soul turns a deaf ear to this inward spiritual gospel of the great founder, you would not be a true disciple or even a devotee of God. We have first of all to remember that we do not live by bread alone and the greed for money, the greed for physical comfort and the greed for social approbation has to be shed as an accretion, that has grown unfortunately upon our souls, as a cancer that has grown upon the body, and it has to be shed immediately and this is not easy, unless you train yourselves.

We have started recently a small campus called the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy only to bring into our own memories and mind, this divine message of Sri Gurudev. The intention is not to teach something technical, historical, academic or philosophical. The idea is very simple, very humble and very insignificant, if you would like to call it. And its insignificance lies in the fact that it does not seek any kind of propaganda in the eyes of the social public, but it seeks the recognition in the great eye of God, the Almighty. And if you can succeed in rousing up even

one individual to the status of God-consciousness, the Divine Life Society would have done a great service and the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy would have served its purpose. It is not quantity that we seek, it is quality. We may not be thousands in number, we may be very few, we may be two hundred; it does not matter. We do not require even two hundred. We require one, and if that one has the inner soul-force which has the strength to declare that it can stand on his own legs, and it can draw sustenance from the five elements, from the sun and the moon and the stars, Sri Gurudev would be immensely pleased. The world that is, the creation that is before us is itself our support, and God is our support. And God is never dead; He is never away from us. And if our connection with Him be spiritual, which means to say indivisible, then the help that comes from Him is perpetual. And so it comes without asking. If this gospel can be planted in our hearts, even in the heart of a single person here, God will be immensely satisfied, and the blessings of Sri Gurudev will be abundant. I have spoken all this with an intense feeling for the grand aim for which Sri Gurudev lived and the purpose for which I believe God has created this world itself. Hari Om Tat Sat.

(To be continued)

SWAMI KRISHNANANDA — AS I SEE HIM

Sri Swami Yagnavalkyananda

It was 16th May, 1952 when I had the privilege to have the Darshan of Revered Gurudev and Swami Krishnanandaji, in the Hall which is now a Book-Stall. He was talking on Upanishads. About 20 people were there. I sat down. In about a few minutes, his lecture was over. I saw Swamiji just like a boy and from a distance, you could count his ribs. He, straight, left for his room upstairs. In those days, he would hardly move out of his room, so even if you move about in Ashram, you would hardly see him.

On several visits, I had no chance to have his Darshan, because our visit was in connection with the Eye Camp. After about two years, I felt I should read something about Indian Philosophy. So one day, I went to Swamiji's room. The room was like a bookstall. He was sitting on the cot, bare bodied, books all around. I requested, "I want to study something about Indian Philosophy, what should I read?" He replied, 'Introduction to Indian Philosophy' by Chatterjee & Banerjee—published

by Calcutta University." Before I could speak anything, he joined hands and said "Om." This literally meant I should leave.

In 1959, Swami Chidanandaji then General Secretary was deputed to U.S.A. and Swami Krishnanandaji was appointed as General Secretary. Temperamentally, he is a person who does not like to mix with people and have random talks, but as General Secretary, he had to meet number of people, discuss various items and this activity exposed the latent quality of administration. He managed and led the Ashram into development in various directions. He has to keep himself very busy because Ashram has expanded and with expansion his work also expands. The characteristics of his character are very clean and clear in his talks and writings. That has helped greatly in the development of Ashram. I would cite one small incident. Once, about eight army officers and myself were sitting in Gurudev's Kutiya. In the meantime, Swamiji came for signature. He was

standing near the door. Gurudev said, “Krishnanandaji, tell these people what is Divine Life in ten minutes.” Without any preparation and hesitation, like a tape recorder his speech started. He completed in ten minutes and left. After he left, Gurudev told those officers, “He is the rebirth of Shankaracharya.”

During all these years of management, he never allowed his spiritual activities to be slowed down. Books after books have been coming from his pen. We could see that over

and above, he being a spiritual wizard, he has become a practical man — quite polished. His language appears to be tough to understand for an ordinary man. When he starts his lecture, a flow of Ganga comes out from him continuously. I think he is second to none except Dr. Radhakrishnan, whom I have heard in Mumbai.

The essential qualities of an ideal Sannyasi are Punctuality, Discipline and Self-Control—all these qualities are visible in every cell of his body.

A Jivanmukta is not a whimsical man. He is not bound by the rules of Sastra or society. And yet, he will not deviate from Dharma. All that he does will be in strict accordance with the scriptures or sacred books. He spontaneously does only what is good. An expert dancer never makes a false step. So is a Jivanmukta when he works.

The sage works without effort, without agency, without egoism, attachment and desire. Like a child, his conduct is neither good nor evil.

The Jivanmukta acts only like a child. The sense of right and wrong will be natural in him independently of scriptural teachings. He has destroyed all egoism. He is above Karma, and Karmas cannot touch him. He may, for the instruction of the world, perform works or refrain from forbidden acts.

The Jivanmukta does not care for public criticism. He keeps a cool mind even when he is assaulted. He blesses those who persecute him. He beholds only his own Self everywhere.

His mark or characteristic is an internal mental state. It cannot be perceived or detected by others. The Lord uses him for His divine work.

Swami Sivananda

MERE WORDS OR MYSTIC FORMULAE?

Sri Swami Venkatesananda

What a wealth of spiritual wisdom our Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj poured into our hearts on the night of 26th December 1954! It was not the celebration of one man's birthday; time will reveal that it was the glorious birthday of thousands of aspirants who would have the rare good fortune of reading the sage's stirring speech that night. For, animals would also be 'born' as men, men as supermen and supermen as gods, if only they devoutly study every word uttered by the sage and act up to it. That way the day was blessed indeed!

Never has the sage wasted a word. His are not mere words, but mystic formulae that penetrate the deepest recesses of man's heart and there work wonders!

"Don't give her the Sari she asks for; she will not look at you from today. Such is the love you pine for?" — these were the first words of soul-elevating Upadesh I received from H. H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj; though they were addressed to a friend along with whom I had gone to the Delhi Railway Station in 1944 to meet His Holiness who was then proceeding to Bombay to record some of his songs on the gramophone, I felt they were shafts

directed straight at my heart.

For, in that heart dwelt inordinate desire for worldly enjoyments; it was severely injured by these flaming words from the sage's lips. If Satan himself had created a human being out of his own image, the result could not have been better than I. The triple gates to hell (lust, anger and greed) were all of them ajar to receive me; but from the fourth side Sri Swami Sivananda's divine hand was pulling me up and away, restraining me from entering the hell. Where even Chaitanya Mahaprabhu could have been defeated, my Gurudev has succeeded! I am a breathing miracle of Sivananda.

Then, in the same year, I attended the Christmas Sadhana Week, at the Ashram. I don't remember much about what took place during those seven days of my stay here. On the last day when I was about to return to Delhi, I expressed my admiration of the Ashram atmosphere. Like a thunderbolt came Gurudev's words: "Stay here then! I have built it only for you all." The longing for sense-pleasures was so great in me that even these words (and the mighty sage's Satsankalpa) could not immediately affect me. But Gurudev had succeeded

Taken from 'Life of Swami Venkatesananda'

BIRTH CENTENARY YEAR OF SRI SWAMI VENKATESANANDAJI MAHARAJ

in raising a counterforce.

How I joined the Ashram scarcely eight months later is a miracle! No one who had been acquainted with me in Delhi, Calcutta or Madras and my sensuous nature, could have helped expressing abhorrence at the very idea that I could be allowed to enter the Holy City of Rishikesh, much less the highly spiritual atmosphere of an Ashram. Yet, Gurudev needed only such souls for reclamation.

During the first weeks of my stay at the Ashram, I earned undeserved praise for my love of seclusion: but little did these great ones realise that I was literally ashamed to look at the pure, holy and saintly faces that encountered me everywhere in this holiest place on earth, and preferred to chew my cud in privacy. But Gurudev would not allow this, either!

"What will you gain if you go on typing like this all day and night? It is not for that you have come here. You must do Japa, meditation and Svadhyaya; you must get up at 4 a.m. and conduct Sadhana classes. Then you will evolve nicely!" He threw me into a cauldron of trial and temptations – there to be boiled into a pulp to enable him to mould me as he liked. So there I was literally caught up in hot waters where I least expected them, and throwing up my hands in abject despair, I prayed to Gurudev to protect me with the robes of a monk!

His reactions were different: "When I hear that Parthasarathy was nicely beaten with shoes and he laughed, then alone will I give you Sannyas." By God's Supreme Mercy, soon opportunities presented themselves where I could attempt to cultivate this virtue. It was not easy. Because the sinful heart was sensitive, too. And my uncontrollable temper would rise even against well merited reprimand.

Gurudev's compassionate heart would not wait until his condition was fulfilled before granting the boon. On the 12th September 1947, in commemoration of his Birthday Diamond Jubilee, he out of his supreme compassion, brushing aside all objections, initiated me along with eleven other resplendent highly evolved souls, into the Holy Order of Sannyas.

Worldliness might be hidden in the holy garb, but it is certainly not washed out of the inner personality except by the Waters of Divine Knowledge. The garb Sri Gurudev bestowed upon me certainly protected me from further deterioration; but the inner unregenerate nature persisted, though to a lesser extent. Moreover, there is this additional hurdle that a neophyte has to face in an atmosphere of holiness: he is apt to recline and relax, in the complacency of having renounced Maya. One fine morning came Gurudev's stern warning: "Do

not think that just because you have come to Rishikesh, you have gone above Maya. The realm of Maya does not end with the other bank of the Chandra-Bhaga. Even on the summit of Mount Kailash, you will find the same Maya, the same currents of Raga-Dvesha operating. Beware!" Well, that alerted me to a certain extent. But Gurudev was quick in pointing out the positive way: "Here I have created for you the best field for quick evolution. Do Japa on the Ganges bank. Go to the Mandir and attend the Pujas. Go to the Bhajan hall and do Kirtan. Work, work and work! Serve the sick. Study the books in the Library. Do not join with the tall-talkers and gossip mongers. If you are to evolve, you will have to guard yourself against all these. If you do not, then even here you will continue to be the same man."

One day three people were sitting on a verandah in the Ashram and talking. It was past midday. Gurudev was coming towards the office for distributing his sacred Prasad: in those days he himself used to take a round of the Ashram at noon distributing fruits, curd, butter etc. to the inmates. The embarrassed disciples hurriedly stood up. With a mischievous smile in his eyes, Gurudev remarked: "When three people sit together. . ." and looked at all. They blinked. He himself completed the sentence, "they talk ill of the fourth man." Then after giving the Prasad, he

said: "Avoid this; and then you will have more time for work and Sadhana."

Even when the holiness of the atmosphere, the kindness of the other highly evolved Sadhaks of the Ashram and Gurudev's watchful mercy, again and again prevented my inner worldliness from manifesting itself in its own crude form, I found that it had its own modifications and appeared in mysterious ways! There arose, for instance, inordinate ambition – for this or for that, it does not matter. Bubbling enthusiasm often resulted in uncalled-for interference in the affairs of others. This in turn resulted in disharmony and restlessness. Gurudev must have been silently watching for an opportunity to correct his child. How patient and loving he is! When an opportunity did present itself, Gurudev remarked in a very mild and loving manner: "Don't interfere in the affairs of others. This tendency to interfere is innate in man. If you are intent on your own progress, you should not interfere in the affairs of others." And thereby he wrought another miracle.

By all this, I do not claim that the sores of viciousness have been completely healed. Gurudev's compassion and His Divine Words which have been to me more than Mystic Formulae have definitely been able to achieve great wonders and much transformation. Often have I wondered if this Almighty in human

form could not have said: "Be thou healed of worldliness and arise victorious as a divine being!" and thus divinised me entirely. He could have, however base I was. In fact, he did say once: "I will give you whatever you want." He said it while handing me sweet Prasad; but the Divine Light in his eyes had a different message. It was as though at that moment had I brought myself to ask for Moksha, he would have bestowed it upon me then and there. But I didn't; and that too I consider was his miracle. If many great vicious traits still persist in me, I consider that even that is his will. For it is the presence of these in me that enable me to appreciate truly the spiritual greatness of the other disciples of Sri Gurudev and to look

upon them all as divine personages – walking divinities upon earth; and to continue to serve Gurudev as an insignificant speck of dust ever aspiring for a corner of Gurudev's shoes. Even if birth after birth, I live to serve as Gurudev's slave, I cannot repay the debt I owe to Gurudev for this supreme gift of his Flaming Words of Divine Light. I can never express the indebtedness when I remember what Gurudev said on a significant occasion, when all but his Almighty Will would have thrown me down the steep precipice of a great downfall: "For the past twenty-four hours at least, I have been constantly thinking of your welfare." What an ocean of compassion He is! To the Light of His Words, I bow in all humility and reverence!

Bhakti is easier than any other way of approach to God. In Jnana and Yoga, there is the risk of a fall. In the path of devotion, there is no risk as the devotee receives full support and help from God.

Those who tread the path of Jnana and Yoga are liable to become proud of their powers and wisdom. Bhaktas are humble. Humility is the foundation of Bhakti Yoga.

Jnana Yoga is the Yoga of wisdom. It is the path of analysis and rejection. It is the path of endless negation. This is a very difficult path.

Raja Yoga also is difficult. It is like stilling the waves of the ocean. You will have to still all the thought-waves. Karma Yoga also is difficult. It is like climbing to the highest peak. You need tremendous will-power. Bhakti Yoga alone is easy. The Lord is stretching His hands to lift you up from the mire of Samsara. You will have to grasp His hand firmly. But, one thing is absolutely essential here. You should not have any other thought than that of God and God alone.

Swami Sivananda

THE SELF OF SIVA

Sri Swami Sivananda-Krishnananda

R e v e r e d S w a m i Venkatesanandaji is the self of my Gurudev! The whole world is indebted to you, for the blessed ones like your noble self sanctify our earth from time to time: *Tirthikurvanti tirthani* (They impart sanctity to places of pilgrimage). All talk about such a noble soul like you in terms of praise as a Yogi or a great person will be a poor estimate of the sublime and supreme achievements that you have made, because one who has become identical with the divinity becomes immanent as well as transcendent.

Verily, you have become identical with Sri Swami Sivananda Sarasvati. It will be sheer injustice to say that you are a very great Sannyasi, serving the Guru at his feet and sharing in his glorious mission. The fact is that you have no longer maintained or reserved your individual identity as a Sevak or a Sannyasi or as a self-controlled Yogi. Every aspect of your life, every thought of your mind and every work that proceeds from your hands is that of Sri Swamiji Maharaj. It is not Swami Venkatesananda as a separate entity in the capacity of a disciple or a servant that is working out the divine plan of

Sri Swamiji Maharaj. It is not Swami Venkatesananda of a human stature who has been accomplishing the task of a radiator or a gramophone record of Sri Swamiji Maharaj. Again, it is not Swami Venkatesananda who can be given the honour of being the voice of Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. Is it right if we say that what Lord Ganesha was to the great Vyasa in recording his immortal work, or what blessed Ananda was to keep the torch of Buddha's illumination eternally kindled – that Swami Venkatesananda is to the great mission of the philosopher-saint Swami Sivananda Sarasvati? To judge and analyse the relative phenomenon of Swami Venkatesananda's life and work in terms of a servant and an ardent disciple and an efficient instrument will be to underestimate his true position and value.

Then what exactly is the personality of Swami Venkatesananda? He has become identical with Swamiji Maharaj. He is beyond the limiting functions of time, space and causation. His mission or his achievements are his clock, calendar, etc. Every moment of his life is lived in tune with Sri Swamiji's

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BIRTH CENTENARY YEAR OF SRI SWAMI VENKATESANANDAJI MAHARAJ

mission, and there arises no need to say that he has all his senses under control, because he has no senses of his own. Just as we have in the Upanishad the illustration of salt dissolved in water; and the father asks: "Which part of the water, say my son, is not saltish?" and the son replies: "Father, every part of the water is saltish and not a drop of it is unsaltish." Yes, every part, may it be physical or spiritual, is Sri Swamiji's immanence. Those blessed ones who feel by virtue of the knowledge of the Supreme, "we shall become the Supreme!" rightly and justly value and examine the life of Swami Venkatesananda. It is not because Swami Venkatesananda eats what we eat or wears what is worn by every common man – not for that Swami Venkatesananda is loved by all. It is for the mere fact that his entire personality has become identical and is in a state of merger with our revered Gurudev, the Divinity incarnate, that we see in him no other than our Gurudev.

Wherever the ailing body of Siva moved, there moved Swami Venkatesananda; wherever the healthy Gurudev went, he went with him too. How can a body remain in parts at two different places? The symphony of Swamiji's divine music plays in Venkatesanandaji's fingers and he sounds the rhythm of

Gurudev's holy sermon. He is not merely the Voice of Sivananda, for this will be to charge him with imitation; he is Siva himself. It is in this spirit that we, the members of Siva's home of fraternity, introspect on the life and work of Swami Venkatesananda and on his philosophy. The Blessed One said at his last moment to Ananda: "Beloved Ananda, I have told you what I should: you are the light, life and the path. Blessed Ananda, you have to cover this long distance by yourself."

Swami Venkatesananda embodies in himself this independent spirit of evolution. The long and weary journey of existence on this earth, he feels, he has to cover independently, but nevertheless, he is ever conscious of the pains, sorrow and turmoils of the existence. He has transcended the plane of discursive consciousness where we mortals are, and has become one with the all-blissful Saint Siva. Then the philosophy of Siva has become his philosophy, the religion of Siva is his religion and the mission of Siva is his mission. He is the material as well as the efficient cause for effecting the spiritual awakening in the hearth and home of mankind. He has no philosophy independent of that of Siva; he has no existence independent of Siva, who is his own self.

But in this relative plane, the parts of the Cosmic Being play in a mysterious manner. In the drama of

life, He plays the part of a king and a servant, great and small, the saint and the sinner, of Guru and disciple. Even as it is said: "My dear son, He is Prana when He breathes; He is ear when He hears; He is mind when He thinks, and so on." These are but names due to His functions; but people do not realise that the description is ever incomplete. The Self of Siva has penetrated into the entire body of Venkatesananda, up to his nails' ends.

It is our rare privilege to have participated in these sacred celebrations, not merely to eulogise a personality, but to meditate upon true spirituality, divinity, personified in the form of Swami Venkatesananda, the self of Sri Gurudev.

It is our prayer to Swami Venkatesanandaji to grace us with his choicest and profound blessings, so that we too may become one with our Gurudev in form, knowledge and spirit.

You cannot know Brahman or the Absolute through the finite instrument, intellect. The intellect draws its power and light from its source, Brahman, the Supreme Soul. Intellect can only know the nature and attributes, colour, form, etc., of sense-objects. But, it cannot know the knower. Intellectual understanding of the nature of Brahman, mere study of Upanishads or theoretical knowledge of Brahman, cannot give you Self-realisation or Freedom. The intellect and senses must cease functioning. The ego must merge in the ocean of bliss. The individual soul must fuse in the Supreme Soul. Then alone the aspirant attains Salvation.

Brahman or the Absolute cannot be reached just as one reaches a village. The village is outside oneself; but Brahman is omnipresent. He is everywhere. He is your own innermost Self or Atman. The mind melts in Brahman. The individual soul becomes one with the Supreme Soul or the Absolute, just as the drop becomes one with the ocean.

Swami Sivananda

LORD'S NAME IS A SOURCE OF STRENGTH AND A PASSPORT TO VAIKUNTHA

Sri Swami Gurusharanananda

10th September, 1955

Today the Sivananda Dramatic Association enacted a drama on 'Ishwara Bhakti', and at the conclusion of the drama, Swamiji ascended the platform, thanked the audience and the dramatists, did Kirtans, and distributed to all the actors who took part in the dramas certificates conferring on them various titles. Referring to the efficacy of imparting spiritual truths through the medium of dramas, Swamiji said, "There is a peculiar and tremendous influence when spiritual truths are given in the form of dramas; people are ready to receive the truths and get themselves transformed into divinity. Our ancient Rishis gave spiritual truths in the form of stories and dramas so that people would easily receive them".

Praising the repetition of the Lord's Names, Swamiji said, "You all have now repeated the Lord's Name. If one repeats the Lord's Name, at once he will enter Vaikuntha. We all will surely enter Vaikuntha. We shall have to remain here for some time more, because some work has to be done by

us. Karma-Yoga removes Mal or impurities, Upasana destroys Vikshepa or oscillation of the mind, and meditation on the Mahavakyas removes Avarana or the veil. The fruits of Karma-Yoga, Bhakti-Yoga, Raja-Yoga and Jnana-Yoga are all attained by merely repeating the Lord's Names. Repetition of the Names of the Lord will transform you into divine beings".

Referring to the dramatic actors, Swamiji said, "These people have been living practically without food for the last three days. They have forgotten everything and are working day and night for the dramas. Yet they are not weak. Their voice is loud and powerful. That is due to their repeating the Names, 'Narayan, Narayan'".

11th SEPTEMBER, 1955

**DRAMATIC ORGANISATIONS
SHOULD POPULARISE NAMA-
SANKIRTAN**

While Swamiji was in the office, Dr. Ramjas, who organised the dramas which were enacted in the Ashram on the 8th, 9th and 10th September, came to the office, accompanied by his party of dramatists, to take leave of Swamiji.

Then Swamiji said to him, and Swamiji's above mentioned suggestion to Dr. Ramjas reveal Buffoons should also do Kirtans immediately after their humour is over". Dr. Ramjas agreed to follow Swamiji's instructions. It may be mentioned here that during the previous night's drama, Swamiji did Nama-Kirtan at the end of each of the first few scenes, and all the assembled people joined Swamiji in his Kirtans. This fact, Swamiji's wish that dramatic organizations should popularise Nama-Sankirtan among the masses, (1) by conducting Nama-Sankirtan en-masse during the intervals between every two scenes and (2) by making the actors themselves do more of Nama-Kirtans, either as forming a part of, or over and above their actual part in the drama.

The Name of God, chanted correctly or incorrectly, knowingly or unknowingly, carefully or carelessly, is sure to give the desired result. Just as burning quality is natural to and inherent in fire, so also, the power of destroying sins with their very root and branch, and bringing the aspirant into blissful union with the Lord through Bhava-samadhi, is natural to and inherent in the Name of God.

The glory of the Name of God cannot be established through reasoning and intellect. It can be experienced or realised only through devotion, faith, and constant repetition of the Name.

Pingala was a Ganika or prostitute. She obtained a parrot, as a lovely present from a thief. The parrot was trained to utter the Name 'Sri Rama, Sri Rama'. Pingala knew nothing of Rama-Nama. She heard the sound Rama, Rama through the mouth of the parrot. It was very melodious and charming. Pingala was very much attracted. She fixed her mind on the Rama-Nama uttered by the parrot, and mysteriously entered into Bhava-samadhi, union with Rama.

Ajamila was a righteous Brahmin in the beginning. He fell in love with a low-caste girl and committed many atrocious crimes. It was at the time of death that he uttered the name of his son Narayana, and there came the messengers of Lord Narayana Himself to his rescue, and Ajamila was released from this world for ever.

The greatest of sinners can attain God-realisation through the blessings of the Name. Nothing is impossible to be achieved through God's Name. The Lord's Name is all-powerful.

Swami Sivananda

LET GO YET BE FULLY ENGAGED

Sri Swami Atmaswarupananda

Pujya Swami Chidanandaji used to frequently use the expression, “the art and science of the spiritual life.” By that he wanted us to understand that the spiritual life may be fundamentally simple, but it is not simplistic. It is, in fact, the greatest challenge we can face. It takes everything we have got, all our faculties. The Gita says that yoga is skill in action. It requires, as Gurudev said, Head, Heart and Hand.

Why is this? It is because it demands of us a skill that we normally don't have. And that is, that we are meant to let go, and, at the same time, we are meant to be fully engaged. If we let go, if we surrender to God, it is difficult for us to take full responsibility for what we are doing. Somehow, we think that we are meant to leave at least part of it for God. On the other hand, if we are fully engaged, we are concerned about results. It is almost impossible for us to totally let go. We are not able to combine the two successfully.

Lord Krishna teaches that we must do our duty, yet not be concerned with the results. In the West, generally speaking, seekers are able to very successfully engage in life, but it is very difficult for them to know how to surrender and let go. In the East, generally speaking, seekers are artists at letting go, but not always are they skilled at being fully engaged. The purpose of all our spiritual experiences and activities is to teach us the art and science of letting go and yet being fully engaged.

We become fully engaged by taking full responsibility for our life. We don't blame anyone else, neither God nor others, for our fate. On the other hand, we let go by constantly surrendering everything to God, saying everything is happening by His will. How is it possible to reconcile these two? From a human point of view, it seems to be impossible, and almost no one can accomplish it. But then, if we work at it hard enough, we gradually begin to understand that the reconciliation comes about when we come to grips with the fundamental truths of Vedanta.

Vedanta says that Brahman alone is without a second, which means, in the words of the mahavakya, the great sentence, that we are all That. In other words, the letting go is letting go of any sense of separation or ego, any sense of a separate 'I' that is doing. Being fully engaged involves the recognition that we are nothing except that One alone, which is ever active in all fields of Its creation. To be an integrated part of God's creation, we have to be as active as He is in all the rest of His creation.

It is thus through surrender and trust that we resolve our dilemma of letting go and yet being fully engaged. We live a day at a time doing what is there to be done. We are fully engaged, yet letting go of personal doership, knowing ourselves to be an integral part of the Whole.

CHILDREN'S WORLD

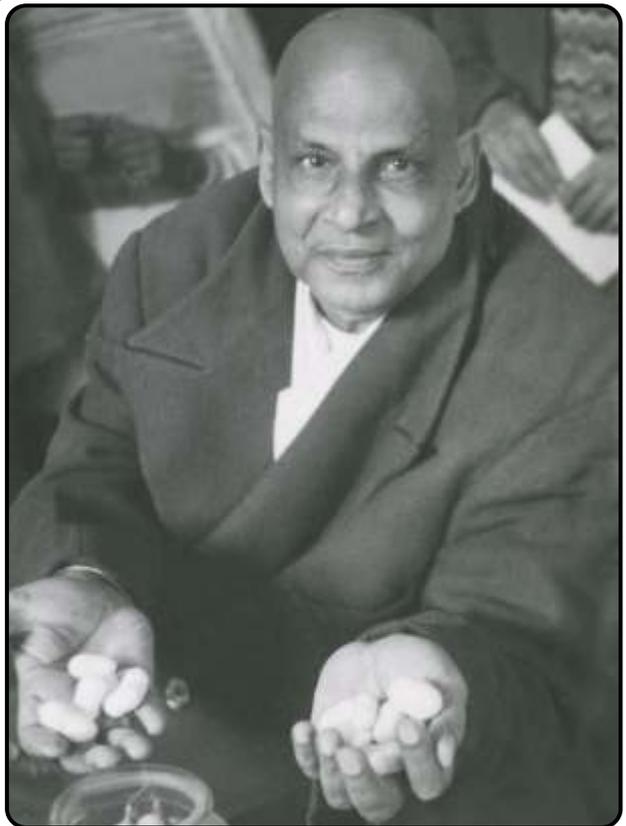
STUDENTS' SUCCESS IN LIFE WILL CULTURE

Glorious Immortal Atman,

He who is attempting to develop the will should always try and keep a cool head. He should have a balanced mind under all conditions. He will have to train and discipline the mind. The man who has a balanced mind and a strong will gets sanguine success in all his undertakings.

Unruffled state of the mind, poise, cheerfulness, inner strength, capacity to turn out difficult works, success in all undertakings, power to influence people, a magnetic and dynamic personality, fearlessness, etc., are some of the signs and symptoms that indicate that one's will is growing.

Swami Sivananda



CULTIVATION OF VIRTUES

FIRMNESS

Firmness is steadiness, resoluteness, determination, constancy.

Firmness enables a man to overcome obstacles and difficulties very easily. A man of firmness is not easily moved or disturbed. He is unshaken by anything. He is courageous.

A man of firmness always attains success in all undertakings.

You must have firmness both in suffering and exertion. Then alone will you attain greatness and victory.

Firmness is indeed a noble quality, but it must be guided by knowledge. Otherwise, it becomes rashness or obstinacy.

Swami Sivananda

ERADICATION OF VICES

EVIL COMPANY

The effects of evil company are highly disastrous. The mind is filled with bad ideas by contact with evil companions. The little faith in God and scriptures also vanishes. A man is known by the company he keeps. Birds of the same feather flock together. These are all proverbs or wise maxims. They are quite true.

The company of those who speak lies, who commit adultery, theft, cheating, double dealing, who indulge in idle-talks, backbiting, tale-bearing, who have no faith in God and in the scriptures etc., should be strictly avoided.

Swami Sivananda



MAYURASANA

(Peacock posture)

Technique: Kneel on the floor with the knees slightly apart and the toes resting on the ground. Bend the body forward, join the arms together and rest the palms on the floor, with the two little fingers touching each other, and all the fingers pointing to the feet. Keep the arms firm, bent at the elbows. Let the forearms be kept close together.

Slowly bend forward and rest the abdomen on the elbows, and the chest on the upper part of the arms. Stretch the legs back one by one, and keep them together, stiff. Exhale and stretch your body, raising and keeping the legs straight. Secure balance and further stretch out the body parallel to the ground, and remain in the pose as long as you can comfortably. Retain the posture for a few seconds to start with. Gradually, increase the duration to two or three minutes with normal breathing. To release the pose, first lower the head and then the legs. Then, place the knees by the side of the hands and thereafter release the position of the hands. Lie flat on the floor and relax in Shavasana.



You would notice that your balance and the duration of stay in the Asana, increase as your wrists gradually gain strength.

Note: Beginners may find it difficult to maintain the balance when they raise the feet off the ground. Sometimes, they may have a fall forwards and may cause hurt to their nose. To avoid this, a cushion may be kept in front. When there is any difficulty to keep



the balance, try to slip on the sides. In the final position, the head, trunk, legs and feet will be in one straight line, parallel to the ground.

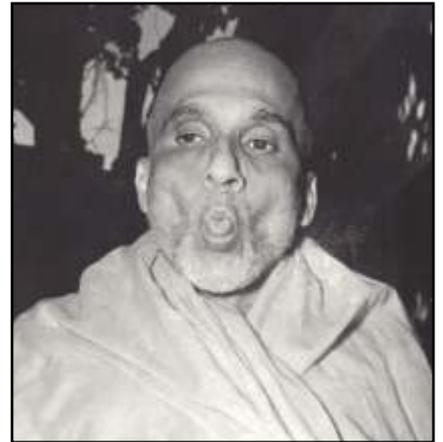
Benefits: Besides strengthening the forearms, elbows and wrists, this Asana removes various abdominal diseases. It increases digestive power and tones up the stomach, kidneys and spleen. It is specially beneficial to those suffering from diabetes. Proper circulation of fresh blood is effected into the internal organs of the abdominal region.

Swami Chidananda

SITALI

(Cooling Pranayama)

Technique: Sit in any one of the postures. Open the mouth and form the lips into 'O' shape. Protrude the tongue like a tube. Draw in the air through the tongue tube. Fill the lungs with fresh and cool air as much as possible. After inhalation, withdraw the tongue and close the mouth. Lower your head and touch the collar bone with the chin during retention of breath. Exhale slowly through both the nostrils after bringing your head erect. Practise this daily ten to fifteen times.



Benefits: This Pranayama cools the system, soothes the eyes and ears and purifies the blood. It quenches thirst and appeases hunger. It cures chronic dyspepsia (indigestion), inflammation of the spleen, various chronic skin diseases, low fever, biliousness and phlegm disorders.

Swami Chidananda



Celebration of 58th Punyatithi Aradhana Day of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj at the Headquarters Ashram



वीतान्तसंसारगदार्दितानां वेदान्तबोधौषधदानदीक्षम् ।
वन्दारुमन्दारममन्दकीर्तिं वन्दे शिवानन्दमहामुनीन्द्रम् ॥

Salutations and prostrations to the great saint Sivananda who is ever engaged in giving medicine of Vedantic knowledge to those afflicted by the dire disease of Samsara, who is divine wish-fulfilling tree for his devotees and whose glorious fame radiates all around the world.



The sacred day of Fifty Eighth Punyatithi Aradhana of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was observed with great sanctity and devoutness on 2nd August 2021 at the Headquarters Ashram. The programme commenced at 5 a.m. with Brahmamuhurta prayers and





meditation followed by the brief message of H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj.

In the forenoon session, ceremonial worship with Laksharchana to the chant of 'Om Namō Bhagavate Sivanandaya' was offered to the sacred Padukas of Worshipful Gurudev in the holy Samadhi Shrine. Sannyasis, Brahmacharis and Sadhaks of the Ashram performed Puja and Archana with deep devotion, prayerfulness and profound faith in the divine presence of the Holy Master. The celebration concluded with Arati and distribution of Prasad. Two books of Sri Gurudev were also released on this auspicious occasion during the night Satsang.



May the blessings of Lord Almighty 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)

One day this month, Sivananda Home was informed about a Sadhu Baba who was lying in the neighbourhood, not able to get up. Once he was admitted, it was discovered that he had a fresh head injury at the backside of his scalp. It was covered with a temporary filthy bandage and was still bleeding. After cleaning and dressing, he had his meal, and was put to rest in the segregated area for new patients. During the course of the day though, his speech became slurred, his movements uncontrolled and his consciousness slipped down. In the evening time he was taken to a local clinic for emergency check-up, and investigations as per advice of the consulting Doctor were done. Being under observation, supervised medicine intake, continuation of cleaning and dressing of the wound, his condition improved rapidly. After a week, his normal speech came back and he mentioned how he had a fall, whereafter he did not remember much and had lost his orientation. Every year he used to visit the Holy places of Badrinath and Kedarnath, from Rishikesh, by foot; hailing from a small village in Uttar Pradesh, where he had left his hearth and home, to take up the life of a wandering Sannyasin. By the grace of Gurudev, he could be discharged after full recovery, as per his wish, to continue his journey of life.

Amputation of two fingers was done this month for the young patient with her infectious and gangrenous fingers and she recovered gradually as well. Post-operative check-up as per instruction of the surgeon was done and recovery went on smoothly and steadily.

One of the female patients of the Leprosy Colony was referred to a Hospital in Rishikesh for investigation of a lump in her breast. A period of pain, anxiety and tension about the outcome and reports of the many investigations followed, praying to God for calm, enduring and recuperation, during this difficult time in her life.

Om Sri Satgurudevaya Namah.

“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

Badhiausta: The Branch celebrated Guru Purnima on 24th July with Paduka Puja, Bhajan, Kirtan and discourse on Guru Sishya relation. This was concluded with distribution of booklets, medicines and clothes for needy people.

Bargarh (Odisha): The Branch conducted daily Puja, Rudrabhishek on Mondays and Guru Paduka Puja on Thursdays. Guru Purnima was celebrated on 24th July with Paduka Puja and Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Japa.

Chandapur (Odisha): Daily Puja, weekly Satsang on Saturdays, Guru Paduka Puja on Thursdays and mobile Satsang on 8th and 24th of every month were the regular programmes of the Branch. Sundarakanda Parayan was done on 16th July. Special Satsangs were arranged on 5th, 22nd and 28th at the residence of devotees.

Chhatrapur (Odisha): The Branch had weekly Satsang on

Thursdays. Monthly Jayanti ceremonies were held on 8th and 24th with Paduka Puja, Archana, Bhajan and Kirtan.

Khurdha Road (Odisha): The Branch continued daily Puja and online Satsang with Gita Path, chanting of Hanuman Chalisa, Bhajan and Kirtan. Guru Purnima was celebrated on 24th July with Paduka Puja, Bhajan and Kirtan.

Lucknow (U.P.): During the Covid pandemic, the Branch conducted online Satsang on 11th July. Guru Purnima was celebrated on 24th with Paduka Puja, Bhajan, Mantra Japa and Swadhyaya etc. Besides this, Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Japa was done for speedy recovery of Covid patients.

Mysore (Karnataka): Guru Purnima on 24th July and Punyatithi Aradhana day of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 2nd August were celebrated by the Branch with Paduka Puja, Abhishekam,

Bhajans and talk on Importance of Guru in one's life.

Rourkela (Odisha): Weekly Satsang on Thursdays and Sundays was continued with Paduka Puja, Bhajan, Kirtan, Archana and recitation of Vishnu Sahasranam. Guru Purnima was celebrated by the Branch on 24th July.

Visakha Rural Branch (A.P.): The Branch had daily Puja and Abhishekam. Birth Anniversary of H.H. Sri Swami Devanandaji Maharaj on 21st June and the auspicious day of Guru Purnima on 24th July were celebrated with Paduka Puja, Japa, Dhyana and discourses. It was concluded with Narayan Seva.

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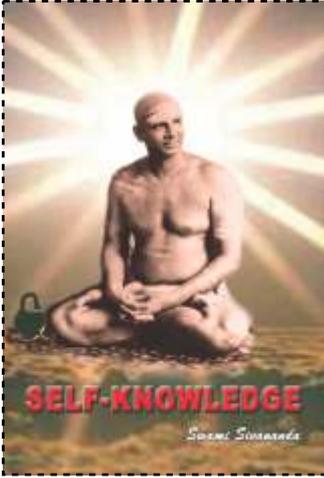
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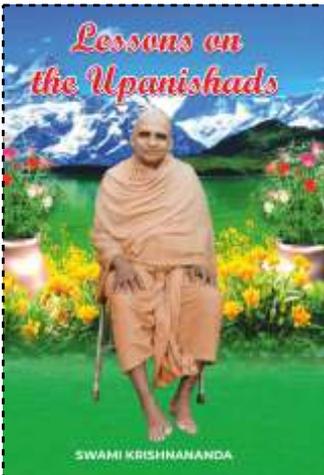
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TWENTY IMPORTANT SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTIONS

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.

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Be tolerant. Behold the unity of all
faiths, cults, creeds and religions.

Respect the views, opinions and
sentiments of all.

Swami Sivananda

To