

₹100/- ANNUAL



The DIVINE LIFE



Every death is a reminder. Every bell that rings, says, "the end is near." Every day robs off from you one part of your precious life. Therefore, you should be very earnest in plunging yourself in constant Sadhana.

Swami Sivaramananda

DECEMBER 2022

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**

EVILS OF LUST AND ANGER

Anger and lust are the two inner enemies that stand in the way of developing Bhakti. From lust follow the ten vices that are mentioned in Manusamhita: Love of hunting, gambling, sleeping by day, slandering, company with bad women, drinking, singing love-songs, dancing, delighting in vulgar music, and aimlessly wandering.

Anger begets eight kinds of vices. All evil qualities proceed from anger. If you can eradicate anger, all bad qualities will die of themselves. The eight vices are: Injustice, rashness, persecution, jealousy, taking possession of other's property, harsh words and cruelty.

Swami Sivananda



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MUNDAKOPANISHAD

CHAPTER I—SECTION I

यत्तदद्रेश्यमग्राह्यमगोत्रमवर्णमचक्षुःश्रोत्रं तदपाणिपादम् ।

नित्यं विभुं सर्वगतं सुसूक्ष्मं तदव्ययं यद्भूतयोनिं परिपश्यन्ति धीराः ॥६॥

That which cannot be seen nor seized, which has no origin, which has no properties, which has neither ear nor eye, which has neither hands nor feet, which is eternal, diversely manifested, all-pervading, extremely subtle and imperishable, the wise regard as the source of all beings (Bhutas), all creation.

शिवानन्दस्तोत्रपुष्पांजलिः
SIVANANDA-STOTRAPUSHHPANJALI
PART-II

Sri Swami Jnanananda Saraswati, Sivanandanagar

अन्यादृशप्रतिभमप्रतिमप्रभाव-

मन्यायकर्मविमुखं विततानुकम्पम् ।

धन्याशयं शिवगुरुं सुकृतैकमूर्तिं

सन्यासिवर्यमनिशं शरणं प्रपद्ये ॥११॥

I take refuge at the lotus feet of the great saint Swami Sivananda, who is large-hearted and endowed with remarkable intellectual power rarely to be found in others, who glows with divine splendour, who never does unworthy deeds, who has boundless compassion, and who is an embodiment of virtues.

अतनुवैरिनिरन्तरचिन्तना-

दतनुतेजसमद्भुतवैभवम् ।

कृतनुतिप्रकरं सुजनव्रजै-

शिवयतीश्वरमेव समाश्रये ॥१२॥

I take shelter at the sacred feet of the great sage Swami Sivananda, who is shining with great splendour as the result of incessant meditation on Lord Siva, whose glory is indescribable, and who is devoutly adored by good people.

(To be continued)

STRAINS OF AN ETERNAL GOSPEL

Sri Swami Sivananda

On the 25th of this month, we will be celebrating the advent of the Blessed Messiah, the nineteen hundred and sixty first birth anniversary of Jesus; for, it is generally accepted that he saw the light of the day in the eighth year before the Christian calendar began. Incidentally, modern historians and paleographic experts are inclined to believe that Jesus was born sometime in the month of October rather than in the night of December 25, but reason we have none to wrangle over this dispute, because it is hardly that traditional beliefs change and our concern is only with the life and teachings of the Christ.

How can mortal thought and finite language describe the glory of such a one who was far above the flesh with so profound, fathomless, immutable and yet so humane, loving and compassionate a personality that it is difficult even

to imagine that once he had actually breathed this air and trodden over this earth?

A REVOLUTIONARY DOCTRINE

The doctrine of Jesus was surely one of the most powerful revolutionary forces to galvanise human thought. He lived far ahead of his time, so that the world of the day utterly failed to appreciate the real significance of his teaching and considered him to be a dangerous blasphemer. No wonder then that the Jewish Pharisees found their only redress in arresting and prosecuting this noble, relentless and redoubtable crusader at the Jerusalem court of Pilate, the Roman magistrate, who finally decided to get rid of him by a barbarously slow execution upon the cross, so that a religious uprising with consequent political complications might be nipped in the bud.

One of the earliest and most

enlightened prophets of spiritual socialism, baptised by John while he was about thirty and preaching in the Aramaic tongue in Judea during the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Jesus Christ was first to advocate in that part of the world, the necessity to shed racial and class bigotry and to identify oneself as a common member of the vast family of mankind where everyone was a child of God with equal rights and opportunities to live in peace and to seek Him.

When selfishness and greed were nothing to be ashamed of, it was Jesus who emphasised the necessity of equal distribution of wealth, practical sympathy and loving considerateness for the fellowmen and the strangers alike, of abandoning vengeance and reprisal through forgiveness and charity, to love one's neighbour as one's own self for the obvious reason that there might be no disunity and disharmony, and, on the whole, to encounter evil by good, because if evil was to be met by evil, there would be no end of it.

CHRIST'S CONCEPT OF GOD

In the Hebrew world, Jesus was first to bring a healthier and more rational concept of God. The Jews believed that God had agreed to a bargain with Father Abraham, deciding their fate arbitrarily and yet reserving special privileges for them over other tribesmen in His own kingdom. This idea was revolting to Christ, and he boldly spoke out that God had nothing to do with one man's comfort and another's suffering, that He was a loving Father to all mankind, claiming no favourites, absolutely impartial, kind and merciful, and knowable through the cleansing of the human nature.

In Palestine, when Jesus lived, tribal loyalties and distinctions were rigidly observed, and, as is the case even in our own time, one race looked upon another with contempt and despise, and tried to glorify themselves above all. Jesus could not bear this and sought to break up all differentiation through the gospel of universal brotherhood

and all-inclusive love. This was one of the reasons, together with his unchangeable conviction in the common fatherhood of God, that outraged the sectarian patriotic fervour of his own people and the preferential, divine hierarchy of the priest craft. He could neither reconcile himself that there were to be accumulated private property, reserved considerations, justification for earthly pride or for indiscriminate satiation of base impulses, continuation of traditional habits, which sought to set up barriers between men, and atonement for one's misdeeds through monetary dividends. What was the result? Jesus had to be a martyr.

HIS RELIGION AND TEACHING

The religion of the Messiah was the religion of heart, built on the edifice of love. He said that the kingdom of God was not to be found in this material world of fraud and deceit but in the hearts of good people who had transformed their lower nature. Thus, first of all, Jesus advocated an inner purification and he

applied this doctrine on a social basis through his commandments in which he asked not to be promiscuous, not to steal, not to kill, not to bear false witness, not to hate and cavil, and not to defraud. But he went further and said that if one really wanted to enter the kingdom of God, he had to renounce earthly riches and vanities. So strong was his reaction to the privileged wealthy class, knowing fully well how corrupting was the influence of gold, that he proclaimed, "It is easier for a camel to enter the eye of a needle than for the rich man to enter into the kingdom of God," and to a seeker who wanted to inherit the eternal life, he said, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon; for either ye will hate one and love the other, or else ye will hold to the one and despise the other. Renounce everything, take the cross and follow me."

Christ had an immense conviction about the sacredness of what he taught, emphatic as he was in his Sermon on the Mount

that "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for, they shall be filled; blessed are the merciful, for, they shall obtain mercy; blessed are the pure in heart, for, they shall see God; and blessed are the peace-makers, for, they shall be called the children of God."

He believed in the law of Cause and Effect; for, he remarked "Whatever man soweth that shall he also reap." Many have wrongly accused him of being unduly exuberant in his promises for a future blessedness in heaven. On the contrary, he concerned himself more with the present than with the distant future, since he asked people to live the day well in goodness and in the service of God, and 'take no thought for the morrow, for, the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.'

Jesus revealed a profound respect for the public sentiment when he said "The voice of the people is the voice of God." He had an utter repugnance for religious insincerity, for, he was very particular in advising "When thou

prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are, for, they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that may be seen of men; but thou, when prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

The world has no other go but to listen to and practise the teaching of the Christ if it is to save itself from recurrent global conflagrations, inevitable slaughter of great masses of innocent people, unmitigable suffering, and systematic demoralisation.

The peeling of Christmas bells brings us a wistful ray of hope and a languid expectation that the spirit of the Messiah might one day resurrect in all its glory in the hearts of men and women all over the world, and particularly within those that are at the helms of the world governments.

May the grace of Holy Christ be upon us all!

THE INNER KINGDOM OF SPIRIT

Sri Swami Chidananda

Adorations and heart-felt homage at the sacred feet of Lord Jesus, Divinity incarnate upon this planet of ours to show to man the way to eternal Peace and spiritual Perfection. Salutations to Jesus the Christ who showed the way to live the Divine Life of love, purity, godliness and divine consciousness. May that great Light shine again in the inner shrine of every man's heart and may it illumine the entire world with the radiance of peace and goodwill.

This world is the house of God. All men are verily His children and are brothers in the spirit of God. Humanity is one divine family. The One Almighty Lord known to man variously as Allah, Ahura Mazda, the Father in Heaven, Atman or Paramatman or the Supreme Tao—call Him by whatever name you like—is the Eternal Parent of us all. He is our original abode, the source of our being, our sole support and

centre and the ultimate goal and destination of our life. His is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Jesus had come into this world of men to show unto us the inner way to the spiritual Kingdom of God. The true worth and the glory of human life is in the attainment of the inner Kingdom of Spirit. In the measure that you draw near to this ideal, to that measure will peace, joy, strength, courage, success, true and lasting bliss come to prevail upon your life. For, the Kingdom of Heaven is verily the Kingdom of Bliss and of a Peace that passeth all understanding. Christ lives eternally in that Kingdom, nay, he is indeed the Kingdom. He would have you too live in the bliss and the light of the heavenly Kingdom; hence his Call to you saying: "Come unto me". Harken, O man, to this loving voice and draw near to him, the compassion-filled Christ, the adorable, the worshipful, the Divine Christ will

surely redeem you!

The world is in greater need of Christ now than it ever was before, since the time when Divinity in the guise of the gentle, holy Nazarene walked the shores of Galilee. In the Gospel of Jesus verily lies the hope of man now heading towards wholesale destruction designed by his own blindness, faithlessness and folly. Jesus' eternal cry, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy-laden" has fallen upon deaf ears, and instead of going to the open arms of the Lord, man is moving into the gaping jaws of Mammon. Yet he wonders why he does not obtain lasting happiness, satisfaction and peace. This is itself the real wonder, that you sow thistle and would expect to reap figs out of it.

Nearly twenty centuries ago when Christ called upon men to follow him, so that he may lead them on to true happiness and eternal life, the blind and ignorant people of that time persecuted him. They denied him, betrayed him and crucified him. O Man, would you too enact the tragic

and bitter drama all over again this present day? O Friends, beware, for, by your heedlessness and wanton evil, you are verily preparing to crucify the spirit of the very Christ within you all. If Jesus was denied but thrice then in the past, you are now denying him many times over again, repeatedly by your unrighteous thoughts, words and deeds, individually and collectively. Let not the spirit of Jesus stand betrayed at the hands of modern man. By persisting in a life of greed, hatred, violence and warfare, humanity is once again taking the Christ-spirit in its life towards the tragic mount of Calvary. Wake up, O Man! And arise hence from this heedlessness and wantonness. Follow the Lord. Imitate the Christ. Strive to build up your life upon the Christ pattern of perfection. Herein lies your true and lasting welfare.

Like the shepherd after his lost sheep does the loving Lord seek time and again through the blessed saints and god-men to bring you back into the Divine

fold. The same Divine Call comes again to you through today's great spiritual masters saying, 'Follow me. Come unto me. Lead the Divine Life. Become Blessed.' Beloved friends! Arise and follow. Embrace the gospel of goodness. Be selfless. Love all. Serve all and be kind to all. Exercise compassion. Purify your heart and mind. Cultivate faith and charity. Do good. Pray, and worship the Lord. Meditate upon Him. Live in the constant remembrance of His eternal, all-pervading Presence. Strive manfully. Cast out the devils of selfishness, impurity, greed, hatred and anger from within. Be not content merely to say, 'Lord, Lord', but earnestly seek to do His Will. Thyself live and likewise inspire all to live in the true spirit of the Christ's noble utterances, viz., thou shalt love thy Lord, God, with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind and with all thy strength, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Think of the ideals of Jesus. Reflect over again upon his supreme Gospel embodied in the

Sermon on the Mount. Meditate deeply upon the life of Jesus. Mould your entire being gradually upon the pattern of the Christ's perfect life. Your life will indeed blossom forth into perfection.

Let us be with the Lord for just a while and see how he taught this holy path to blessedness and glory. It is on a holy Sabbath day. The place is blessed Capernaum. The Lord has preached and taught in the synagogue and later repaired to Peter's house. It is evening. Great crowds of all manner of people have gathered about him. Jesus is blessing, healing, curing and consoling. The crowd increases. Seeing the multitudes, behold Jesus going up on to a mountain, the people closely following Jesus and there he turns round and addresses them. There standing on the crest of the Mount, behold how he looks thrilling, inspiring and radiant, framed against the crimson and gold of the glorious evening sky. Spiritual brilliance shines from his face. His entire being is radiant with an ethereal Light. And thus he speaks to them all,

delivering in sweet accents full of compassion:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for, theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn; for, they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek; for, they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness; for, they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful; for, they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart; for, they shall see God.

Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for their's is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye, when men revile you and persecute you, and utter all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake.

Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad; for, great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they, the prophets who were before you."

This is his Sermon, in

essence, the Sermon that shall endure as long as man is. In it, we have the essence of all scriptures and all the religions. Herein you have the heart of the Veda and the Upanishads, expounding the royal path to Godhead; by dying to the lower self to live the Divine Life of utter egolessness, humility, purity, righteousness, compassion, devotion and surrender. How greatly blessed this world would be, if this Gospel were to be enshrined in the hearts of all men!

Jesus has spoken. It is for us to act. The Light shines and it illumines the path. It is for you, and for all of us, to tread along the path and uttering, 'Thy Kingdom come', to enter joyously into the Realm Divine. 'Give us this day our daily bread', is really prayer for the spiritual food, the divine Manna of Sadhana Shakti (Spiritual Force) and Yoga. 'Deliver us from evil', is not indeed so much external, but rather a prayer to safeguard us from the Shadripus (lust, anger, greed, deliberate attachment, pride and jealousy) and save us from Maya, the supreme Illusion. To live in

the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount is to imitate and to follow Christ in the truest manner. To follow him is to ascend into blessedness. He who follows Jesus faithfully, shall ascend from the unreal to the Real, from darkness into eternal Light, from mortality to Immortality. If you live in the spirit of the Lord's Sermon, then your prayer 'Our Father which art in Heaven, Thy Kingdom Come' shall be answered forthwith and will be manifest to you here and now. Joy, peace and blessedness will prevail in your life.

The life of Christ and his personality, I can only describe by the terms 'wondrous and glorious'. There is no other term to adequately describe this glorious life. Divinity incarnated upon this earth in the form of the dazzling messenger who later idealised in his life the perfect pattern of a true and noble person and the ideal saint. It is the divinity of the Christ that has the power today across these nearly twenty centuries, to command our reverence and to irresistibly draw

our adoration and devotion at his feet. The life of Christ is the pattern of saintship. We will find that every word of Christ, every action of his, every little moment of his life, every episode, only went to fill in the shining details of his glorious pattern of ideal sainthood. His was a life which shows us what it is to live constantly and continuously in the consciousness of one's divinity, though apparently he was of the world through physical body. Upon the holy and auspicious day of Christmas, on 25th December, the Grace and Compassion of the Almighty Being descended here upon this earth in the form of a Divine Being, whom we now adore. He is God's love embodied in human form. Most blessed indeed is that great day when this earth became hallowed by the sacred presence of this Divine incarnation. His sublime life and teaching shine as the supreme Light that illumines and guides us upon the path to the Blissful realm, beyond all sorrow, pain and mortality.

THE GOSPEL OF THE BHAGAVADGITA

Sri Swami Krishnananda

I shall endeavour to touch upon a few salient points which will be of some meaning and utility in our day-to-day life. To apply a knowledge to life is the most difficult aspect of knowledge. We have always been accustomed to bifurcate life from knowledge, and vice versa, so that a learned man is not necessarily a happy man, nor even a rich man. The reason is that learning and knowledge, has been isolated from the facts of life. This is one of the conflicts that we observe in life. As they say humorously, Sarasvati and Lakshmi never live in the same house, meaning thereby that learning and wealth do not go together. There are many such conflicts, all of which are supposed to be solved, in one way or the other, by means of the great teachings known as the Bhagavadgita.

Bhagavan Sri Krishna, when He spoke the Bhagavadgita, intended to resolve a conflict. What

is a conflict may be a question that raises itself before our minds. There are, actually, four types of conflicts, within which every other type, kind, or variation of disharmony can be subsumed. The occasion for the delivery of this Gospel was the battle of the Mahabharata, which means a field of conflict with other people. This is what is known as a battle. The first problem one encounters in life is conflict with other people. 'You do not like me,' and 'I do not like you.' When we wake up in the morning and look at the world, we are faced with a conflict with other people. This is a difficulty which saps the vitality of many in the world. We have to see faces with whom we cannot reconcile ourselves. It may be a boss, a subordinate or an equal,—it makes no difference. When we cannot reconcile ourselves with another face, there is a conflict; and we see nothing but faces when we get up in the morning and look at the world outside.

The battle of the Mahabharata is a large epic, describing this primary conflict of human nature,—conflict of one person with another person, in which can be included conflicts of groups, communities and nations, because all these are nothing but personalities and individualities associating and clashing in certain manners and patterns. What you call a society, or a family, or a nation or a community is nothing but human beings grouping themselves into patterns. So, conflict with other people includes every kind of conflict in the world. Thus, we have the Mahabharata epic, in the middle of which the Bhagavadgita occurs. Where is the Bhagavadgita located? In the middle of the battle of the Mahabharata. What is this epic battle? A conflict between the Pandavas and the Kauravas, brothers in a unitary family. It was a family feud. We may say it was a conflict between Yudhishtira and Duryodhana, which amounts to the same essential situation. So, again, to reiterate, the conflict which Bhagavan Sri Krishna tries to resolve has as its background the conflict enumerated in the long epic poem of the Mahabharata. What is this background? The conflict of personalities! That was the occasion for the war. Huge armies were arrayed on both sides. Thousands were about to fly at the throats of each other. That was the occasion for the giving of this Gospel. The Gospel was not given in a school, a college, or a university, a temple, a church, or an auditorium, — nothing of the kind. This most interesting and indispensable Gospel which you try to enshrine in your heart, in your memory, was given on that momentous occasion of a war that was about to break between large contending armies. Nobody would like to seek wisdom on that tense occasion. That is not the time to speak at all; it is the time to act and do something immediately. Who would speak philosophy when there are large numbers of men emotionally worked up into such a heightened pitch of anxiety and wrath that they will hear no

words spoken by anyone, and are bent upon a severe type of action! On that occasion, who would speak a sublime Gospel or a scripture! But that was the occasion, and there could not be a better occasion.

Now, the very purpose of this war was primarily to resolve a social conflict. Well, it was agreed that the war was indispensable. The purpose behind the war was not to destroy people but to resolve a social conflict or a political tension. It was impossible to mend people, and so they thought it was necessary to end people. And they concluded that by the ending of the people, the conflict would automatically vanish. If you cannot untie a knot, you cut the knot.

And for memory's sake I may mention a few names who were involved in this conflict,—the leaders, the generalissimos of the war. There were powerful veterans on the side of the Kauravas, almost invincible in battle, three of whom, the most prominent ones, were, Bhishma, Drona and Karna. Nobody could face them

with immunity to their lives. On the other side, that of the Pandavas, we have leaders like Bhima and Arjuna, the brothers of king Yudhishtira, the eldest of the Pandavas. While the most powerful from the Kaurava side was Bhishma, the most invincible on the side of the Pandavas was Arjuna. They knew every tactics of war and people would shudder in their hearts by merely hearing the names of these people.

Now, on mutual acceptance, it was agreed that the war had to be waged to end a social conflict. But, when the hour of crisis came, when the iron was hot and it had to be hit, when that moment came, what happened? A most unexpected conflict arose within the mind of Arjuna. It was not a conflict with other people, but a conflict within one's own self. I told you that there are four types of conflicts. The first one is conflict with other people and to end it they embarked upon this perilous adventure of war. But before it broke out or started, the most important of the leaders, the hero of one party, the most renowned

warrior, had to pass through a muddle of conflict within himself—his own thoughts, feelings, emotions, and the various tantrums of his psychological organ. You know the situation. All action emanates from the individual, and to do or not to do is to be decided by the individual himself. A decision can be taken only when there is no conflict in one's mind. Either you do a thing or you do not do the thing. You want a thing or you do not want the thing. These are decisions that the mind takes. But if one begins to waver between the two horns of the dilemma, and one does not know which side to take, and what steps to put forward, due to a conflict within one's own mind, there would be no solution at all. A most surprising attitude did Arjuna take, to the wonder and marvel of everyone there. The most heroic of persons began to speak words of pusillanimity, feelings of pity which would be completely unexpected from a warrior girt up on the brink of a war. Instead of attempting to solve the social conflict for the sake of

which the war was to be engaged in, another conflict was added on to it. So, instead of one conflict, we have two conflicts here. Arjuna, the leader, the great warrior, advanced specious arguments before Krishna, his colleague, his friend and guide, who was seated on the very same chariot, and clinched the whole matter by saying, "I am not for this". It was a very difficult thing to swallow, and only a personality like Krishna could take it in the true spirit in which it arose.

When a person is truly friendly with you, he knows how to take your moods. That is wisdom of life. Krishna was not pleased; nor was he displeased. A doctor is neither pleased nor displeased with a patient. An emotion will not rise in the mind of a physician. Krishna was not distressed at the agonising condition of the mind of Arjuna. He did not weep, cry or beat His breast. He spoke words of wisdom laden with the profundity of the experience of life which, incidentally, opened up the gates for a solution to all conflicts in life. Not merely Arjuna's conflict but

your conflict, my conflict and anyone's conflict at any time found a solution therein. All problems, all conflicts, all disharmonies, in everyone's mind, in every pattern of society, and for all times, were dealt with effectively. Thus it is that the Bhagavadgita became a scripture of universal significance. Though it arose on account of a historical context, it gradually bordered upon timeless questions and the eternal problems of mankind, or humanity as a whole. The Bhagavadgita teaches not the Hindu religion, but Religion as such. It is not my religion, or your religion, but the religion of the human soul that is spoken in the words of the Bhagavadgita. It is an answer to the questions of mankind, not merely the themes of some religion, cult or creed. It is 'man' putting a question to God. It is not any particular person or a particular faith or association or affiliation raising a problem, but 'man' signifying humanity, raising a problem before the Maker of all things. And to it, the answer came from all sides. The answer came from all the mouths of the Cosmic Person, not merely from

one individual called Krishna. There was no Krishna then, when this answer came. The query was not raised by Arjuna as a historical person. It was not Arjuna that kicked up the problem; it was the humanity present in Arjuna that raised the question. There is a character of humanity in everyone of us, which is neither male nor female, neither eastern nor western. That human element puts the eternal question. Hence, the answer has to be all-comprehensive. The human complexity raised the question; and who will answer the question? Not another man. One man's problem cannot be solved by another man or another person. Because another person is also a human being like this person. You cannot solve my problem, nor can I solve your problem. Because both of us stand on the same pedestal of humanity. And here was the problem of humanity as a whole, not of one individual; and who will answer this question? Not Krishna, because to utter the name Krishna in this context would be to raise the question of an individual. It was not

the historical Krishna that spoke to Arjuna, but it was Narayana who spoke to Nara. This is also known as Nara-Narayana-Samvada, not merely Krishna-Arjuna-Samvada. God spoke to man, not Krishna to Arjuna. The Universal spoke to the particular. The All-Comprehensive began to speak words of wisdom to that which is localised in space and time. Humanity was face to face with the Absolute. With this background of understanding, we shall be able to realise the importance of this scripture.

Thus, on the background of the necessity to solve a social conflict, an individual conflict arose in the mind of a symbol of humanity, known as Arjuna. As I have already pointed out, I cannot answer this question, and you cannot answer this question either, because we are all persons, human beings, individuals, and it is the individual that raises the question. Then, who is to give the answer? Not anyone in the world. The answer has to come from That which is beyond the world. And hence the personality of Krishna began to expand gradually into

the All-inclusive Consciousness which covers the entire gamut of the evolution of mankind and the world as a whole. This apocalypse of consciousness is what is known as Virat, or the Vishvarupa. It expanded not merely quantitatively in space and time; it is not the swelling of a body that is called Virat or Vishvarupa, — but a humanly unimaginable expansion of Consciousness, which alone can solve the questions of mankind's conflict.

And what is mankind's conflict? One person set against another person. This is the first phase of the problem. Then, each one is at loggerheads with one's own self. This is another phase of the conflict. You do not know what you will think tomorrow. You do not agree today with what you thought yesterday. Your understanding cannot go hand in hand with your feeling. Your feelings cannot go hand in hand with your will. Your emotions will not agree with your logical argument. Your logic goes against the facts of human society outside. All this is a description of

internal conflict. 'I can neither fully agree with you nor fully reject you.' This is also a personal conflict. If I can fully agree with you, there can be no conflict. If I can fully reject you, then also there is no conflict. But, unfortunately, I cannot fully reject you for certain reasons, and cannot also wholly accept you for certain other reasons. This is individual conflict. And there are also non-alignments of the layers of the personality itself.

I am proceeding from the posterior to the prior, from the gross to the subtle, from the visible to the invisible, from the outer to the inner, for the purpose of explanation. The outer conflict of society is an outcome of the internal conflict of human nature. Why has this conflict come? Is there any solution for this? Arjuna fell at the feet of Krishna. 'I am confused, and I do not know what I am supposed to do. Bewildered is the condition of my mind. It is true that I have come here for battle, as a general of the army, but now something is happening within my own mind. I do not know,

Krishna, what is happening! I am sunk in grief. I am swallowed by sorrow. I cannot lift my finger. I cannot raise my hand. My nerves are getting paralysed. I cannot even stand up. I am falling down.' This is what happens when internal conflict reaches its climax. And here the real Bhagavadgita starts, which is God speaking. Upto this time man was speaking. 'I shall wage a war, I shall end these people, crush them and pound them to powder.' That was the boast of man before the war was entered upon. Then the sinking down of the personality: 'This is impossible. I shall withdraw because I do not think that I am fit to adjust myself to this complex that has arisen now in the form of a social conflict, which, I hold, is raised by us due to ignorance, greed and callousness towards the consequences of war.'

The answer of Bhagavan Sri Krishna, representing the Unity of the cosmos, is simple and precise, though it is apparently a long gospel of many chapters. Arjuna was thoroughly mistaken in

assessing the values of life. 'Your understanding is turbid; it is not clear enough to grasp the vitality of life. Nobody asked you to start the war. It is you who started this, and I merely said nothing against it. If you want it, have it, and be done with it. After having started it of your own accord, relying on the strength of your own army, listening to nobody else's advice, what makes you now sing a different tune altogether, as if you are another person having nothing to do with the previous person that you were, who decided to wage the war?' The answer of Arjuna was, 'I do not know.' There are some students who come to this Ashram. If I ask them why they have come, the answer is, 'I do not know.' It is very difficult to speak to such people. How is it that they do not know anything? You must know something at least. The truth is that you know that you do not know. Don't you know even that much? Well, it looks something humorous. But, this was exactly what Arjuna did. 'I do not know what to do. Tell me what is my

duty.' The answer is the Bhagavadgita which is supposed to be a Gospel on duty.

What is the duty of man? I began by speaking of the four conflicts, which the Bhagavadgita endeavours to resolve. To solve the first conflict, Arjuna thought that battle is the only way. But before the war took place outside, a war broke out inside him. There was a psychological war which fumed up like wild fire within the mind of the hero, even before the outer social war took place. 'Do you know why does this happen? Do you know why any war takes place at all? Why conflicts should arise at all? The ultimate cause of all conflicts—do you know this Arjuna?' Sri Krishna said. 'You do not know anything. You do not know that you have a higher conflict pushing you forward into a further external conflict.' Behind the social conflict, is the individual conflict. Behind the individual conflict, there is another conflict which is not apparent to the mind of any person. But Krishna knew what it was. It is the conflict between the individual and the

world as a whole in the form of this vast creation. Man has estranged himself from Nature. This is the third conflict, — the conflict between man and Nature. The world seems to be outside us, and we seem to be strangers in this world. We are not sure that we are really wanted in this world. Sometimes it looks that we are not wanted at all, and yet we, somehow, reconcile ourselves with the hardships of this mysterious creation and pull on in life, 'get on,' as we say. The world is not going to be reconciled if we are not going to obey its laws. Because of a conflict of our individuality with the universal Nature, we suffer various pains,—hunger and thirst, heat and cold, and, finally, death. All these catastrophes of human life and life in general, are the outcome of an isolation of the individual from the cosmic Nature. Nature does not die; it is the individual that dies. Nature has no hunger and thirst; it is the individual that has hunger and thirst. Nature does not feel cold and does not want a blanket or a sweater. It is the individual that feels heat and cold.

The bodily limitations, the vital limitations, the mental limitations, the intellectual limitations, are the outcome of this bifurcation of personality or individuality from cosmic Nature. If you are to be tuned to Nature, you are to become an integral, vital, universal part of Nature. Then you will have no hunger and thirst, no heat and cold, no death. But why should this difficulty arise? I never wanted to isolate myself from Nature. Nobody would purchase trouble deliberately. Then why has this happened? Who is responsible for this banishment of the individual from universal Nature?

This third conflict is due to another conflict altogether, viz., the fourth conflict, — the conflict between the Universe and the Absolute, between man and God. We are estranged from God Himself. That is why every other conflict has cropped up. Social conflict or political conflict is due to individual conflict. The individual conflict is due to the conflict of natural forces in respect of the individual. This, again, is due to a higher conflict

between the Universal Soul and the individual soul, man and God waging a war with each other. Then it is that God has released this huge army called Nature, with all its terrific armament.

The war seen before you is nothing but the array of forces which God has unleashed to teach you a lesson. The whole world is up in arms against you, because you have set yourself against God. Can you expect to have peace and happiness here when you wage a battle with God Himself? But this is the secret that man does not know because of an original ignorance, what you call the original sin of man, the fall of man, the fall of the soul from its Divine Status of Universality. Unless you reconcile yourself with God, you are not going to reconcile yourself with Nature. Nature is nothing but the army of forces let loose by God against you, as a reaction to your rebellion against Him. When there is conflict with a country in war, you cannot speak to its soldiers, 'My dear friends, please do not fight,' for, they are not responsible for the battle. They are released by

some other force behind them. You must tackle that force which is the cause of the release of these forces. Why do you talk to the soldiers, poor fellows! They know nothing except that they have been ordered, and they act. Thus there is no use of speaking to the world, 'My dear friend, Wind, do, not bite me,' Water, do not drown me; Fire, do not burn me.' They will say, 'We do not know, we are only ordered to act and we shall do according to the order. You speak to the Person, the Force who has ordered thus. Otherwise, we shall burn you down, cut you, blow you up, drown you, kill you.' So, there is no use trying to get rid of the troubles of life, because these are forces released by a higher Nature. Unless you reconcile yourself with God, you are not going to be friendly with Nature. And unless you reconcile yourself with the Nature, the cosmos as a whole, your internal conflicts are not going to cease. And until internal conflicts are solved, the external wars are not going to end. The social peace which you are clamouring for, the national

peace, the world-peace, the Ramarajya as you call it,—all these wonderful things that you are aspiring for in life,—cannot be had on earth until you solve the causative conflict that is between you, Nature and God.

This is the essence of the themes described in the chapters of the Bhagavadgita. You are face to face with the Supreme Being in the eleventh chapter. Whatever I have told you now, is the inner significance of the contents of the first eleven chapters, and the chapters that follow from the eleventh onwards describe methods of practically applying this knowledge in specific contexts of life. Before doing anything, understand well, think well logically, dispassionately, taking into consideration all aspects of the question that arises in your mind. Cast your glance around you, and recognise where you really stand in this world, what your difficulties are, and tap the difficulties in their roots. Then it is that you will be blessed; and mankind at large, reach supreme beatitude.

Social collaboration, individual self-control, universal inter-relatedness, and Absolute Oneness—these are the standpoints from which the Bhagavadgita exhorts us at different levels of its teaching. The highest Reality is Aksharam Brahma (the Imperishable Absolute): It is the Supreme Person, or Adhiyajna, from the standpoint of creation. It is manifest as Adhibhuta (the external universe as the object) on the one side, and as Adhyatma (the individual experiencer as the subject), on the other side. The Divine Principle organising the relations between subjects and objects is Adhidaiva (superintending Deity). The movement of the cosmic cycle, the inexorable impulse to action, the universal urge of creativity, is Karma-Visarga (the complex of activity determined by interconnected universal factors). No one can escape this duty of 'All-Life,' and none can afford to be ignorant of this secret of existence. Here is the Bhagavadgita in a nutshell.

THE NAME—FOR THE HIGH AND THE LOW

Sri Swami Venkatesananda

15th APRIL, 1948

Hardly is a high-powered official interested in Yoga and that too in the Bhakti Marga! He has little faith in God and often ridicules those who repeat His Name. In Siva's very presence, such officers are transformed and they act in spite of themselves. Sri Y.N. Sukthankar, I.C.S., Commerce Secretary to the Govt. of the Dominion of India, visited the Ashram to pay his homage to India's Saint. Siva infused into him Love for God and His Name and gave a short discourse on Japa Yoga.

SIVA – THE MASTER- REFORMER

With three of his disciples, Siva attended a conference of the leading Sadhus of Rishikesh, and the Managers of the Annakshetras, convened to discuss the establishment of an organisation for the betterment of Sadhus. The various elements started producing a discordant note; but Siva's melodious Kirtan at once cast its divine spell on them all. Harmony prevailed

throughout the meeting.

Siva was unanimously chosen as the President of the "Rishikesh Sadhu Seva Sangh" which was formed at the meeting. The meeting came to a close with Kirtan and Shanti Path by Siva. Siva then distributed "Prasad" (oranges) and books and leaflets to all assembled in the meeting: an invariable item at all meetings attended by this great doctor of the body and the soul, a born leader and organiser, an adept in the dissemination of spiritual knowledge.

19th APRIL, 1948

THE ALL-PERVADING SIVA

"Wherever I have been, Swamiji, I have found that your name and your soul-elevating writings have gone ahead of me!" said Goswami Ganesha Duttji, the millionaire public benefactor of Punjab who had himself a fame for his humanitarian services to the people of India.

Sri Goswamiji had come to pay his respects to Siva whom he had known for a long time. The object of his visit was to discuss

with Siva the questions of Sadhu Seva (Sadhu Reform).

For a long time the two, into whose very soul the spirit of Service had entered, sat comparing notes. Sri Goswamiji detailed his talks with the Provincial Premier and the Dominion Ministers on the Subject, how he intended to proceed with the work etc. And Siva offered his sagely counsel often from within Goswamiji himself and also verbally. The reverence that one showed to the other was proof positive of their high spiritual achievements. Siva's Chaitanya-like humility was beyond description. He would quickly disown any credit, when Goswamiji asserted that all

glory for building up such a mammoth organisation which has spread its protective wings throughout the world, went to one person, Siva! And that the success of the present reform and service of the Sadhus also depended largely on his blessings. Goswamiji also requested Siva to inspire the Swarg Ashram by his frequent visits. (Goswamiji was one of the Trustees of the Swarg Ashram.)

At the meeting of the Rishikesh Sadhu Seva Sangh held on 22nd April 1948, Goswamiji spoke reverently of his great respect and admiration for Siva, Saints like whom alone, he said, upheld the prestige of the most holy order of Sannyasins.

Two things are necessary for a beautifully finished idol or image. One is a perfect, faultless, good piece of marble; the second is the expert sculptor. The piece of marble should but unconditionally remain in the hands of the sculptor in order to be carved and chiselled into the fine image. So too, the disciple has but to cleanse himself, purify himself, and make himself a perfectly faultless piece of marble, and placing himself under the expert guidance of his Master, allow to be carved out and chiselled into the image of God.

Swami Sivananda

CHILDREN'S WORLD



Blessed Immortal Selves!

Calm the mind. Have a one-pointed and balanced state of mind always.

Grow. Expand. Evolve. Destroy separateness. Mix with all. Develop cosmic love. Become selfless.

Swami Sivananda

CULTIVATION OF VIRTUES

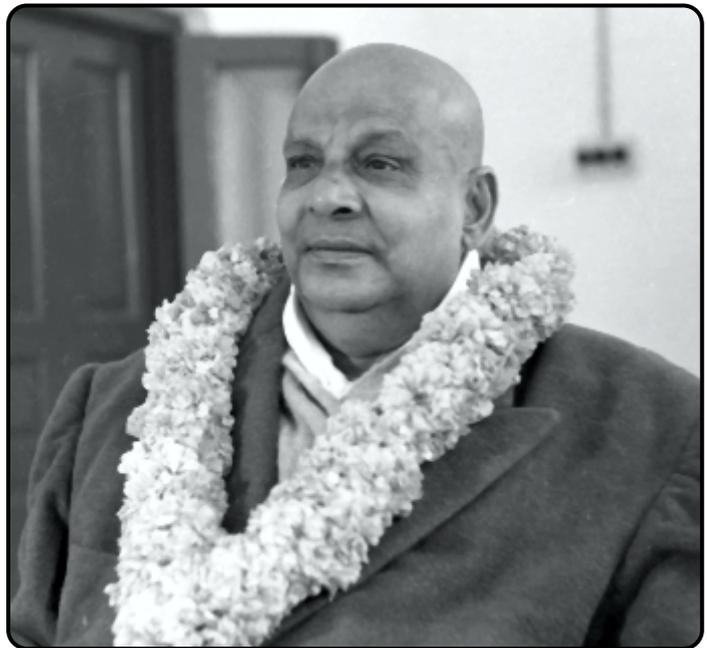
MERCY

God is an ocean of mercy or Karuna. He is all-merciful. If you want to have communion with Him, if you want to unite with Him, if you wish to dwell in Him, you must also become an embodiment of mercy.

Mercy is compassion or benevolence. Mercy is sublime goodness. It knows and understands the sufferings of others and is ready to help them.

The heart of a merciful man is softer than butter.

Butter melts near fire, but the heart of a merciful man melts when he sees the sufferings of others even at a distance.



The thoughts, words and deeds of a merciful man are full of sympathy and compassion. He always shares what he has with others. He sacrifices even his own needs and comforts for the sake of others.

Show mercy to others. Others will also be merciful to you. You will receive mercy when it shall be most needed. This is the immutable law of God.

Show mercy to animals and persons who are in distress. Wipe their tears. You will indeed be blessed.

May mercy arise in your heart. May your heart be filled with mercy.

Swami Sivananda

ERADICATION OF VICES

MISERLINESS

Miserliness is a great curse. It is an enemy of peace and a friend of selfishness. Miserly persons are quite unfit for the spiritual path.

A miser is very far from God. He who expects Samadhi and Darshan of God by practising Asanas and Kumbhaka, and little Japa keeping up extreme miserliness and unsympathetic hard heart, cheats himself. He is a downright hypocrite indeed.

Doing abundant, spontaneous and unrestrained charity to relieve the pains of the suffering humanity is an effective means to destroy this evil nature.

Whenever you come across poor people, wherever there is suffering, give money like water. If you give, the whole wealth of the world is yours. Money will come to you. This is the immutable, inexorable, unrelenting law of nature. Therefore give, give. See God everywhere. Share with all.

Swami Sivananda



THE AHIMSA-IDEAL

A poverty-stricken man was walking through a grove. He was very hungry. He had not taken any food for the previous three days. The grove was full of mango trees; and it was the mango-season. The luscious fruit was too tempting, so the hungry man instinctively walked over to the tree, took it and threw it at the tree. A couple of mangoes fell on the ground; the man's hunger glowed with joy and as his hands hungrily sought the fruits, his mouth was dripping with saliva.

In the joy of having obtained a fruit to appease his hunger with, the poor man could not bestow a thought on the course the stone took, after cutting the fruit away from the tree. Having achieved its object, the stone had to fall. The momentum given by the man's hunger was great and the stone soared into the sky, before dropping down.

Destiny, the creatrix of strange situations, had conspired to bring into that grove that day, the poorest of man and the ruling monarch of the land. The poor man at the threshold of death sought something—anything—to appease his hunger. The monarch after the royal dinner sought the cool shade of the trees to while his time away playing chess with his consorts and ministers. The monarch and the miserable wretch were unaware of each other.

The missile that struck the tree and felled the fruit was an inert stone; it couldn't respectfully avoid the monarch. It landed on his head. The turban protected the scalp, but was itself thrown off and put out of shape. The monarch immersed in delightful play with his consorts had no mind to investigate the cause of the turban's sad fate. But his courtiers could not brook the insult to the king. The servants of the king sought the miscreant—the poor man who was greedily eating the luscious fruits.

Servants of the king are ever eager to forestall the monarch's worst punishment and want to demonstrate their loyalty to him by meting out capital punishment on one who has least offended His Majesty's person. It happened in this case, too, that the king's minister of law held an immediate Court on the spot and condemned the poor man to death, for making an



assault on the king's person.

The king rose from the game; and the minister for law announced that the miscreant had been severely punished for his outrageous act.

“Bring him to us,” said His Majesty.

The poor man was produced before the monarch. “Why did you throw the stone?”

“To obtain a mango.”

“On what did you throw the stone?”

“On the tree.”

“Did you get the mango?”

“Yes, Maharaj.”

“Have you eaten the mango?”

“Yes, Maharaj.”

The king turned to his minister for law.

“The poor man was hungry and he hit the tree with the stone. He got couple of mangoes. He has eaten them. Now, tell me how long he would be free from hunger?”

“For twenty-four hours, your Majesty!”

“That will do. Now, we will pronounce our judgment.”

The entire crowd waited with bated breath. Could it be something worse than the Judge's sentence?

“We command that from today till the end of his life on earth, this poor man will receive from our Treasury wealth enough to maintain himself. Communicate this Order at once to the Finance Minister.”

Everyone was amazed! What manner of punishment is this!

The queen thought that she was responsible for this, and that the pleasant mood that she had brought on in the king has put him in a light vein and so that award to the poor man was being given. She smiled significantly.



“My dear,” said the king to the queen, “tell me, is the tree a sentient or an insentient object?”

“Of course, insentient, my Lord.”

“And, I?”

“What a question to ask, great one! Man, the crown of creation, is a sentient being. You are jewel among men. You are a divinity truly. Who has surpassed thee in wisdom and knowledge?”

“Then, my beloved, is it not fair that I, a sentient being, prove that I am worthier of this status that God has granted me, than an insentient tree?”

“You are my Lord: you are worthier than all men in fact in wisdom. But, why do you say all this?”

“Look! The poor man hit the tree with a stone. It gave him two luscious fruits to eat. It appeased his hunger for a day. The stone fell on me, as he threw it, it was adjudged that he hit me with it. Should I not prove I am worthier than the tree? That is why I have ordered that his necessities would be provided for throughout his life-time.”

The ministers, servants and the queen, fell at the monarch's feet and kissed the dust beneath them.

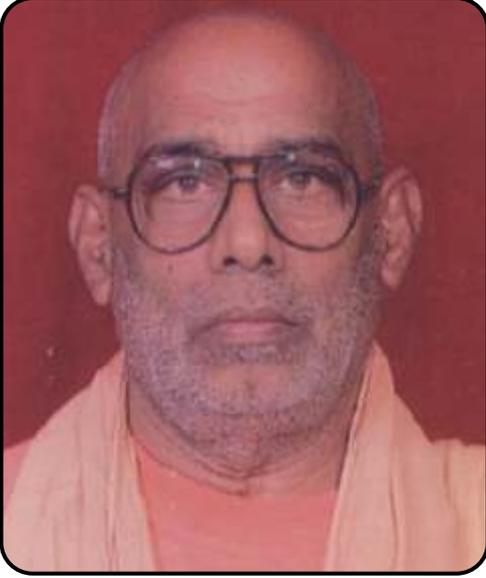
“Our Sovereign! You are truly divinity upon earth. Who but God Himself could manifest such compassion at a time like this? Lord! You rank in this virtue with Lord Buddha and Lord Jesus, with the great saints and sages of all times. Hail, hail! May your Majesty's wise and fruitful reign last for countless years upon this earth. For, only rulers like your majesty can inspire people to cultivate compassion, cosmic love and forbearance. Inspired by your glorious example, people will love each other, serve each other and thus being purified at heart, transform themselves into divine beings. Bless us, O Lord! That we may be worthy servants of thee!”

Swami Sivananda



In Memoriam

With profound sorrow, we report that Sri Swami Ramachandrananda, a senior monk of the Headquarters Ashram, left his mortal coil on the sacred day of Kartik Purnima i.e. 8th November 2022.



Sri Vasantappa, as he was known pre-monastically, was born in 1945. After joining the holy Ashram of Gurudev, Swamiji rendered his services in Ashram Gaushala, Bhajan Hall and Annakshetra. Swamiji breathed his last on 8th

November 2022 at the age of 77 years.

May his soul rest at the holy feet of the Lord and Worshipful Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj.

Man always desires to die a peaceful death with his mind fixed on God. That is the reason why Gita, Bhagavata, Vishnu Sahasranama, and other holy scriptures are recited at the deathbed of the sick man; even though he may not be able to speak, he may hear what is read out to him. This will help the sick man in forgetting the body-idea or his ailment and think of the Lord. When his memory fails, these sacred sentences of the scriptures will remind him of his real nature.

Swami Sivananda

In Memoriam

With a deep sense of loss and great sorrow, we report that Sri Swami Sarvamangalananda Mataji, one of the senior inmates of the Headquarters Ashram, passed away on 19th November 2022.

Jacqueline Webster, as she was known pre-monastically, was born on 1st June 1937 in Switzerland. She met Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj in 1970 and received Mantra



Diksha from him as well. In 1995, leaving her hearth and home, Jacqueline Mataji came to stay at the holy Ashram of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj.

She was blessed with Sannyasa Diksha by Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on the sacred day of Mahasivaratri i.e. 25th February 1998 and was given the name Swami Sarvamangalananda Saraswati. Revered Mataji devoutly served in the Ashram Central Library, and also offered her dedicated services in recording Ashram videos, compiling and editing various books and souvenirs. Through her amiable and affectionate nature, she endeared herself to all those who came into contact with her. Mataji took her last breath on 19th November 2022 at the ripe age of 85 years.

May the Almighty Lord and Sadgurudev bless her soul with eternal peace and divine beatitude.

CAUTION

This is to caution all the members, devotees and well-wishers of The Divine Life Society that some fraudsters have launched a website impersonating the official website of the Divine Life Society, with the address <https://sivanandaashram.co.in/>, Email Id info@sivanandaashram.co.in and phone number 9668461538 in order to mislead the public and collect money in the name of booking rooms, joining Yoga Courses, etc in Sivananda Ashram, Rishikesh, Uttarakhand, India.

Those who are devoted to the Ashram and Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj know very well that the Ashram does not charge anything for any Seva at the Ashram and it has never been a practice of the Ashram to let the devotees or guests book rooms or register for Yoga Courses through phone or Whatsapp. Therefore, all are advised to be cautious of such fake websites and fraudsters, and not to fall prey to such scammers.

Please also take note that the official websites of The Divine Life Society are <https://www.sivanandaonline.org> and <https://www.dlshq.org>, Email Ids are generalsecretary@sivanandaonline.org and gs@sivanandaonline.org and the online donation portal is <https://donations.sivanandaonline.org>

Real happiness is within you. It is in the Atman. It is subjective. It manifests when the mind is concentrated. When the Indriyas are withdrawn from the objects outside, when the mind is one-pointed, when there is Vasana- kshaya and Manonasha, when you become desireless and thoughtless, Atmic bliss begins to dawn, spiritual Ananda begins to thrill.

Swami Sivananda

**47th ALL ANDHRA DIVINE LIFE
SOCIETY SPIRITUAL CONFERENCE
18th to 20th JANUARY 2023,
AT ANNAVARAM, ANDHRA PRADESH**

By the grace of Worshipful Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, the 47th All Andhra Divine Life Spiritual conference will be held from 18th to 20th January 2023, at Annavaram, Andhra Pradesh.

The Conference will be blessed by senior monks from Headquarters and saints and scholars from other institutions. Devotees from all the Branches of the Divine Life Society are cordially invited to participate in the Conference aimed at dissemination of spiritual knowledge.

For Registration and Information please contact:

1. Sri Chilla Ramakrishna, M: 0 94405 64735
2. Sri T. Chandramouli, M: 0 96182 83789
3. Sri Dr. N. Nageswara Rao, M: 0 94403 87659

The Divine Life Society

If the dust is in the company of the wind, it soars high in the sky. If it is in the company of muddy water, it becomes a dirty mire. If the air is in the company of jasmine, it wafts a sweet aroma. If it is in the company of offal, it emits a foul odour. Put the parrot in the company of wicked men. It will start abusing. Put it in the company of Sadhus. It will repeat, "Ram, Ram, Renga, Renga." Even so, if one is in the company of a sage, he attains knowledge and soars high in the realm of eternal bliss.

Swami Sivananda



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

YOGA-VEDANTA FOREST ACADEMY

THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

P.O. SHIVANANDANAGAR, PIN: 249 192, Distt. Tehri-Garhwal, Uttarakhand (INDIA)

ADMISSION NOTICE

Applications are hereby invited for undergoing the **96th** residential Basic YOGA-VEDANTA COURSE of two months' duration, i.e., from **1-3-2023** to **29-4-2023**. This Course will be held in the Academy premises at the Headquarters of the Divine Life Society, Shivanandanagar, Rishikesh.

The details are as follows:

1. It is open to Indian citizens (Men) only.
2. Age Group: Between 20 and 65 years
3. Qualifications:
 - (a) Preferably graduate with keen spiritual aspiration and deep interest in the practice of Yoga-Vedanta
 - (b) Must be able to converse in English fluently as the medium of instruction is English.
 - (c) Should have sound health
4. Scope and syllabus of the Course:
 - (a) An outline study of History of Indian and Western Philosophy, Studies in Upanishads, Studies in Religious Consciousness, Study of the Bhagavad Gita, Patanjali's Yoga System, Narada Bhakti Sutras and The Philosophy of Swami Sivananda
 - (b) There will be final examination after the completion of syllabus.
 - (c) Asana, Pranayama, Meditation, Karma Yoga, Lectures, Group discussions, and Questions and Answers will also form part of the Course.
5. There will be no charges for training, boarding and lodging. Pure vegetarian food (Breakfast and two meals a day only) will be provided. Smoking, drinking and use of intoxicants are strictly prohibited.
6. The Application Form and Prospectus can be had from the Registrar through post or downloaded from our website www.sivanandaonline.org. Candidates can also apply for the Course using Online Mode through the link given in our website www.sivanandaonline.org. Duly filled Application Form should reach the undersigned by **31-1-2023**.
7. The aim of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy is not merely academic equipment of students, but to prepare the students for a successful life in the world and to facilitate the living of a wholesome life with an integrated personality. The Course conducted in this Academy is more of the nature of an all-round discipline than merely providing students with scriptural learning or textual information.

Shivanandanagar
November 2022

Registrar,
Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy,
Phone: 0135-2433541, email—yvfacademy@gmail.com

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/-
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3. New Branch Opening Fee**	₹ 1,000/-
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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

Kabisurya Nagar, Ganjam, Odisha: The Branch conducted daily Narayana Seva, and Satsang on Sundays and Thursdays during October. Daily evening Satsang with Jaya Ganesh prayers, Guru Paduka Puja, Archana, Gita Path, Bhajan, Pravachan, Shanti Path and Aarati were the events during the month of Kartika.

South Balanda, Talcher, Odisha: In the month of September, besides regular activities, on 8th & 24th, Guru Paduka Puja and Satsang were organised. Akhanda Maha Mantra Sankirtan from 6:00 pm to 9:00pm was done on 28th which was dedicated to world peace and universal brotherhood.

Rourkela, Odisha: Regular activities of Weekly Satsang on Thursdays for two hours in the evening were continued during October with prayer, Bhajan, Swadhyaya, discourse etc.. Every Thursday and Sunday morning, members and devotees performed Paduka Puja. The 23rd Pratishtha anniversary of Sivananda Ashram, was observed on 22nd . Daily Yoga

class and free Acupressure treatment in the morning by devotees are the other ongoing activities.

Nandini Nagar, Chattisgarh: During October, the Branch continued the regular activities of Brahma Muhurta Satsang and evening Satsang. Akhanda Maha Mantra Kirtan for six hours on 3rd, weekly Satsang on Thursdays from 6pm to 8pm and Matri Satsang on Saturdays from 3pm to 5pm were the other activities. Besides, worship of Lord Siva on Mondays and worship of the Divine Mother Durga during Navaratri from 26th September to 4th October with Havan, Kanya Pooja and Feeding were the other events.

Bargarh, Odisha: Daily worship with Anna Bhog to Lord Viswanath, morning and evening Aarati of Sadgurudev, Swadhyaya, Yoga and Pranayama sessions were the regular activities during October. Rudrabhisheka on Mondays, Gurudev's Paduka Pooja on Thursdays, Satsang on Saturdays and Gita recitation and discussions on Sundays were other activities. Homoeo treatment to poor patients

was also continued.

Kakching, Manipur: Daily worship with Rudram, Chamakam and Siva Mahimna Stotra was continued in October. A large number of devotees attended the monthly Satsang on 8th. Tarpan Utsav, sponsored by Dr. N. Nabakishore Singh, President of the Branch, went on with Bhajan, Kirtan and Mahaprasadam partaking.

Panchkula, Haryana: In the presence of Sri Swami Akhilanandaji Maharaj and Swami Shivasritananda Mataji, Satsang and guided meditation were conducted. Swami Akhilanandaji Maharaj gave a discourse on the 12th chapter of Bhagavad Gita. On 24th October, Chidananda day was observed by offering green fodder at Mata Mansa Devi Goshala, Panchkula.

Berhampur, Odisha: The third Sunday of October was observed as Sadhana Day, with meditation, Japa, Guru Paduka Pooja and discussion on Sadhana. On every Thursday and 8th and 24th of the month, special Guru Paduka Puja was performed. On Sankranti day Sundarakanda Parayan, on Ekadasi days

Bhagavad Gita Parayan and during Kartik month, Ekadasa Skandha of Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana Parayan and discussion on the meaning were the other events.

Jeypore, Koraput, Odisha: In the month of September, twice-a-day worship and bi-weekly Satsang on Sundays and Thursdays were continued. The 135th Birthday Anniversary of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and the 106th Birthday Anniversary of H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, were celebrated on 8th and 24th respectively, participated by about 150 devotees with various programmes from 5:30 AM to 2:30 PM. On 24th, 100 students in the age group of 15 to 18, participated in a competition programme on "Philosophy of Gurudev" and prizes were distributed to the winners. As part of the Navaratri celebrations, 90 students participated in Swdhyaya of "God as Mother" from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM from 26th September to 4th October. Altogether, 16 Satsangs were held during the month under report.

Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh: The Branch conducted regular Satsang on 2nd and 30th October, with Jaya

Ganesh prayer, Kirtan, Mantra Japa, Meditation, Swadhyaya and Bhajan by Bal Vahini and adults, ending with Aarati.

Khatiguda, Nabarangapur, Odisha: Daily two-time worships, weekly Satsang on Thursday evening, Sadhana Day with Paduka Puja On 2nd October were the regular activities of the month. Navaratri was celebrated from 26th September to 4th October with daily night Satsang with Archana, worship, invoking Maa Durga, Maha Lakshmi and Maha Saraswati along with Lalita Sahasranama and Swadhyaya. Ekadasi on 6th and 21st were observed with Satsang and Vishnu Sahasranama Parayan.

Bhimakand, Angul, Odisha: Daily regular Guru Paduka Puja at 6:00 AM, and weekly Satsang on Sundays from 4:00 to 6:00 PM were continued. On 30th October, all the DLS Branch Members of Angul district assembled at the Branch and conducted the bi-monthly S a m m e l a n . S w a m i Krishnadasanandaji Maharaj and Pandit Dibakar Nanda ji delivered Pravachan.

Sivananda Sevagrama, Gaham, Angul, Odisha: The Branch

continued with its noble Seva of downtrodden people through Chidananda Centenary Charitable Dispensary. Altogether 8043 needy patients were examined and provided with free medicines during the month of October. Dr. R.N. Panda, Dr. Sucharita Pati and Dr. Ashok Panda and the team of dedicated supporting staff rendered free service.

Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh: During September, the Branch conducted four Satsangs on Mondays with Meditation and Pravachan on 'Devi Bhagavatam' by Smt. J. Satya Moulika ji at Sivananda Kshetram, Sarpavaram.

Puri, Odisha: Daily Satsang and Paduka Puja, and weekly Satsang on Mondays and Thursdays, were continued during September. The 135th Birth Anniversary of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and the 106th Birth Anniversary of H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj were celebrated on 8th and 24th respectively. On both the days poor-feeding was also arranged. 108 times Hanuman Chalisa chanting on Sankranti day, Gita Parayan on Ekadasi days, Srimad Bhagavata Parayana and on 21st a Pravachan by Sri Swami Ramasarananandaji on

Ramakatha were the other activities.

Barbil, Keonjhar, Odisha: The members and devotees conducted five weekly Satsangs during the month of September on Thursdays, and four residential Satsangs at the houses of devotees from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. H.H. Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj's 106th Birthday was celebrated on 24th as Sadhana Day like every month and with special programmes like Nagar Sankirtan, Guru Paduka Pooja, Narayana Seva, Vastra Daan and evening Satsang.

Khatiguda, Nabarangapur, Odisha: Regular activities of worship twice a day, weekly Satsang on Thursday evening, and Sadhana Day with Paduka Pooja on 3rd September were continued. The 135th Birth Anniversary of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and 106th Birth Anniversary of H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, were celebrated on 8th and 24th respectively, with Morning Prayer, Meditation, Guru Paduka Puja and Night Satsang. Navaratri was celebrated every day with Night Satsang, Puja & Archana to Divine Mother along with chanting of Lalita Sahasranama and Swadhyaya from

26th September to 4th October. Ekadasi was observed on 6th and 21st with special Satsang and reciting of Sri Vishnu Sahasranama.

Bhubaneswar, Odisha: In the month of September, the Branch continued regular activities of daily Paduka Puja and Narayan Seva, weekly Satsang on Thursdays and free health service on four days per week. On the 4th, competition for students on moral & spiritual topics through essay writing, elocution, memorized chanting of Gita and Universal Prayer. The 135th Birthday of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and 106th Birthday of H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, were celebrated on 8th and 24th respectively, with various programmes, in the morning and evening sessions. Besides, a special 17-day Jayanti programme from 8th to 24th September at Sivananda Sanskriti Kendra, in morning and evening sessions every day, different spiritual activities including discourses by Saints and senior devotees took place.

Chatrapur, Ganjam, Odisha: In the month of September, Five weekly Satsangs on Thursdays, from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM and Two special

Satsangs on 3rd and 27th were conducted. The 135th Birth Anniversary of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and the 106th Birth Anniversary of H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, were celebrated on 8th and 24th respectively, with Paduka Pooja and various other programmes. Sadhana Day was observed on 25th from 5:00AM to 6:00 AM. On the same day "Sundarakanda Parayan" was conducted in the premises of Laxmi Narayan Temple, Station Road, Chatrapur.

Nimapara, Puri, Odisha: Regular weekly Satsang was held on Thursday in September with Guru Paduka Puja in the morning and Satsang in the evening. Every day in the evening Maha Mantra Kirtan and reading of one chapter of Bhagavata Mahapurana were also conducted. The 135th Birthday of Satgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and the 106th Birthday of H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj were celebrated on 8th and 24th respectively, with various programmes. During this period, mobile Satsang was held every day, in the residence of devotees, in the

presence of Swami Sadasivanandaji Maharaj.

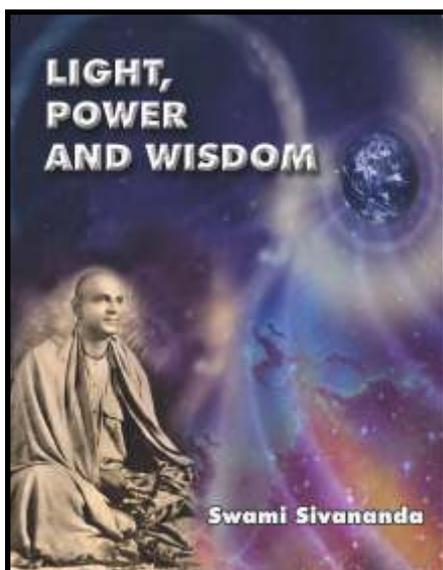
Visakha Rural Branch, Andhra Pradesh: The 135th Birth Anniversary of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and 106th Birth Anniversary of H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj were celebrated on 8th and 24th September respectively, with various programmes. On 8th there was Nagara Sankirtan, Paduka Puja, Prayers, Kirtan and Pravachan. On 24th in the presence of Swamini Vinamrananda Mataji from Shanti Ashram , Thotapalli and Smt. Prabhavati Mataji from Pranavasram Kakinada, there was Pravachan and inauguration of the first floor of the Ashram building. Devi Navaratri from 26th September to 5th October was celebrated, with worships and Mantra chanting both in the morning and in the evening. Sri Rajanna ji & party enthralled the whole gathering with music, Bhajan and Kirtan. On 11th September, a free Medical Camp was organised in the Ashram for the local populace by the gracious free service of Dr.GVS Ramu, MS (Ortho), Dr. Lakshmi Madhavi, Medical Specialist, and Dr. Vishnuvardhan Reddy and Dr. M. Rachana, Ophthalmologists.

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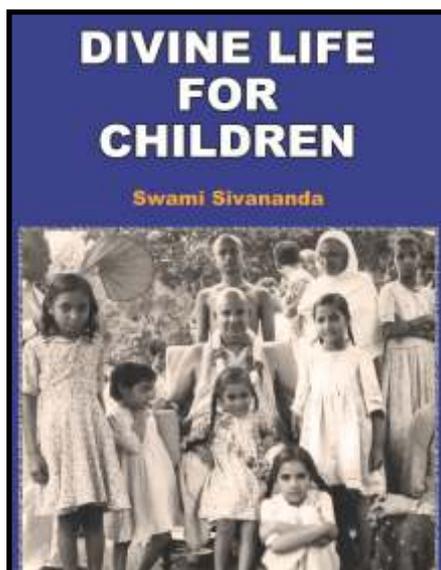
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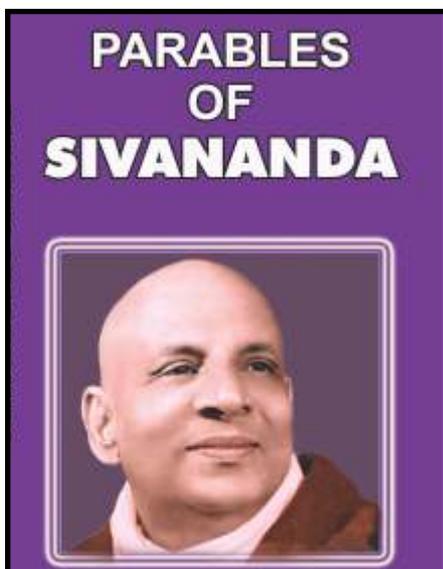
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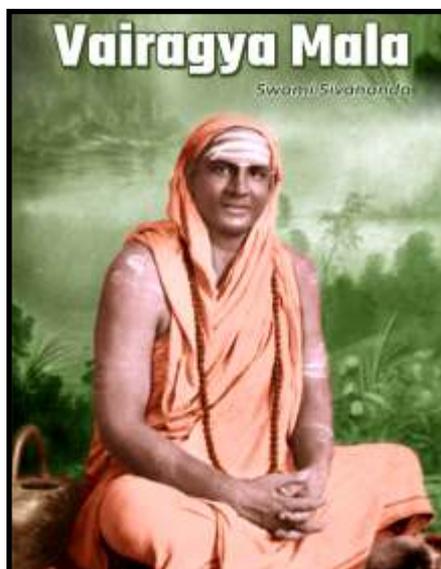
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TWENTY IMPORTANT SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTIONS

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 Namo Narayanaya, Om Namah Sivaya, Om Namo 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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2022**

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INEFFABLE NATURE OF THE HIGHEST SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

Spiritual experiences cannot be described in words. Language is imperfect. They are to be felt and realised by the aspirants. Experiences vary. A devotee, a Yogi and a sage have different spiritual experiences in the beginning. Ultimately, the highest experience is one and invariable. The highest experience is that in which you become identical with the Absolute.

There is neither darkness nor void in this experience. It is all-light. You become a Sarvavid or all-knower. You know the mystery of creation. You get immortality, higher knowledge, and eternal bliss.

In meditation, new grooves are formed in the brain, and the mind moves upwards in the new spiritual grooves. When the mind becomes steady in meditation, the eye-balls also become steady. A Yogi, whose mind is calm, will have a steady eye. There will be no winking at all. The eyes will be lustrous, red or pure white.

When you enter into very deep, silent meditation, the breath will not come out of the nostrils. There may be occasional, slow movement of the lungs and the abdomen.

In profound and continued meditation, thinking ceases. There is only one idea of I am the Infinite, Aham Brahmasmi. When this idea also is given up, Nirvikalpa Samadhi ensues. Just as salt melts in water, the Sattvic mind melts in the Brahman, its Substratum.

Swami Sivananda

To

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