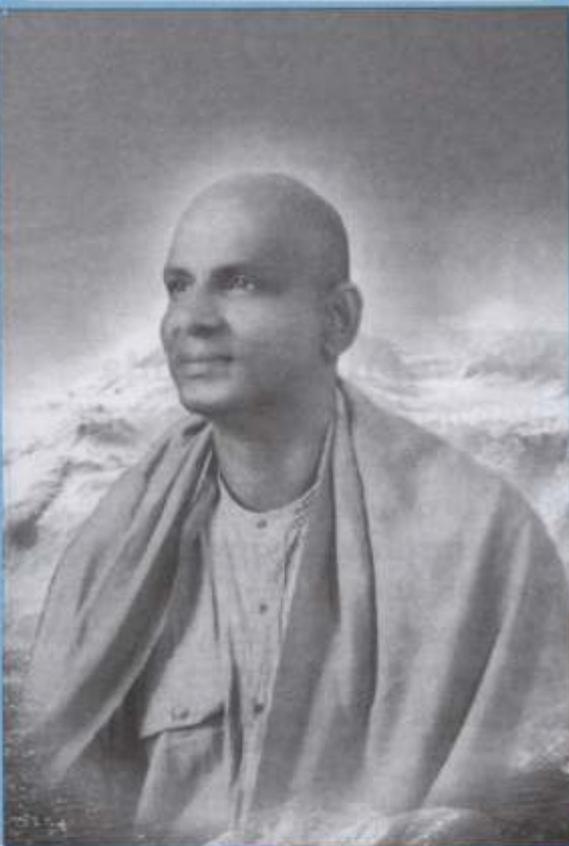


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The DIVINE LIFE



The world is the visible manifestation of God's cosmic play, and all are but actors on the stage of life. For the brief duration, one has to play one's part. One should play well, with goodwill towards all and malice towards none, causing injury to no one, without estrangement or avarice, with mercy and fellowship and the spiritual goal always in view.

Swami Sivananda

MARCH 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**

SIMPLE SADHANA

If you study one chapter of Gita and do two Maalas of Japa daily, if you observe two fasts in a month, and spend the time in prayer, within a single year you can cover a long distance in the path of Yoga. The spiritual Samskaras are present in the subconscious mind. They are indestructible. They will coalesce and form a spiritual bridge through which you can cross to the other shore of fearlessness and immortality in a short time.

Keep company with evolved souls, who tread the path of Truth.
Always mark carefully what is going on in the inner mental factory.

Swami Sivananda



THE DIVINE LIFE

Vol. LXXX

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No. 12

PRASNOPANISHAD

SHASHTHA PRASNA (QUESTION VI)

स यथेमा नद्यः स्यन्दमानाः समुद्रायणाः समुद्रं प्राप्यास्तं
गच्छन्ति भिद्येते तासां नामरूपे समुद्र इत्येवं प्रोच्यते ।

एवमेवास्य परिद्रष्टुरिमाः षोडशकलाः पुरुषायणाः पुरुषं प्राप्यास्तं गच्छन्ति
भिद्येते चासां नामरूपे पुरुष इत्येवं प्रोच्यते स एषोऽकलोऽमृतो भवति तदेष श्लोकः ॥५॥

Just as these rivers flowing towards the sea, when they have reached the sea, disappear, their names and forms perish and all is called sea, so also these sixteen parts of the witness that go towards the Purusha, disappear, their names and forms are destroyed and all is called Purusha alone. 'He becomes without parts and immortal'. On this, there is this verse.

शिवानन्दाश्रममहिमा

SIVANANDASHRAM MAHIMA

(पञ्चचामरसप्तकम्)

Jnana Bhaskara Mahamahopadhyaya Sri S. Gopala Sastri

सुतुङ्गभङ्गजह्नु जातटान्तवीचिनादिते
 सुशीतनीरबिन्दुवाहिमन्दमारुतांचिते।
 मनःप्रशान्तिदे सुशर्मसत्कुटीरनामके
 वसन् गुरुत्तमो जयत्यतुल्यभे निजाश्रमे ॥१॥

Sri Gurudev, shines gloriously in his holy hermitage 'Anandakutir', which is incomparably lustrous, which reverberates with the sound of high waves of river Ganga, which is adorned with the breeze bringing with it cool water particles, and which bestows supreme peace.

जनान् कुमार्गगामिनो नयन् सुधर्म्यवर्त्मना
 हितोपदेशमाधुरीवशीकृताखिलान्तरः।
 सुनिश्चिताशयप्रदर्शनान्त्रिरस्तसंशयः
 प्रशास्ति लोकमद्वितीयवैभवेन सद्गुरुः ॥२॥

Sri Gurudev instructs the world by his matchless magnificence, leading the people, who are on evil path, to the path of Dharma, attracting the minds of all by the sweetness of his nectarine teachings and removing all doubts by the exposition of his firm ideas.

To be Continued

HOLI

Sri Swami Sivananda

(The Holi marks the advent of spring and the rekindling of its glow in the hearts of people. As usual with Hindu festivals, Holi also has a many-faceted lore woven round it, which has an appropriate significance for all the levels of society— spiritual, mythological, and social. This year the Holi falls on the 19th of March. We send the readers the season's greetings and reproduce here for their edification a few excerpts from the talks and writings of Sri Gurudev on the subject.)

All great Hindu festivals have religious and social elements in them. And Holi, the greatest festival, is no exception. Every season has a festival of its own. Holi is the great spring festival of India. India has been an agricultural country and hence, our two big festivals are harvest

festivals and they occur at a time when the barns and granaries of our farmers are full and they have reason to enjoy the fruits of their hard labour. The harvest season is a festival season all over the world.

The religious element in the Holi festival is the worship of Lord Krishna. It is also called at certain places 'Dol Yatra', the word 'Dol' literally means a swing.

The social element in Holi is the 'embracing' function between the great and the small, and amongst the equals, the rich and the poor. And the festival teaches 'let the dead past bury its dead'. Forget the outgoing year's ill-feelings and begin the New Year with love, sympathy and co-operation and equality for all.

The Holika legend describes Prahlad's devotion to Narayana and his subsequent escape from

death at the hands of Holika. Hiranyakashipu punished Prahlad in a variety of ways to change his devotional mind and make him worldly-minded. He failed in all his attempts. At last, he ordered his sister Holika, who had a boon to remain unburnt even inside the fire, to take Prahlad on her lap and enter into the blazing flames of the fire. Holika did so. Holika vanished, but Prahlad was laughing. He was not affected by the fire on account of the Grace of Lord Narayana. And the same thing is done every year to remind people that those who love God shall be saved, and those that torture the devotee of God shall be reduced to ashes.

Holi means Homa or sacrifice. Burn all the impurities of the mind such as egoism, vanity, lust etc., through the fire of devotion and knowledge. Burn the ignorance, which is the root-cause for your pains, sorrows and sufferings through the fire of Brahma-jnana. Ignite cosmic

love, mercy, generosity, selflessness, truthfulness, purity etc. through the fire of Yoga Sadhana. This is real Holi. Get up from the mire of stupidity and absurdity and dive deep into the ocean of Divinity.

The call of Holi is to keep always the blaze of love shining in your heart. Inner spiritual illumination is real Holi. Spring season is the Swaroop of the Lord. Holi is His Heart.

O Man! Burn the lust within, burn the beginningless ignorance and shine in divine splendour. This is real Holi. O Man! Go beyond colours and forms, transcend the Maya of colours and attain the colourless Atman. This is the real Holi. This world is a play of colours. Do not run after colour, do not be duped by colour. It will fade in no time. Understand the philosophy of Holi, rest in the colourless Atma, rejoice in the ever-blissful Self and enjoy the real 'Holi' of 'Holies'.

THE FIVE BHAVAS

Sri Swami Sivananda

God can be approached by the devotees through various Bhavas. There are five main Bhavas which are natural to human beings and therefore easy to practise.

1. Dasya Bhava – the Bhava in which the Bhakta takes himself to be the Lord's servant.
2. Vatsalya Bhava – in which the Bhakta takes the Lord to be his Child.
3. Sakhya Bhava – in which the Bhakta considers the Lord to be his Friend.
4. Madhurya Bhava – in which the devotee regards the Lord as his Lover.
5. Shanta Bhava – is the attitude in which the devotee peacefully and in utter silence and tranquility meditates upon the Lord.

Of all the Bhavas, Madhurya Bhava is the highest. In recent times, Lord Gauranga had this Bhava. When he used to do Nagar Kirtan, to go about the streets singing the Lord's Name, he would blissfully dance completely oblivious of his surroundings.

In Bengal, even now, they perform Nagar Kirtan. Whenever

they hold Sankirtan Conferences, which usually go on for four or five days, on the first day, they have Nagar Kirtan. With a big party singing the Lord's Names to the accompaniment of all kinds of musical instruments, they move about, so that Bhagawan's Name may be spread everywhere and the entire atmosphere purified and cleansed of lust, crookedness, hypocrisy and cheating. This also acts as an advertisement. People come to know that there would be a big Sankirtan Conference where Bhaktas would assemble to sing the Lord's Name.

The Kirtan Dhvani which Lord Gauranga used to sing during such Nagar-Kirtans was:

*Hare Krishna Hare Krishna,
Krishna Krishna Hare Hare,
Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama
Rama Hare Hare*

The name should come from the bottom of the heart. Open the chambers of your heart for the entry of the Divine Grace, so that all your sins will be destroyed. Right now this very second, you should have Darshan of the Lord and Mukti.

YOUR REAL PROBLEM

Sri Swami Chidananda

Radiant Immortal Atman! Beloved and blessed children of Light, assembled in Gurudev's spiritual presence in this sacred Samadhi Hall! May the divine grace of the supreme Eternal Reality, the one reality behind ever-changing names and forms, enable you to become firmly established in the noble ideals and divine principles, that you have adopted for living your chosen way of life, and in the lofty spiritual qualities which are indispensably necessary to become firmly established in the spiritual life. May His divine grace enable you to develop the inner spiritual strength to cultivate successfully the noble divine qualities – Daivi Sampada – like Shama, Dama, Titiksha, Uparati, Shraddha and Samadhana (calmness of mind, control of senses, endurance, self-

withdrawal, faith and proper concentration), like Viveka, Vairagya and Mumukshutva (discrimination, dispassion and a burning desire for liberation), and the qualities of Ahimsa, Satyam and Brahmacharya.

May the grace of Gurudev make it possible for you to not only be firmly established in these sublime divine qualities, but also to effectively apply them in your day-to-day life, in your daily thinking, feeling, speech and actions. May Gurudev's Guru-kripa grant you the insight and wisdom to effectively adhere to and apply these noble principles and divine qualities in your relationship with life around you, with your fellow beings whom you have to deal with in the Vyavaharic field.

Idealism is one thing. But idealism becoming a living force in

your day-to-day life, in your being and doing, in the manner in which you relate yourself to your fellow beings in the field of daily Vyavahara, that becomes another thing. That becomes practical idealism. That becomes applied divinity, Daivi Sampada in action! This is more difficult because it encounters various adverse factors and obstacles. It also encounters the formidable obstacle of your mind's refusal to give way to higher principles in preference to lesser principles. This is because the mind sometimes has its own attachments, whims and fancies, and it has fallen in love with certain lesser ways of expressing itself. It clings to them; it does not want to leave them.

There is an essential unwillingness of the mind to change, sometimes obstinacy, sometimes even obduracy. Therefore, great wisdom, earnestness and sincere application are necessary in order

to bring the mind around, recreate it and to cultivate in ourselves a new mind. It is a regeneration. Gurudev used a significant phrase in one song: "Die to live." The old has to die and give place to the new in your interior. It is in dying to the little self that one attains to everlasting life.

It is a very difficult task. You can suppress the mind. You can repress it. You can keep it in check. But to make it die, so that it forever leaves off its old inveterate tendencies and consents to become totally new, that is a very difficult task. For, the mind is always propelled by a basic delusion, a basic ignorance, i.e. Maya. With your efforts, it appears to be dead, but it is still there, because it is propelled from inside by this great illusory and delusory force.

In his song of "Eighteen Ities," Gurudev says, "Brahman is the only real entity," and follows it immediately by saying "Mr. So and So is a false non-entity." As long as one does not overcome the deluded

notion that “I am important, I am something, I am someone,” unless you realise and become convinced that Mr. So and So, your “I” within, your little personality-consciousness, your distinctive ego-consciousness, is a false non-entity, it is very difficult to really start living the divine life.

We still cling to that within us which is not the Divine, which is the outcome of Bhranti (error), the outcome of Avidya, of Ajnana (ignorance). Dehatma-buddhi (considering the body as the Atman) gives rise to this false ego-principle of a distinctive, separate, individual human personality-consciousness. It is the Adhyasa (superimposition), the proximity of the Shuddha Chaitanya Tattva (pure consciousness principle) which is your Nija Svarupa (own true nature) with the Jada Tattva (insentient principle) that goes to make up your Prakriti, that is your earthly self.

It is this proximity that has given rise to this ego-principle

which is, at the moment, the most important thing in the whole world. Even though it is a nothing, even though it constitutes your bondage, your essential darkness, your Prapancha and Samsara, your greatest problem and affliction, yet, such is the tremendous power of Maya, that she makes you regard it as the most important thing to be treasured and supported, to be carefully preserved and nurtured. From morning till evening, we are doing nothing but taking care of it, trying to see that it is not in any way assailed or hurt. We do everything to keep it permanently there, whereas we should see clearly that it is our greatest problem. It indeed constitutes our true problem, the central problem of our spiritual life.

And if you psychologically investigate ego-consciousness, analyse it, pursue it and begin to find out, then psychologically also, you will find it to be the kingpin of

all troubles, the clashes and conflicts, the fights and quarrels, the bitterness and hatreds. But then, one does not wish to do this keen critical analysis of one's inner personality structure. For, the ego is the essence of it. It is the prop of the personality. It is the ridge-pole of this life. And if the ridge-pole is taken away, the whole tent will collapse. There will be nowhere for you to reside. So, it is always maintained. Great importance is given to it. Yet it is our affliction. Ahamkarti (egoism) is our Badha (hindrance). It is our Bhavaroga (disease of transmigration and worldly existence). It is the main affliction from which we are suffering. But we do not know that it is the source of our suffering. We think that it will protect us from all suffering. We rely upon it. We depend upon it to maintain our integrity.

Everyone knows the great adage, "Then shall I be free, when I shall cease to be," but we do not recognise its truth, its validity and its

importance. We do not recognise its worth in our life, its central place in our Sadhana. So we know everything, yet we live in ignorance. We have all the knowledge, yet we cling to ignorance. That is why we weep and wail, we fight and quarrel. We bring upon ourselves various types of afflictions, frustrations, disappointments, disillusionments, sorrows and griefs, not knowing that the key is simple. We can rise above all of them, if we refuse to give importance to this ego-consciousness, this "so and so" false non-entity and become established in the truth of our being.

Yet, even though this is said a hundred times, we fail to recognise this truth. That is why Lord Krishna says, "*daivi hyesha gunamayi mama maya duratyaya* (Verily, this divine illusion of Mine, made up of the three qualities of nature, is difficult to cross over)." Difficult it is to understand; for, it is so subtle, so elusive, so effective, that knowing, yet, one does not know. One lives in

ignorance. Seeing, yet, one does not perceive. One still remains blind. Hearing, yet, one does not really understand. One pays no attention to what one hears. Therefore, even though hearing, one still fails to understand what is being said.

This is the subtle workings of Maya, which wants to preserve this personality, which deserves to be liquidated and not preserved. Yet, its preservation is the most important business of life for the vast number of individuals that go to make up human society. Fortunate indeed are the microscopic few, who clearly recognise that our main problem is ourselves, that our Prapancha lies within us, our Samsara lies within us, our bondage lies within us, not outside. Others are not our problem. We are more our problem than all others put together. This indeed is to be pondered, to be grasped, to be understood and known, and this indeed has to be dealt with, one day or another, if

you are to transcend yourself and attain your true status, your divine identity. One day it has to be done. Until that time, we shall still be carefully nourishing and preserving our problems, we shall be carefully perpetuating our bondage and protecting our troubles.

Think deeply. Cursory reflection will not take you into that which alone can make you realise the truth of the reality. It is only deep thinking that will bring you face to face with this central truth of your present situation, that you are presently established in a limited, separate human consciousness, a “so and so” consciousness, a “such and such” consciousness. Deep reflection will be necessary to realise the actual nature of your present consciousness, deep and constant reflection.

Therefore, we invoke the grace of the Divine and the benedictions of holy beings like Holy Master, to enable us to become well aware of the state of our inner

consciousness, to enable us to deal with the situation the way it is, to rise and go beyond our lesser self and become established in our true Self, our divinity.

Then alone divine life starts. Then alone divine life is possible. Otherwise, Maya deludes us into thinking that we have already lifted our consciousness into a higher plane, while keeping us firmly established in our plane of the I-consciousness. It is difficult to understand the very subtle workings of Maya, unless we are constantly after her with in-depth thinking, reflection and reasoning. Therefore they say, you must have keen, actively-exercised discrimination as your constant companion day by day. Great is the need to supplement our devotion with keen, analytical, critical reasoning. Bhakti, Jnana and Vairagya—all three have to go together.

We are celebrating the birth

anniversary of one of the greatest spiritual personalities of India, who had within himself an abundant measure of Bhakti and Jnana as well as Vairagya. So his name has become immortal. Sri Krishna Chaitanya Gauranga Mahaprabhu was a supreme devotee established in the highest state of Bhakti. But at the same time, he was a very strictly rational, logical and keenly analytical personality. And due to the combination of these two, he became established in the highest type of Vairagya, supreme Vairagya. If you study his life, you will be astounded to see in his personality a rare confluence of the highest Bhakti, highest Jnana and highest Vairagya.

He, who lived more than 500 years ago and is the inspirer of the Hare Krishna movement, the Gaudiya Vaishnava Sampradaya (sect), is indeed a great ideal. He perfectly realised the falsity and nothingness of his little ego-consciousness and at one stroke

was able to cast away all ambition and all his love for learning and rationality. He had been an outstanding scholar and a towering intellect. But due to his great insight and great spiritual awakening within, he was able to put away his ambition and scholarship and conquer the ego—a very difficult task indeed. If you have conquered the ego, you have conquered Samsara, you have conquered Prapancha, you have overcome bondage, you have liberated yourself.

“Then shall I be free when I shall cease to be.” This “I” which is so dear to everyone, which is the most important thing in the whole world for everyone, which one does not want to let go of, this really constitutes your problem and it creates problems for others also.

And it is to solve this problem that all philosophies have come up. All the great Acharyas – Sankaracharya, Ramanujacharya, Madhvacharya, Vallabhacharya,

Nimbarkacharya, etc., all the great teachers, Guru Nanak, Zoroaster, Jesus, Buddha, have laboured only in order to teach us, to enable us to overcome this little “I”. It is inveterate and very difficult indeed to recognise it in its true colours. All the philosophies exist only in order to debunk this “I”. All systems and schools of philosophy exist to make us see this truth clearly, that “I” is your real problem. It is not an easy joke. You have to become a real philosopher, you have to become a real Yogi, you have to become a real Vairagi, you have to become a real Viveki, in order to recognise this subtlest of all subtle truths.

God bless you. God's grace is necessary. Guru's Kripa is necessary and our willingness to face facts is necessary. Our willingness to recognise the truth when we see it, is necessary. It is the third important necessity. May you be endowed with all three!

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Blessed Atman,

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Om Namo Bhagavate Sivanandaya.

Loving Pranams.

As you all know that 25th April 2022 is the sacred day of Birth Centenary of Beloved and Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj. To commemorate this auspicious occasion, the Headquarters Ashram had decided to organise a year-long programme, but due to the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic, it could not materialise.

Unfortunately, the Covid-19 situation prevailed and we could not commence the 100 Days Birth Centenary Programme also from 14th January 2022 as planned. However, the books and booklets of Param Pujya Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj are being published at regular intervals as a part of Birth Centenary Celebration.

Now with the divine grace of the Lord Almighty and blessings of Sri Gurudev, the third wave of Covid-19 has subsided. Therefore, the Ashram intends to celebrate the sacred occasion of Birth Centenary of Pujya Swamiji Maharaj from 18th March to 25th April in a grand manner by organising various spiritual and cultural programmes. Details regarding the Birth Centenary Programmes are being published in the following pages of the Magazine.

The DLS Branches are also requested to organise befitting spiritual programmes and Seva activities in the sacred memory of Pujya Sri Swamiji Maharaj, observing the Covid-19 protocol. In this regard, I would like to share with you the cardinal objectives given to the Divine Life Society Branches in the year 1986 for the Centenary Celebration of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. These objectives epitomise Sadgurudev's chief mottoes of Serve, Love and Give.

-
1. Feed the hungry
 2. Clothe the naked
 3. Nurse the sick
 4. Uplift the fallen
 5. Disseminate spiritual knowledge and unfold the spirituality latent in man

The Branches can focus on either one or more of these cardinal objectives to celebrate the Birth Centenary of Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj.

May the abundant blessings of Lord Vishwanatha, Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj be upon all.

With Prem and Om,



Swami Yogaswarupananda
President

Feel the Divine Presence everywhere—in every form, in every thought, in every feeling and in every sentiment, in every movement, in every emotion.

God, seen through the senses, is matter. God, seen through the intellect, is mind. God, seen through the spirit, is Atman or the Self.

Thou art indwelt by the Lord. He is the inner ruler, Antaryamin, guarding and controlling your life. He is in you and you are in Him. He is quite close to you. He is not very far, but is nearer to you than you are to yourself. You were thinking in the beginning that He could be found only in Mount Kailas, Ramesvaram, Mecca, Jerusalem, sky or heaven. You had very vague ideas. This body is His moving temple. The sanctum sanctorum is the chamber of your own heart. Close your eyes. Withdraw your Indriyas from the sensual objects. Search Him in thy heart with one-pointed mind, devotion and pure love. You will surely find Him. He is waiting there with outstretched arms to embrace you. If you cannot find Him there, you cannot find Him anywhere else.

Swami Sivananda

SWAMI KRISHNANANDA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATION (18th March to 25th April 2022)

25th April 2022 marks the glorious occasion of Birth Centenary of Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj. The Birth Centenary Celebrations of Pujya Swamiji Maharaj will commence at the Headquarters Ashram on 18th March 2022, the sacred day of Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu Jayanti.

The programmes being organised during this period are as follows: -

22nd March to 28th March 2022	Srimad Bhagavat Saptah by Sadhvi Muralikaji of Barasana
2nd April to 6th April 2022	Veda Parayana, Pavamana Homa and Special Pujas
10th April 2022	Sri Ramanavami Celebration
12th April to 18th April 2022	Srimad Bhagavat Katha by Sri Nochur Venkataraman
19th April & 20th April 2022	Kabir Bhajans in the Malwi folk style by Sri Prahlad Tipaniya, Madhya Pradesh
21st to 23rd April 2022	Spiritual Conference
24th April 2022	Devotional Music by Sri Kartik Raman
25th April 2022	Grand Celebration of 100th Birthday of Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj

From 18th March to 25th April 2022, Prabhat-pheri and Akhand Mahamantra Kirtan at Bhajan Hall will be done by the Sannyasis and Brahmacharis of the Ashram and the devotees from various DLS Branches.

The Divine Life Society

PRACTICAL HINTS ON SADHANA

Sri Swami Krishnananda

1. First of all, there should be a clear conception of the Aim of one's life.

2. The Aim should be such that it should not be subject to subsequent change of opinion or transcendence by some other thought, feeling or experience. It means, the Aim should be ultimate, and there should be nothing beyond that.

3. It will be clear that, since the ultimate Aim is single, and set clearly before one's mind, everything else in the world becomes merely an instrument, an auxiliary or an accessory to the fulfilment of this Aim.

4. It is possible to make the mistake that only certain things in the world are aids in the realisation of one's Aim of life, and that others are obstacles. But this is not true; because everything in the world is interconnected and it is not possible to divide the necessary from the unnecessary, the good from the bad, etc., except in a purely relative

sense. The so-called unnecessary items or the useless ones are those whose subtle connection with our central purpose in life is not clear to our minds. This happens when our minds are carried away by sudden emotions or spurts of enthusiasm.

5. All this would mean that it is not advisable or practicable to ignore any aspect of life totally, as if it is completely irrelevant to the purpose of one's life. But, here begins the difficulty in the practice of Sadhana, because it is not humanly possible to consider every aspect of a situation, when one tries to understand it.

6. The solution for this is the training which one has to receive under a competent Guru, who alone can suggest methods of entertaining such a comprehensive vision of things, which is the precondition of a true spiritual life, or a life of higher meditation.

7. There are economic and material needs as well as vital longings of the human nature which

have to be paid their due, at the proper time and in the proper proportion, not with the intention of acquiring comfort and satisfaction to one's self, but with a view to the sublimation of all personal desires or urges, whether physical, vital or psychological. An utter ignorance of this fact may prove to be a sort of hindrance in one's further practice on the path of Sadhana.

8. It is, of course, necessary that one should live a life of reasonable seclusion under the guidance of a master, until such time when one can stand on one's own legs, and think independently, without any aid from anyone.

9. But, one should, now and then, test one's ability to counteract one's reactions to the atmosphere, even when one is in the midst of intractable and irreconcilable surroundings. Seclusion should not mean a kind of self-hypnotism or hibernation and an incapacity to face the atmosphere around.

10. It should also not mean that one should be incapable of living in seclusion alone to oneself, when the occasion for it comes. In short, the ideal should be

achievement of an equanimous attitude to circumstances, whether one is alone to oneself, or one is in the midst of an irreconcilable social atmosphere.

11. While in seclusion, the mind should not be allowed to go back to the circumstances of one's family life, official career or to problems which are likely to disturb the concentration of the mind on God, because the pressure of these earlier experiences may sometimes prove itself to be greater in intensity, than one's love of God.

12. It is impossible to concentrate on God, unless one has a firm conviction and faith, that whatever one expects in this world, can also be had from God; nay, much more than all these things which the world has as its treasures and values.

13. It is difficult to have the vision of one's Aim of Life, when the mind goes out of meditation to whatever it longs for in the world. Hence, a deep study of the Upanishads and the Bhagavad-Gita, the Srimad Bhagavata and such other scriptures is necessary to drive into the mind the conviction

about the Supremacy of God.

14. Study or Svadhyaya, Japa of Mantras, and Meditation, are the three main aspects of spiritual Sadhana.

15. Svadhyaya does not mean study of any book, that one may find anywhere at any time. It means a continued and regular study, daily, of selected holy texts, or even a single text, from among those that have been suggested above. A study in this manner, done at a fixed time, everyday, for a fixed duration, will bring the expected result.

16. The Japa of the Mantra should, in the beginning, be done with a little sound in the mouth, so that the mind may not go here and there towards different things. The loud chant of the Mantra will bring the mind back to the point of concentration. Later on, the Japa can be only with movement of lips, but without making any sound. In the end, the Japa can be only mental, provided that the mind does not wander during the mental Japa.

17. A convenient duration, say, half an hour, or one hour, should be set up at different times, so that the daily Sadhana should be

at least for three hours a day, and not less. It can be increased according to one's capacity, as days pass.

18. During Japa, the mind should think of the meaning of the Mantra, the surrender of oneself to the Deity of the Mantra, and finally, the communion of oneself with that Great Deity. Effort should be put forth to entertain this deep feeling during Japa, every day.

19. Meditation can be either combined with Japa, or it can be independent of Japa. Meditation with Japa means the mental repetition of the Mantra and also, at the same time, meditating deeply on the meaning of the Mantra, as mentioned above.

20. Meditation without Japa is a higher stage where the mind gets so much absorbed in the thought of God, surrender to God and union with God, that in this meditation, Japa automatically stops. This is the highest state of Meditation.

21. Throughout one's Sadhana, it is necessary to feel the oneness of oneself and the universe with God.

SWAMI KRISHNANANDA—AS I KNOW HIM TO BE

Savitri Asopa

It is indeed very difficult to be able to assess fully the glory and greatness of a saint like Krishnananda. A saint alone can know and understand a saint. We, writing of him, is as good as a military man writing about Socrates and Russell scoffing at the adventure! It is like a molehill surveying the summit. Still, on this blessed occasion of Swamiji's Diamond Jubilee, we can offer him a few flowers of prayerful good wishes and a basket full of fruits and gratitude.

I shall begin by narrating, as I know him. My first contact with him was way back in 1953 when we went to Rishikesh. I had not met or seen him but had only heard of him, many times, from my Guru, the Master Sivananda. The way in which Sivananda referred to him often, I could infer he must be an important functionary and a great personality in the Ashram. One day Gurudev gave me a book to

read. It was "The Realisation of the Absolute" by Swami Krishnananda. I went through the book, found it terse and difficult. I was hardly half way through it and gave it up blissfully. I felt it was difficult to understand the book and perhaps much more difficult to know the author. Although I was an M.A. in Philosophy, I felt I could not keep pace with him in the book. That was my first encounter with him. Thereafter, I had many opportunities to see him, but every time I thought I could neither approach him nor understand him. But, when I heard his lectures, I was thrilled, and thrilled so intensely that I felt being an M.A. in Philosophy was no good. For, the first time in life did I feel, I knew nothing, next to nothing. I discovered myself to be small, too small.

One day, when we were returning from the Satsang with

Taken from Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj's 60th Birthday Souvenir

BIRTH CENTENARY YEAR OF SRI SWAMI KRISHNANANDAJI MAHARAJ

Gurudev, he said, "Swami Krishnananda is a very brilliant person, a perfect Jnani, Vedanta Master. He can thrill the world. But I feel sorry for him. His health is not good."

We then had an opportunity to attend a series of Swami Krishnanandaji's lectures. One day, after the lecture I went to him and posed a problem. I said, "Why should I surrender to God? Surrender shall make me lazy and fate-oriented". He said, "No. Surrender is the highest and most difficult human effort, and a great achievement on the part of a Sadhak".

Once, we had some difficulty in our working field. We consulted him. He just smiled and said, "I never react. For I know, God can take better action. If you react, then, God need not take any action".

On another occasion, a man approached him for Mantra Diksha. The man said that he had been to many saints, that all had refused him Diksha. He knew not why. The man was very depressed. Three of his fingers were missing too. Swami Krishnananda said, "You do not know the meaning of Diksha. It means the transference of your

Karmas on my head. I will not give you Diksha, for, I am already suffering. I can no more increase the load of my suffering". However, that man used to be always present in Swamiji's office. One day, we were all sitting with Swamiji in his office. That day he was holding a rosary in his hand. He was talking to us, yet he was rolling the beads. For at least half an hour, it was in his hand. Then suddenly, he called the man to him and in his immense love and mercy, gave him Mantra Diksha. And the rosary too.

In the office, Swamiji would discuss with great humour many a thing—from man to moon and kings to cabbages. One day, he said, "I have to eat very little food from the Langar (Ashram kitchen). If I eat more, then I have to work more". Why? Perhaps it is the clearance of a debt.

Once we had the opportunity to attend his noon lectures for quite some time. In one of these, he stressed something of great importance and interest. What is happiness, after all? We all want it. Then he gave the answer himself—Balance is happiness. Imbalance is sorrow. One has to maintain a balance between the

inner world and the outer world. I asked him how to maintain this balance. He replied, "Meditation makes the balance easy".

With utter simplicity and great clarity, he can discuss and describe the most difficult of spiritual concepts and experiences. As he once said, "At the height of your meditation, the experience or existence of matter disappears. You will actually behold every object disintegrating itself into a spiritual light, just as ice melts away into water". Once, in the course of a lecture, he explained the meaning of 'OM'. He said, "Om is the truth and essence of everything, of the visible and the invisible". One day, a family was sitting in his office and discussing with him many a thing. They told him: "We chant Om, sing Om, do Japa of Om". Swami Krishnananda said, "You know not. Om is a very big thing meant for Japa by Sannyasins only, and that too by those Sannyasins who want nothing from this world. Do not use it for the fulfilment of worldly desires". Then he said, "When you go to a Maharaja, do not ask for pebbles. You should ask for gems. But the highest gain is yours if the

'Maharaja becomes yours. You will own everything. Therefore, do not go to God for anything but for love and devotion and mercy".

Once, a young couple was staying at the Ashram. The husband became a mental case. He had to be shut up in a room. The condition of his wife became pitiable. Swami Krishnananda, in mother-like manner, calmed and consoled the man and restored him to health. He regained the balance of his personality, became normal and cheerful again. I was myself once caught up in an intense eddy of fear and helplessness. In spite of my best efforts, I could not come out of it. I cannot forget how from his spiritual height, Swamiji just lifted me out of the whirlpool of anxiety and nervousness.

Now, from his book, 'The Realisation of the Absolute', I come to his recent books. There is a complete change in the writing to suit the temper and ability of the modern lay-man. Swamiji's present-day writings are very simple, interesting and thoroughly psychological. Truly it is said, as you ascend, you become simple and simple. Clarity, and not ambiguity,

is the mark of wisdom. When we read his books like "Kathopanishad", "The Ascent of the Soul" or "The Philosophy of the Bhagavad Gita", we feel that he is first leading us through psychological planes. When sufficient of these planes are traversed, we come to moral cliffs, and then to moral mountains. Suddenly he begins the spiritual ascent. Like an aeroplane, we take off. Joy begins here. We start enjoying the book at this point.

Since I have known him these

many years, I find him to be a living Gita. A Jnana Yogi, rigorous like Kant, and yet mystical like Sankara. Even cheerful, witty, gay. Ever ready to discuss the most difficult of things in the world, always lovingly and equally easily. Swami Krishnananda presents an admirable study in the excellence of asceticism and the rigours of renunciation interspersed with peals of laughter to banish a while the woes of the world. Glory to the great! Glory to Sri Swami Krishnananda!

The sage lives for ever. He has attained life everlasting. Cravings torture him not. Sins stain him not. Birth and death touch him not. Pains and tribulations torment him not.

A Jivanmukta may give up his body in any place, at any time. Just as the falling leaves and fruits of a tree will not affect the tree itself, so also, the dropping of the body will not affect the Atman, which survives like the tree. His Pranas do not depart elsewhere for transmigration. They are absorbed in Brahman after the exhaustion of his Prarabdha [the results of past actions that have already begun to bear fruit]. He is freed from further births.

The Jivanmukta is freed from the trammels of mind and matter. He is absolutely free, perfect, independent. He is absolutely free from hatred, lust, cares, worries and anxieties. Everybody will surely like this state of beatitude or final emancipation. It is the final goal of life. It is the end of all human aspirations.

Swami Sivananda

SIVARATRI AT SHIVANANDA NAGAR

Chronicler: Swami Chaitanyananda

16th February, 1958

Some of those who are destined to live in busy cities, in spite of their strong desire to live in seclusion and practise meditation and other spiritual practices, are seen today to alight from cars, buses and trains and proceed towards Ananda Kutir. Nothing on the way seems to interest them; they are not particular about their costly dress; the thoughts of food and the inclemency of climate occupy not their minds; the duties which they leave behind, urgent though they be, distract them not; their slender purses which will soon be emptied, disturb them not; no, nothing mundane, nothing temporal discourages them when they think of paying their periodical homage to their Gurudev and fall at his feet.

There is an atmosphere of auspiciousness and an unusual stir about the Ashram from the dawn. The loudspeaker is on duty, the Pundits and Pujaris are busy, and the devotees are absorbed in their

own thoughts and items of Sadhana. Swamiji and his staff are pressed by an additional work. Brilliant lights everywhere, thanks to the electricity, songs and Kirtans and Japa in the Vishwanath Temple, in Bhajan Hall, on the Ghats of the Ganges, performance of Homa, decorations with flowers and green leaves, circumambulation around the Temple, suspension of daily routine. Why all this today? What is the speciality?

Ah, the dry routine deceived us! It is the 16th of Feb., the auspicious occasion of Sivaratri, when the devotees of Lord Siva and Bhaktas and disciples of His Holiness are eager to spend the day at Shivananda Nagar. Why? Some of them came a week ago and are waiting for this moment. The candidates for Sannyas are fasting and forgetting the world. They have resolved to say good-bye to the glamour of senses and attraction of the world, and are bent on complete renunciation. Lo! Here they emerge

from the Kutir with ochre-coloured robes and OM NAMA SIVAYA on their lips. Do their clothes, appearing like flame, signify that their past sins and Karmas are reduced to ashes by the fire of Sannyas? These souls are shining with a rare brilliance today. They are recalled to their pristine glory and have taken a NEW BIRTH. The highest Truth of the Upanishadic lore 'Tat Tvam Asi' has been revealed to them by their revered Gurudev. To realise the goal individually and experience the Atman 'directly and immediately', they have only to meditate on this great dictum. Let us join with those who sing 'Glory to Sannyas, glory to Gurus, glory to the scriptures, glory to the disciples and glory to the Goal, the all-pervading Brahman'.

The whole day was spent in Japa, Kirtan, fasting, Puja and Ganges bath. Shadows of night are thick upon us, the eagerness to see Gurudev and to participate in the Satsang has possessed us. Ascending the steps and reaching the Temple, we find ourselves drowned in a flood of light illuminating the Holy Shrine. The Sanctum Sanctorum is beyond our

description. Here Lord Siva and Lord Krishna are living in complete harmony and friendship. Lord Krishna is as picturesquely decorated as the Holy Lingam Itself, nay, all the Inhabitants of our Vishwanath Mandir appear in their best spirit. They are all swimming on the waters of Sat-chit-ananda. Everyone that entered the precincts of this Temple was instantaneously inspired and lost in SIVANANDAM. No one wanted to go down, but the thought of Gurudev's presence in the Satsang Bhavan did not leave us till we entered the latter.

We came a little earlier. The music party of the Ashram is in full enthusiasm. Vocal and instrumental music are rivalling with each other. This is Swami Sangeetananda, sitting in the middle, shaking and moving his limbs which are dancing to the tune of the harmonium and Tabla, and giving you a song in praise of Lord Siva. The party was almost unconcerned with the audience and looked at one another—now laughing, now nodding the head, now closing the eyes: mutual appreciation, mutual encouragement and willing co-

operation. Sangeetanandaji and Sadasivanandaji have interchanged their duties, the Manjira passing from the latter to the former. This performance was also equally interesting; but ignorant as we are of technicalities of music, we are not in a position to adjudge which was better. The audience then was entertained by Swami Amaranandaji, who sang with religious fervour. Swami Omtatsatananda, who took charge from Amaranandaji, greatly impressed us both by his music and his spiritual mood of absorption. You could easily detect the harmony between his thoughts and the music he breathed out. We wanted him to continue, when someone else claimed the right. Presently the scene changes.

Swamiji's arrival was heralded by the entrance of Swami Shantanandaji, and that caused a stir, a happy stir. "What is that?" said the first voice; "Swamiji Maharaj", returned the second voice in a whisper. All stood, not out of fear but compelled by their love, devotion and respect for their Master. Half in the door, but no-no, he is Satchidanandaji. Hush! The

dignified and holy Presence, slowly proceeding towards the chair, surveying the whole Satsang with his beaming eyes, yet appearing as though they are not observing anything but the floor. Here is a salutation and a 'Jai Ho' from him instead of from you. But Swamiji seemed receiving respect while giving it to you! Then the chair felt happy, for so long it was in a state of expectancy and eagerness. Its ambition has been fulfilled along with those of hundreds of eyes that wanted to feast upon the Holy Presence.

The enthusiasm of musical instruments broke the silence. Something reminded Swamiji—perhaps the music—of Srimati Lakshmi, who sang on the All India Radio, New Delhi. She is the daughter of Swami Mounanandaji who was sitting behind the chair. "Mounananda Swami", issued the solemn voice, "Our Lakshmi's performance was—there are three classes A, B, C; and her rank is above even A!"

"Yes Swamiji, I have just heard from Srimati Vani Bai", readily replied Mounanandaji.

As though to testify the statements, Vani Bai looked at them

assuringly. There was no room for further argument. And for a moment Swamiji listened to the music party, but made no remarks.

As is usual with Swamiji, he then mentally surveyed matters connected with correspondence, etc., and made appropriate enquiries about Prasad, books, milk for the singers, important letters to be written, so on and so forth. But, mind you, all this happened in one minute, as it generally happens in our dreams. Having ascertained whatever was necessary for the occasion, Swamiji returned to his characteristic repose and self-absorption, but none will allow him to go on with his meditation and absorption; and particularly today, Srimati Bhagyalakshmi was drawing him out from his depths by some enquiry or other. She impresses you as a conversationalist, and is happy to find the Master equally responsive. Because of the music, much was heard only to them both. Even Hridayananda was seen struggling to capture the words although she was nearest to Swamiji. I attempted desperately and gave it up as unfruitful; but could not altogether

be unconcerned with it. But happily for us, Swamiji's humorous remarks, constituted of a word or two, relieved us of the strain. We laughed, sometimes against our will, and enjoyed the 'rare' and witty remarks. The Prasad that fell now and then into our hands—fruits, sweets, among others—kept up our joy unabated. Hridayananda made a mistake of eating one plantain, and she was punished by a bunch of three more. Thus the time sped. The musicians were changing hands.

While distributing Prasad, a small mistake was made by the distributor, when Swamiji remarked, “The distributing of Prasad is a Science — a course of five years. It is not so simple.” This remark was at once humorous and revealing. That it is nothing short of a science is known to Sri Satyagyanam and Shantanandaji.

“Now”, said Swamiji, “Our Vani Bai Ram will give us her sweet Bhajans”.

“In Carnatic music?”

“In Carnatic or Hindustani, or in anything. Whatever you like.”

She had hardly begun, when Swamiji remarked: “Without Sangeet, man's life is tasteless.”

Vani Bai sang melodiously several songs and entertained the audience.

A recommendation was made to direct Shantanandaji to sing his mellifluous 'Dheere' song. His tone is captivating. You never feel disinclined to listen to him. The innocent smile that dances on his child-like face adds to the charm. Swamiji always insists on his facing the audience so that the latter may appreciate his Bhava, so that the contagious smile may spread to all. And this always takes place.

Srimati Chandravati Singh gave us her mild and sweet Bhajan in Hindi. "Very nice", appreciated Swamiji.

A few Veenas were brought in by Mr. Shepherd and students of music. Bhagyalakshmi requested Swamiji to call Venkatesanandaji for playing on the Veena. "Yes, but he has to do his work of typing and editing only at night. People trouble him during the day every now and then. Therefore he works till 12 or 1 o'clock at night", said Swamiji, and refrained from issuing orders.

Sri Parvatikar Maharaj was to begin his marvellous performance on Sitar and Swaramandali. Before that, Swami Jyotirmayanandaji was

ordered to talk on the importance and glory of Sivaratri in Hindi. The significance of this auspicious occasion was explained by him. Philosophically, Sivaratri signifies the attainment of spiritual goal when the Atman is intuitively realised. The illumination symbolises the effulgence and knowledge of the Atman. Siva is the Supreme Reality and the devotee is the human soul: Darshan stands for Atma-Sakshatkar. The final consummation is reached through the practice of spiritual Sadhanas. The path is tedious but the goal is sure—experience of Sat-Chit-Ananda.

Swami Premananda spoke next. Swami Murugananda desired to speak. He was permitted. He had read out his speech in Tamil. He explained the mysterious ways and grace of the Lord, giving us an incidence of his life that led to his embracing of Sannyasa.

A CHALLENGE TO YAMA (DEATH)

During the war, he was working as a Seaman. Once, his ship was torpedoed near Australia. He knew not swimming. His friend, a Stoker, asked him to put on the life-belt and be floating on the water, while he will swim to the Captain's ship and send some life-boat.

Swami Murugananda lay on the water for 12 hours, repeating 'MURUGA', 'MURUGA', 'Meenakshi', 'Meenakshi', and praying. The life of the life-belt was only twelve hours, so after the eleventh hour, it began sinking, and Murugananda was drinking water in fear. But there was neither a shark nor any other carnivorous aquatic creature to make short work of him. When the rescuing boat came and searched for the Bhakta, he was to be seen nowhere. Imagining that he was lost forever, the Lieutenant was about to return, when suddenly some voice reached his ears — 'Muruga', 'Meenakshi', but the source of the voice could not be seen with his naked eyes. The Lieutenant was sure as to the direction of the sound, so he moved in that direction; and what was his surprise when he saw a head coming up. He was picked up and brought to the Captain's ship.

A true Bhakta as he was, Sri Murugananda made up his mind to renounce the world and worldly pursuits, since the Lord alone saved him. He then made a promise solemnly, which he had fulfilled today by entering the order of Sannyasa. The voice which said 'Muruga-Meenakshi'

was, according to him, from Lord Muruga Himself, and according to the Lieutenant a 'mystery'.

Hearing this, Swamiji was up in praise of the Lord and His Leelas. Since many did not know Tamil, Swamiji himself explained the story and its significance.

PUNISHMENT FOR KIND OFFER

Beautiful diaries containing the immortal teachings of Gurudev were kept ready for distribution. Some of them were distributed by Swamiji, and some by Shantanandaji and Satyagyanam. The stock was nearing its end, when suddenly the thought of presenting four more to Bhagyalakshmi, for giving them to her children appeared. No sooner did they fall into her hands than she rose up, and approaching Swamiji, requested for autographing them. This is really a difficult job for many reasons: no light, the posture in the easy chair uncomfortable for writing, no pen in the hand. But how to refuse a request? Bhagyalakshmi's ambition was fulfilled, but it did not stop with that. Others followed suit. Thus the penalty was paid for the offer.

HOLY SANKIRTAN

Sri Parvatikar Maharaj played for an hour-and-a-half, there was pin-drop silence in the hall. It was exquisite melody and superb music. It appeared as though he has exhausted all the varieties of sounds and types of music. "He is the only man I think who can play on the Swaramandali", said Swamiji in an enquiring way. "Yes Swamiji", from Mounanandaji and from Vani Bai.

Then the Ashram Kirtan party was sworn in. All the four Swamis sang. Referring to Amaranandaji's song and its meaning, Swamiji said, "This is my Bhakti Kirtan rendered into Tamil by Amaranandaji; he has done it well and he sings nicely. Everyone here is a Ratna, a gem."

The Bangalore party headed by Sri V.L. Nagaraj was asked to give their sweet Tamil Bhajans and Kirtans. They sang with the fervour of Bhaktas and impressed all with their devotion. "One more, please". They complied.

The closing item of programme was some inspiring Kirtans by Gurudev. All followed Swamiji in singing the Kirtans of Lord Siva, Rama and others. 'Shankar Shankar' was repeated

specially, as it was Sivaratri night.

Kirtan was closed and Arati began; it is also over, the turn of Prasad came, but "Today no Prasad?" "No Swamiji", was the repeated reply. But Swamiji was satisfied only after ascertaining from Swami Murugananda, who is in charge of Prasad. Swamiji then made some more enquiries about the Muruga-incident, and received all details. Looking at the Bangalore party, while approaching the door of the Hall, Swamiji exhorted them in the following words, "The Souvenir of the Conference should be beautiful, the photos should be attractive, the get-up and the articles—everything should be excellent—(spend) four thousand rupees!" "Yes Swamiji".

This reminds me of Srimati Vani Bai's book 'Children's Sivananda'. The get-up of the book is very pleasing and attractive. What the contents were, we did not as yet know. Dr. Radhakrishnan's portrait and his preface were seen in the opening pages, and some photos of Sri Gurudev and Srimati Vani Bai and family. In a minute, the book slipped through several hands. Sri Santosh's attention was drawn to it.

Swamiji traced the voyage of the book. Santosh's eyes were all attention on the book; the music and everything in the hall was forgotten. "Just look there", said Swamiji smilingly, pointing to Santosh, "how she is looking at the book, and preparing to snatch away the book". And indeed it was done. It was apprehended that the book will be lost soon. So Swami Satyagyanam, who is firm in action, was commissioned with the task of retrieving the book. The plan succeeded. Swamiji was eager to get back the copy, because, only one

copy of it was brought in advance, from Delhi.

At the gate, the sound of Kirtan of OM NAMA SIVAYA was heard. "Are they doing Kirtan in the Mandir?" enquired Swamiji.

"Yes Swamiji, it will be done throughout the night".

"O Yes, it will be nice", appreciated Swamiji.

Here there was a bifurcation, some ascending the steps leading to the Temple and some following Gurudev to the Kutir.

Afterwards, there was OM NAMA SIVAYA Kirtan till four o'clock.

A religious life is the greatest of all blessings. It lifts a man from the mire of worldliness, impurity, and infidelity. Intellect is vain if it is not illuminated by religion. Religion does what philosophy can never do. If you live in accordance with the rules of religion, you will attain wisdom, immortality, everlasting peace, and eternal bliss.

Religion frees one from sorrow and pain. Religion bestows everlasting peace. Religion makes one perfect and free. Religion makes one independent. Religion unites the soul with Brahman. Religion frees one from births and deaths.

Religion is the foundation of society, the source of all goodness and happiness, the basis of the virtue and prosperity of the individual, and through the individuals, of the nation. Civilisation, order, morality—all that elevate man and give peace to the nation—are the fruits of the practice of religion.

Swami Sivananda

CHILDREN'S WORLD

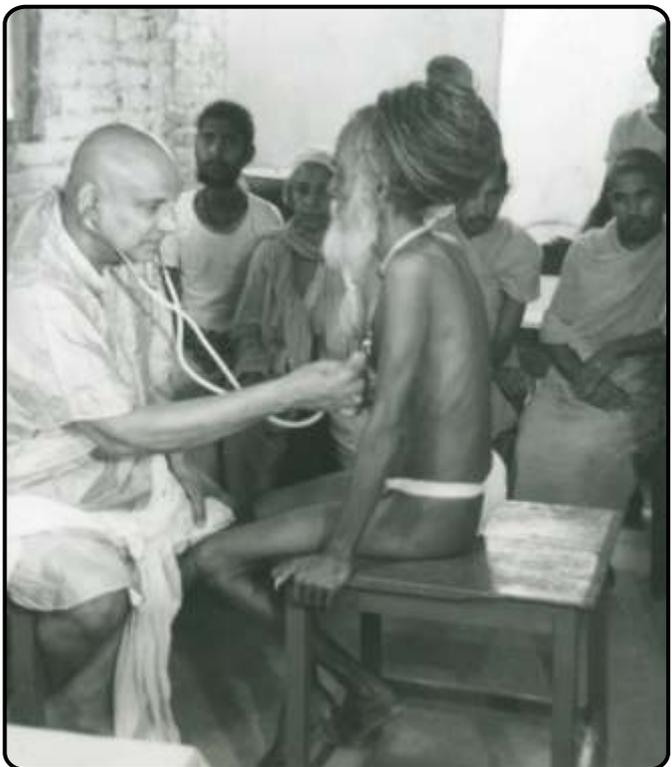


SELFLESS SERVICE

Blessed Immortal Selves!

A Karma Yogi should have an amiable, loving, social nature. He should have perfect adaptability, tolerance, sympathy, cosmic love and mercy. He should be able to adjust himself to the ways and habits of others. He should have an all-embracing and all-inclusive heart and equal vision. He should have a cool and balanced mind. He should rejoice in the welfare of others. He should have all the organs under perfect control. He should lead a very simple life. He should bear insult, disrespect, dishonour, censure, infamy, disgrace, harsh words, heat and cold and the pain of diseases. He should have power of endurance. He should have absolute faith in himself, in God, in scriptures and in the words of his Guru. Such a man becomes a good Karma Yogi and reaches the Goal quickly.

The man who serves the world really serves himself. That man who helps others really helps himself. This is an important point. When you



serve a man, when you serve your country, always think that the Lord has given you a rare opportunity to improve, correct and mould yourself by service. Be grateful to that man who has given you a chance to serve him.

Karma Yoga prepares the mind for the reception of Light of Knowledge. It expands the heart and breaks all barriers that stand in the way of unity or oneness. Karma Yoga is the effective Sadhana for Chitta Shuddhi (purification of the mind).

Swami Sivananda

CULTIVATION OF VIRTUES

GOODNESS

Goodness is the state or quality of being good in any sense of that word especially kindness, benevolence, morality, virtue. It is an act or expression showing goodness. It is an act of benevolence, compassion or mercy.

Do all the good you can in all the ways you can, to all people you can, in every place you can, at all the times you can, with all the zeal, strength, love and heart and interest you can, as long as ever you can.

Return good for evil. It is the sign of a real man. Love begets love, hatred begets hatred.

Doing good and bringing happiness to others bring goodness and happiness to you.

Entertain good, sublime, divine thoughts. Shut your mind from evil thoughts just as you shut your doors against the approach of enemies, thieves and dacoits. Always perform good actions. Evil cannot enter your mind now.

"Be good; and do good." The whole ethics and right conduct are contained in this. If you practise this, you will soon attain God-realisation.

Swami Sivananda



ERADICATION OF VICES

GREED

Greed always makes the mind restless. A man of one lakh of rupees plans to get 10 lakhs. A millionaire schemes to become a multimillionaire. Greed is insatiable. There is no end for it. Greed assumes various subtle forms. A man thirsts for name and fame and applause. This is greed.

A greedy man is absolutely unfit for spiritual path.

Destroy greed of all sorts by Vichara, integrity, disinterestedness and enjoy peace.

Swami Sivananda

THE REWARD OF FAITH

A little prince, richly bedecked with jewels, was standing near the pond. An old, bearded robber came along, his eyes reflecting the evil intent that filled his heart. He pretended to collapse on the ground and uttered a piteous cry. The prince, true to his kingly nature rushed to the old man and enquired of his health.

“I am dying of thirst, child, please get me some water to drink.”

“So shall I at once,” replied the prince and went towards the pond.

“Not thus, sweet child, the water you give might be the last sip I have in this life. You haven't had Mantra-Diksha, and so, you have not experienced the Presence of God. If only you could be initiated into the Holy Word, which will compel God Himself to appear before you, the water you give will become holy, fit to be drunk by me, a holy man, at the time of departing from the world.”

“Kindly initiate me into the Mantra, Sir,” said the boy.

“Go and immerse yourself in that pond, son,” said the old man. “But before you go, take off these costly jewels and apparel and leave them on the shore. Hold your breath and keep your head in the water till



I call out to you. In the meantime, I shall go on repeating the Purificatory Mantras, to make the initiation highly efficacious.”

The innocent boy did as he was told to do. The ornaments were at the old man's feet, filling his heart with great joy. The boy had got into the water and as he immersed his head in the water, the robber took all the jewels and fled.

The boy was made of sterner stuff. Precious minutes passed; but the Guru's call had not come. He would not raise his head from the water, before the Guru called. Conscious struggle led to unconsciousness. Instead of vital breath, he inhaled cold water.

The young devotee's steadfastness and utter self-surrender moved the heart of Lord Narayana. He left His Divine Abode and rushed to where the prince was.

Standing near the pond, the Lord called out to the prince, “My child, I am Lord Narayana, the Lord of the Universe. I am highly pleased with your devotion. Kindly come out now.”

But the boy wouldn't! Mentally he said, “Whoever you might be, I cannot raise my head from the water, till my Guru calls out to me.”

Narayana went where the robber was. Disguising Himself as a Police Officer and father of the boy, the Lord caught hold of the robber, belaboured him and said, “You have compelled my boy to remain under water till you call and he won't get out of water till you call. Go, run, and call him out at once.”

They both went to the pond. The robber called out to the boy, “O child, come, come out of the water now.”

As the boy raised his head, the robber dropped dead; the boy had the supreme reward for his intense faith and devotion and spirit of self-surrender – the Darshan of Lord Narayana.

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

Bargarh (Odisha): In the month of January, the Branch conducted daily Puja and Yoga class, Rudrabhishek on Mondays, Guru Paduka Puja on Thursdays, and weekly Satsang every Saturday.

Bhimkand (Odisha): The Branch had daily Guru Paduka Puja and weekly Satsang on Sundays.

Bikaner (Rajasthan): The Branch continued daily Yoga class, recitation of Hanuman Chalisa and Sundarakand Parayan on Saturdays. Besides this, Hawan was conducted on Ekadasi and Amavasya day. The Branch also distributed food and clothes to needy people.

Chandapur (Odisha): Daily Puja, weekly Satsang on Saturdays, Sundarakanda Parayan on Sankranti day and mobile Satsang on 8th and 24th of every month were the regular programmes of the Branch. Special Satsang was conducted from 24 to 26th January at the residence of a devotee.

Chhatrapur (Odisha): Daily Puja, weekly Satsang on Thursdays and Paduka Puja on 8th and 24th of every month were continued by the Branch. Gita Jayanti was celebrated from 14th to 16th December with chanting of Srimad Bhagavad Gita. Special Satsangs were held on 6th, 21st and on 23rd. There was Sundarakanda Parayan on 25th.

Lucknow (U.P.): The Branch conducted special Satsangs at Lekhraj Homes on 2nd and 16th January with Prayer, Bhajan, Mantra Japa and Swadhyaya etc. Besides this, Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Japa was done for speedy recovery of Covid patients and world peace.

Nandinagar (Chhattisgarh):

The Branch had morning prayers with Gita Path, chanting of Hanuman Chalisa and Parayan of Vishnusahasranam, and Siva Abhisheka on Mondays. There was Mahamantra Kirtan on 3rd January. Besides this, weekly Satsang was held on Thursdays, and Matri Satsang on Saturdays with recitation of Sundarakanda and Hanuman Chalisa.

Nayagarh (Odisha): Weekly Satsang was continued on Wednesdays. On January 1st, New Year was celebrated with special Satsang, and on 14th the Makara Sankranti day, recitation of Hanuman Chalisa, Sundarakanda Parayan, Gita Path and Paduka Puja was arranged by the Branch.

Polasra: The Branch conducted daily Satsang with Swadhyaya of Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana, Paduka Puja on 8th and 24th, and Sundarakanda Parayan on Sankranti day. Gita Jayanti was celebrated on 14th December with Gita Path.

Rourkela (Odisha): In the month of January, the Branch continued weekly Satsang on Thursdays and Sundays with Paduka Puja, Archana and chanting of Vishnusahasranam etc. As usual, free Acupressure treatment and medicines were provided to needy people.

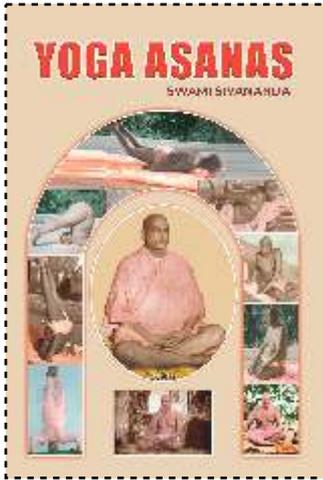
South Balanda (Odisha): Daily Puja, weekly Satsang on Fridays, and Guru Paduka Puja on 8th and 24th of every month were the regular programmes of the Branch. Gita Path, recitation of Vishnu Sahasranam and Hanuman Chalisa were done on Ekadasi. There was Akhand Mahamantra Sankirtan on 3rd January. Special Satsang was held on 14th, the Sankranti day.

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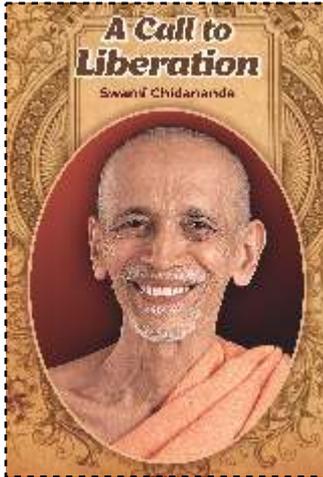
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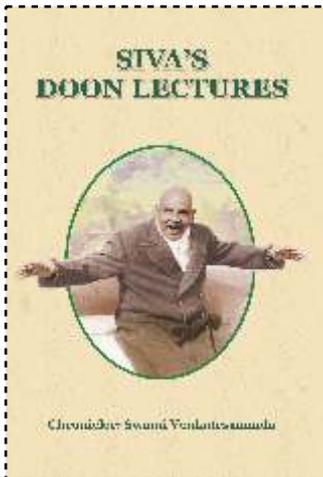
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Swami Sivananda

To