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# The DIVINE LIFE



We are  
here as passing  
pilgrims. Our  
destination is God. Our quest  
is for the lost inheritance, the  
forgotten heritage. The great central  
aim in life is the coming into a  
conscious realisation of our oneness  
with God. Life has no meaning as a  
separate life. It has meaning only  
when it becomes full or the whole,  
when the individual soul joins the  
Supreme Soul.

*Swami Sivananda*

**APRIL 2023**

## **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**

## **RELY ON YOUR OWN SELF**

How can you please the world? There are so many tongues, so many talks, so many opinions, so many remarks. This world is a strange mixture of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Tamasic people are in abundance.

Their nature is to find fault always and pronounce unnecessary criticism. Therefore, follow the dictates of your own conscience and the prompting of your soul. If you are satisfied, the whole world must be satisfied.

Even if the whole world opposes you, fear not. Never move a fraction of an inch from your firm resolve and determination. Stand up and proclaim the Truth. Even if the whole world leaves you, fear not. The Inner Ruler stands by your side in your heart.

*Swami Sivananda*



# THE DIVINE LIFE

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## MUNDAKOPANISHAD

### CHAPTER I—SECTION II

तदेतत्सत्यं मन्त्रेषु कर्माणि कवयो

यान्यपश्यंस्तानि त्रेतायां बहुधा संततानि ।

तान्याचरथ नियतं सत्यकामा एष वः पन्थाः सुकृतस्य लोके ॥१॥

That thing which is such is true. The sacrificial works, which the wise found in the Mantras (of the Veda), are true and were much performed in the Treta age. Practise them always diligently (regularly), ye lovers of truth. That is your path that leads to the world of good works.

# शिवानन्दस्तोत्रपुष्पांजलिः

## SIVANANDA-STOTRAPUSHPANJALI

### PART-II

*Sri Swami Jnanananda Saraswati, Shivanandanagar*

मानातिरिक्तयशसं महनीयरूपं  
 दीनावनैकनिरतं विमलान्तरङ्गम्  
 नानागुणोदवसितं शिवदेशिकेशम्  
 पीनानुकम्पमनिशं हृदि भावयेऽहम् ॥१९॥

I worshipfully meditate on Swami Sivananda whose fame is boundless, whose form is adorable, who is always ready to help the afflicted ones, whose mind is pure, who is an abode of innumerable virtues and who is very compassionate.

निशातशेमुषीबलं सुरापगातटोल्लस-  
 त्रिशान्तवासलालसं निरस्तसर्वकल्मषम्  
 निशाकरोपमाननस्फुरत्स्मितांशुचन्द्रिकं  
 निशामनार्हमाश्रये शिवाभिधानदेशिकम् ॥२०॥

I take refuge at the sacred feet of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivananda who possesses a sharp intellect, who loves to live at the holy and serene banks of the Ganges, who is devoid of all impurities, from whose moon-like radiant face emanates a lustrous smile comparable to the rays of the moon, and to behold whom, is a great blessedness.

*(To be continued)*

## HOW GOD CAME INTO MY LIFE

**Sri Swami Sivananda**

It would be easy to dismiss the question by saying: “Yes, after a prolonged period of intense austerities and meditation, while I was living at Swargashram and when I had the Darshan and blessings of a number of Maharshis, the Lord appeared before me in the form of Sri Krishna.”

But that would not be the whole truth, nor a sufficient answer to a question relating to God, who is infinite, unlimited and beyond the reach of speech and mind.

Cosmic Consciousness is not an accident or chance. It is the summit, accessible by a thorny path that has steps—slippery steps. I ascended them step by step the hard way; but at every stage, I experienced God coming into my life and lifting me easily to the next stage.

My father was fond of ceremonial worship in which he was very regular. To my child-

mind, the image he worshipped was God; and I delighted in helping father in the worship by bringing him flowers and other articles of worship. The deep inner satisfaction that he and I derived from such worship implanted in my heart a strong conviction that God was in such images devoutly worshipped by His devotees. Thus did God first come into my life and place my foot on the first rung of the spiritual ladder.

As an adult, I was fond of gymnastics and vigorous exercises. I learnt fencing from a teacher who belonged to a low caste. He was a Harijan. I could go to him only for a few days before I was made to understand that it was unbecoming of a caste-Brahmin to play the student to an untouchable. I thought deeply over the matter. One moment I felt that the God whom we worshipped in the image in my father's worship room had jumped

over to the heart of this untouchable. He was my Guru all right. So, I immediately went to him with flowers, sweets and clothes and garlanded him, placed flowers at his feet and prostrated myself before him. Thus did God come into my life to remove the veil of caste distinctions.

How very valuable this step was I could realise soon after this; for, I was to enter the medical profession and serve all, and the persistence of caste distinctions would have made that service a mockery. With this mist cleared by the light of God, it was easy and natural for me to serve everyone. I took keen delight in every kind of service connected with the healing and alleviation of human misery. If there was a good prescription for malaria, I felt that the whole world should know it the next moment. Any knowledge about the prevention of diseases, promotion of health and healing of diseases I was eager to acquire and share with all.

Then in Malaya, God came to me in the form of the sick. It is difficult for me now to single out

any instance, and perhaps it is unnecessary. Time and space are concepts of the mind and have no meaning in God. I can look back now upon the whole period of my stay in Malaya as a single event in which God came to me in the form of the sick and suffering. People are sick physically and mentally. To some, life is lingering death; and to others, death is more welcome than life; some invite death and commit suicide, unable to face life.

The aspiration grew within me that if God had not made this world merely as a hell where wicked people would be thrown to suffer, and if there is (as I intuitively felt there should be) something other than this misery and this helpless existence, it should be known well and experienced.

It was at this crucial point in my life that God came to me as a religious mendicant who gave me the first lesson in Vedanta. The positive aspects of life here and the real end and aim of human life were made apparent. This drew me from Malaya to the Himalaya.

God now came to me in the form of an all-consuming aspiration to realise Him as the Self of all.

Meditation and service went apace; and then came various spiritual experiences. The body, mind and intellect as the limiting adjuncts, vanished, and the whole universe shone as His Light. God then came in the form of this Light in which everything assumed a divine shape and the pain and suffering that seem to haunt everybody appeared to be a mirage, the illusion that ignorance creates on account of low sensual appetites that lurk in man.

One more milestone had to be passed in order to know that “everything is Brahman.” Early in 1950—on the 8th of January—the Lord came to me in the form of a half-demented assailant, who disturbed the night Satsang at the Ashram. His attempt failed. I bowed to him, worshipped him and sent him home. Evil exists in order to glorify the good. Evil is a superficial appearance. Beneath its veil, the one Self shines in all.

A noteworthy fact ought to be mentioned here. In this evolution, nothing gained previously was entirely discarded at any later stage. One coalesced into the next, and the Yoga of Synthesis was the fruit. Idol-worship, service of the sick, practice of meditation, the cultivation of cosmic love that transcended the barriers of caste, creed and religion, with the ultimate aim of attaining the state of Cosmic Consciousness, was revealed. This knowledge had to be shared immediately. All this had to become an integral part of my being.

The mission had been gathering strength and spreading. It was in 1950 that I undertook the All-India Tour. Then God came to me in His Virat-Swarupa—as multitudes of devotees—eager to listen to the tenets of divine life. At every centre I felt that God spoke through me, and He Himself in His cosmic form spread out before me as the multitude, listened to me. He sang with me, He prayed with me; He spoke and He also listened. “**Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma**—all indeed is Brahman.”

## **MESSAGE OF SIVANANDA**

### **Sri Swami Chidananda**

While you have come into this world, what is the main duty you have before you as human beings on earth? We live in a half-dream half-sleep state—forgetting our real nature, forgetting our real mission on earth, forgetting the true meaning of life, forgetting the true purpose for which we have come here. Life passes away. Days, months, years roll away and life comes to an end without our having achieved the main goal. There is no greater loss, there is no greater tragedy, than the human being should get as a great gift from God this human life, and yet pass away without making highest use of it, without attaining the supreme blessedness which human life can bring to you, if you live it with a proper understanding of it, in the right way. Remind yourself of this important duty.

To make you aware that you are sleeping, to make you aware that you have to wake up and you have to stir yourself to make use of this great life, this great

opportunity, has been the task of all great teachers. And I, as a humble servant and disciple of a great teacher, one of the greatest teachers of 20th Century, have the supreme joy and blessedness today to bring you a kindly reminder, "Do not forget the true goal of your life. Do not miss the straight path that leads you to success and stray away into the little bypass, running after perishable things, temporary objects of this earth and regret later on". Life comes to an end and you will regret, "Oh, what a great blunder I have done. I did not make use of life properly." What is the use of repenting, what is the use of feeling sorry and remorse when it is too late, when you cannot correct yourself, when you cannot any longer call back the yesterday and bygone years, the hours that have passed, the minutes that have passed? So you have to be awake, you have to live your life in a state of awareness, and live life in its full meaning and importance. This is the purpose of

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Taken from 'Wisdom Light' 1987

60th ANNIVERSARY OF PUNYATITHI ARADHANA OF  
WORSHIPFUL GURUDEV SRI SWAMI SIVANANDAJI MAHARAJ



coming together periodically, and try to once again listen and remember why we are here.

I have the privilege to come here as a representative of that great Institution which Gurudev has left behind. When he was alive in the body, this servant served him personally. That was our Guruseva. And leaving his body, when the appointed time came, he has passed on to another plane, but then he has left behind him as his second-self, or as his own counterpart, the great edifice of the Divine Life Society, the organisation, that Institution which has now taken his place. What Sadguru Swami Sivanandaji himself represented in his lifetime, now the Divine Life Society represents at the present moment. In the Institution, we must see Gurudev himself. Because what is this Institution? It is the quintessence of the entire life of Swami Sivananda, his entire Tapascharya, his Self-realisation, his penance, his wisdom and experience in a concrete form. All his life's energy, all the time's energy and the wisdom and the power have been put in creating this Institution.

So, he himself transformed into a greater, visible, concrete form, this great structure of the Divine Life Society. And, to serve the Divine Life Society is to serve Swami Sivananda himself. And this is why, this body has been moving in so many countries of the world, visiting various Branches of the Divine Life Society and offering services. So, I regard that service of the Divine Life Society is no different from the service of the Guru, whom I served in the body personally, when he was himself living in the body; for, the Divine Life Society is identical with Swami Sivananda, service of the Society is Gurudev's service. Every follower, every disciple, every devotee, everyone who has been benefited by Gurudev's teachings, his sublime life-transforming teachings must deem it a great privilege to serve this second-self of Great Sivananda, the Sivananda Society.

Therefore, do not make a difference between Divine Life Society and Sivananda. Service of the Society is service of Sivananda. And inasmuch as the aim and the objective of the Divine

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Life Society is to spread the message of Divine Life, and inasmuch as I am here in the service of the Divine Life Society, I share with you my ideas of Divine Life, what Divine Life is.

Divine Life is the real life. Divine Life is the true life. Divine Life is the living of your life in the way and in the manner it should be lived. Divine Life is the life lived in the awareness of one's true divine nature, lived in the awareness that "I am not merely a little physical creature. I am not merely this body and this mind. I am not merely a bundle of thoughts and sentiments and desires. I am the spiritual being. I am the eternal being. I am the Immortal Soul. I am a ray of the Great Light of lights. I am a part and parcel of the universal divine Spirit called God. I am rooted in Him. My very existence derives from Him." And thus, knowing that God is the source and the origin of our inner being, knowing that God is the support and root of our spiritual Self, knowing that we are ever in a state of union with Him, in this way we try to make our living divine in its quality. We try to make our life divine in

which way it expresses itself and manifests itself. When we become aware that we are divine and we want to manifest our divinity, there comes as a hurdle our age old nature, our physical nature, our mental nature, our sensual nature, running after always pleasure, always having a hundred thousand desires for perishable things, always being deluded by selfishness saying, "I want, I want, I want; everything must come to me; I must have all that is best, so that I may be happy; I may be satisfied". So, if you approach life from this central base of selfishness, wanting to get everything from others, wanting to make use of others, thinking in what way others can be of use to me, in what way I can exploit others to my advantage, etc.; this, of course, is the opposite of divine life. This is very negation of your true higher nature. And, this is brought about by our selfishness. Selfishness is real blindness. We identify ourselves with this body and mind, this name and form personality. We are so much in love with this name and form personality, that we make our

whole life a business of just self-centered activity, all activity only for the sake of our selfish motives, our selfish desires and our selfish little ambitions, never thinking about others' happiness and welfare, never thinking, "In what way I can be of help to others; in what way I can benefit others and do good to others."

You see, this selfishness is always a great barrier to the expression of your real divine nature. Because, selfishness is undivine, it is Asuri Sampatti. By this selfishness, one loses all consideration for right or wrong, "By hook or crook, I must fulfill my desire", this is the result of extreme selfishness. So, selfishness makes a person blind to all human values, moral values. It makes one completely ignore ethical principles in life. Selfishness blinds one's consciousness. If the Self says, "No, no, no, this should not be done, this is not correct," we shun this inner voice. Because, selfishness does not want to listen to this voice, it does not want to hear the dictate of the consciousness. Because, consciousness tells it to do

something which is against its interest. So, what happens? Through selfish life one becomes unethical, one lies, one cheats, one dishonours, one twists facts, one deceives others and if something comes in the way of this selfish activity, one resents it, one becomes angry, one begins to hate that thing which comes in the way of his fulfilment. So, out of selfishness arises hatred, passion, conflict, untruth, cunningness and deceit. So, selfishness brings us down, instead of raising us higher, making us better, making us grander. All sense of shame is lost and man moves in darkness closing his eyes to all idealism, all moral values, all ethical principles and makes oneself completely unaware of anything that is sublime and brings down life to a very low level.

Due to this degradation, man gets caught in the cycle of birth and death. Because, there is a great law that governs this life. That is, whatever you sow in the form of any type of activity, you have to reap the result of it in the form of experience of the same quality. If you do good actions,

you reap the harvest of good experience. For ill actions, you will harvest ill experience, painful experience. This is the Law, the Law of Cause and Effect. It pervades and governs human life thoroughly. It is a law of action and reaction. What you sow, that you reap. What you think, that you become. So, under the influence of selfishness, if one does not care to abide by the law of action and reaction, if he becomes blind to this law, and commits all sorts of actions, and then he creates his own sorrows. Man manufactures his own pains and his own sufferings. God does not punish. God is not a punishing agent. He is All-Love. But man forgets the Law that governs life and makes his selfishness govern his principles. Then what happens? He goes off from the pure path of moral life and ethical life and thus he puts himself against this great Law.

And when you are on the wrong side of that inexorable law, you create a destiny full of pain. So, you only create your suffering. God does not punish. Law also does not punish, you punish yourself. Your action, that is that

punishes you. You create causes, but you don't want to experience the results! How this is possible? If you sow the seeds, you have to reap the harvest. If someone sows seeds in a particular field, the harvest cannot be reaped in another field. So, from where arose the cause in the form of wrong actions, there alone also the result is created in the form of painful experiences. But this Law is a great and just law. If you put yourself on the right side of the law, if you think rightly, feel rightly and act nobly, then you become blessed. You will create for yourself a glorious future, a golden destiny full of joy, full of blessedness. So this Great Law is not concerned in making special favouritism, not concerned in being partial. It just operates. It fulfils itself. So, be wise and put yourself on the right side of the Law. This you can do only when you are aware that you are divine in your essential higher nature. There is within you all that is good, all that is noble, all that is ideal and pure and virtuous. Because, divine quality is your natural heritage. Having come from the Divine, you have only

divine qualities. We call God Karunasagara, Dayamurti— all these divine qualities with which we endow God, they are your natural heritage. You are part and parcel of that Great Divinity, you are children of the Divine. So, these divine qualities are embedded in you. They are present in you from birth always. The Spirit within you is ever pure, ever perfect, full of joy and peace, full of truth. And Divine Life is a process of awakening, unfolding, manifesting this truth in your life, it is a life lived in the awareness of this divine nature of yours. And life lived as a process of awakening this divine nature, developing it and expressing it in all your thought, word and action will become a life full of radiance, effulgence and divinity. You become blessed. Wherever you are, you bring this awareness with you. That is divine life. That is the life lived, in order to unfold from within you the divine perfection which is already inherent in you.

Supposing, you have a crossed cheque for fifty thousand dollars. Now tell me, are you rich or are you poor? You

are not poor, because you have got the money, fifty thousand dollars. But, with this crossed cheque of fifty thousand dollars, can you go and buy for yourself something from a wayside hawker? The cheque is in your name and you alone can encash it. It is not a draft. No one can take it across a bank counter. You have to put it into your account and draw the money in cash. Then only it will be useful. You can make use of the crossed cheque. Other people cannot make use of it. If you give this cheque to a shopkeeper and say to give you something, the shopkeeper will say, "I am sorry". "Give me twenty dollars in cash" he would say, "I cannot accept this cheque. Because, it is non-negotiable". You are rich, but you have no money. You are rich, yet your richness cannot be made use of, until you go through the necessary process by which you convert your crossed cheque into actual cash. Then alone you can buy whatever you want. In the same way, you are divine, a cheque which containing within itself the full potential of fifty

thousand dollars.

Your spiritual nature contains within itself the full potential of ideal and beautiful life, glorious life full of divine qualities, full of divine radiance. But this cheque of yours is crossed. So you have to go through the process of making it active and awakened by Sadhana. That inner latent divinity is made active and made manifest in a practical way. That is divine life. Divine Life is not little bit of Bhajan and little bit of Dhyana. It is making your entire life divine. Your business, your profession, your social activity, your own family life, your relationships, in all walks of life, in all these relationships, you have to make your life divine, full of love, full of kindness, full of understanding, full of sympathy, full of selflessness, full of spirit of service, full of nobility. It should not be coloured with anything that is undivine. Divine Life is therefore, making your entire life divine in all details. You cannot say, "I am leading divine life, because, I am doing Japa; I am doing Swadhyaya of Gita and Upanishads". In the

shop what you are doing? "Well, it does not matter. I am a black marketer. I tell lies and deceive my customers. And in the profession of a doctor or a lawyer, I may do all sorts of things which may not be exactly spiritual. It does not matter because that is my professional life. I am practising divine life. Because divine life consists of study of Gita, Japa!" No. This will not do. Unless your entire life is divinely lived, you have not lived a divine life.

Only a life which is completely lived in a divine manner can uplift you. Otherwise, only a part of life consisting of some divine activity and greater part of your life consisting of undivine and immoral activities which are against Dharma, then you are bringing a self-contradiction in your life. You are trying to do two things. But one thing will cancel the other. Your little prayers try to raise you higher. But the greater part of your immoral life will pull you down. So, how can you raise higher? Transformation should be in your entire nature.

Spiritualisation should be in all your activities. So, the basic principles of divine life are to renounce all falsehood and practise truthfulness, honesty and integrity. That is the first principle of divine life. Ask yourself, "Am I truthful in all my dealings? Am I honest? Am I practising the first principle of divine life?" Secondly, divine life is bringing joy to others, giving happiness to others, relieving the sorrow of others, trying to lessen the sufferings of others. He who is amidst the sufferings of others and yet is unaffected by it, does nothing to relieve the distresses of others, is not living a divine life. Because, he is contradicting the principle of Ahimsa. Ahimsa does not mean only not injuring others, not giving pain to others. It also means relieving the pains of others. If you allow others to suffer and keep quiet, do nothing to alleviate that suffering, then you are aiding and increasing that suffering. But God has given you some ability and power. Do something to lessen the sufferings of others. If you do not exercise that power, then

you are contradicting the spirit of Ahimsa. Ahimsa is universal love. It means compassion towards all. Ahimsa means inability to tolerate the sufferings of others, because of feeling of oneness with others through love. And when others suffer, you also suffer. And so you have to identify yourself with the sufferings of others and do some thing to help and relieve the sufferings of others. This Ahimsa is one of the great principles of divine life. You must become Paropakari. Paropakara is implied in Ahimsa. Ahimsa is universal love and Paropakara is actual expression of that pure love. So, a person who tries to live divine life grows in universal love and kindness. He will guard over his speech. He will not insult others, will not abuse others, and will not utter harsh and rude language which is full of pain. Refraining from anger, refraining from harsh and rude speech is part of Ahimsa. To practise sweetness of speech, kindness and love, is divine life. Speaking sweet speech so that it brings peace and happiness to others through

friendliness, through a feeling of brotherhood and love, one brings oneself to lead a divine life. Your speech should be soft and sweet that brings peace to others, consolation to others and joy to others.

Divine Life also means purity of thought, word and deed. In home life, it means Ekapatnivrata for the Grihastha. One looks the whole of mankind with pure eyes, pure gaze. The great example given by the divine couple Rama and Sita is the great ideal of the divine family life in India. For Sri Ramachandra, there was no other woman except Sita. All others were like his mother. Because, he had a vow of Ekapatnivrata. "For me, there is only one woman. That soul whom I have taken as my spiritual partner before the witness of Agni Bhagavan, the Fire God, before the witness of all elders, she is only the woman to me. In my life, she is the only woman. All others are like my own mother. I look upon them with reverence. I look upon them with respect and pure heart." That is the ideal of a Grihastha life. And to be a chaste wife, a pure wife to her husband she must have the great ideal of

Pativrata-bhava in her heart. She must feel Matritva, motherhood towards the whole world, all humanity. She must feel, "I am an Amsa, a part of Bhagavati, Mahalaxmi, Mahasaraswati or Parvati. So, all humanity are my children. And to me there is only one man, one Purusha in life. Who is he? He is my Patidev, that being whom I have lawfully taken as my Lord and master before the witness of Agni Bhagavan and all elders. And so, we have come into a spiritual partnership in order to lead our spiritual life together, being of mutual help." In this way the purity of married life of a Grihastha is one of the basic principles of divine living. Here, purity means purity in all its details — Purity not only in the sex life only, but also purity of thought, purity of attitude, to have a pure approach to life. Truth, purity and universal love; S a t y a m , A h i m s a a n d Brahmacharya, these are the principles of divine life. Ahimsa means Vishvaprema. It is not to have resentment against others, not to hate others, not to have anger. It is not to wish any harm to others, not to have enemies.



Ahimsa is to be friendly towards all.

If you study the twelfth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, especially the last eight verses, you will see the wonderful outline which Bhagavan Sri Krishna has given as to what a person leading a true divine life is like, who is a true devotee, what is his nature, how does he behave, how does he relate himself to the life around him, what is his approach to life, what is his conduct. These things are summed up very beautifully in the last eight Shlokas of the twelfth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita. The Divine Life is, therefore, a life of truth, a life of divinity, a life of universal love. And it is also a life of selflessness and service. Because, the basic evil in human nature is selfishness. Out of selfishness, man becomes wicked; he becomes forgetful of higher spiritual values of life. And if you want to overcome this basic impurity of human nature, you must practise selflessness. You must be active in expressing your selflessness. Selfishness can be overcome only by selflessness. The way of practising selflessness is to serve all without egoism. You

should not say, "I am doing this service". No. You should rather say, "I am only an instrument in the hands of God. It is a great privilege to serve". And thus without expressing Ahamkara, without expecting any praise or applaud, without expecting recognition or name and fame, no personal desires, nothing to gain from it, such service is called selfless service. Thus, go on serving.

Serve the elders at home. Serve your father and mother. Serve your neighbour. Serve the society and the poor and sick. Serve the suffering. Serve even a stranger. You should not confine your service only to your relatives. But you should serve even those who may not be good to you. So this pure selflessness practised in the form of services continually rendered with humility and desirelessness, brings about a cleansing of our nature. It thoroughly removes the basic impurity of selfishness in you. So in the heart which is purified by selflessness, a heart which is refined by such service, Lord's grace descends, the light of the Divine descends. And this light

manifests itself as devotion to God, a desire to attain God. Bhakti comes only in a pure heart. The desire to attain God and worship God arises only in a heart that is rid of the impurity of selfishness. By selflessness, you will grow more and more in devotion towards the Almighty. So Bhakti and Bhajan, devotion and worship, these two are the natural development of divine living. And out of this when Bhakti becomes intense, then to worship God and to attain Him becomes your main desire. All other desires become subsidiary or secondary to it. You live in order to attain God. Your whole life becomes a life intensely lived in quest of God. You enter deeper and deeper into yourself and try to keep an unbroken connection with Him. So, daily practise meditation, morning and evening carefully, leaving aside all other thoughts. Be silent. Withdraw the mind. Forget the world totally. Become dead to the world. Forget the body. Only be aware of God, God and God-consciousness. And it is this constant deep inner communication, spiritual communication with God

through daily meditation that ultimately brings about the fruit of God-realisation. Wisdom dawns. The ignorance of your real nature disappears. There is no more Maya with you. You will become purified with the light of Jnana. You will become illumined. Joy fills your heart.

Divine Life is the transformation of your entire life. It is completely cleansing the personality of all selfishness and untruth. It is not something that some people do only in a jungle or on the top of a mountain or in a cave etc. No. Divine life is the living of your normal daily life in a divine way. So these principles of divine life, viz., truth, universal love and selflessness, have to become a part of your life even when you are engaged in business in a shop or your various offices, whether you are a lawyer or a doctor or a school teacher or a professor or an engineer. Divine life is spiritualising even your normal daily activities. This is possible only when these activities are carried out in the awareness of God, that God is everywhere, God is here and now and He is watching all our

activities. Nothing can escape His attention. He is the eternal inner witness. So, all our actions should be offered to Him as flowers of adoration and worship. So, keep telling God, "Whatever I do, whatever various duties I perform as I am put in a particular field, all this I offer at Thy feet as my worship, as my adoration, as my Mahapuja, unbroken Puja." And then what happens? When you do your duties in this way in spirit of worshipfulness, then all these actions become holy actions to you. Wherever you are, you are in the altar of God, you are in a temple. Even the place where you have to render your secular services becomes a temple for your worshipping God. So, feeling the presence of God everywhere, you do all your actions, dedicate them at His feet. Then what happens? Actions become spiritualised. Because, they are connected with God. They become Yogic activities. They are no longer Laukik or Vyavaharic. This becomes a part of your Yoga, a part of your Sadhana. Live your entire life in this manner as a process of

continuous dedication of all your actions to God in a spirit of worship. That is divine life. Then only you can transform your house into veritable Kailasha or Vaikuntha.

You should feel the presence of God in your home. The entire family should feel that they are all Sevaks of Bhagavan, Pujaris of the Lord. And so, every day the family itself should gather together before the altar of the home and spend some time in Bhajan, silent prayer, meditation and studying of scriptures and the lives of great saints. So you must bring about Yoga and divine life right in the home. The family is the best unit because you are all closely knit together in a bond of love. So, the entire family should practise divine life together. Be humble. Be simple. Give respect to others and do not expect respect from others. Humble yourself before God. Do not have superiority complex. Feel yourself a servant of God. All humanity is full of God. And so, feel it a privilege to serve His children. Never expect anything from others. The experiences that you undergo in life have their own

value. They will teach you and bring new light to you. They open your eyes. So, keep a balanced mind whatever the experience in life is.

Be intent upon attaining God. Be intent upon moving towards the goal. This is Divine Life. This can be lived anywhere. The main motive is changed. The inner attitude is changed. Now, you start to feel that you are always in the presence of God. And you completely bring about a different view of life. To the one who leads divine life, — life means a great opportunity to attain God; not an opportunity to accumulate money and have a little Maja (enjoyment). Life means a great wonderful opportunity to attain God. That is how a person leading divine life looks at life. He always tries to bring about a new vision to life and fill it with divine qualities. May God be your highest goal and attainment. Live only in order to attain Him. Divine Life is a life where everything that comes out of you is divine in quality. Your thoughts, your feelings, your sentiments, your words and actions are divine in their quality and not low. No Asuri Sampatti

should qualify your life and Vyavahar. Asuri Sampatti is a contradiction to divine life, because it is undivine.

Read the sixteenth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita where Bhagavan Sri Krishna tells us about the divine and undivine qualities. Carefully take note, what are those divine qualities and the undivine ones. Then examine yourself. Search, introspect and scrutinise yourself and see if you have any undivine qualities within you. If there are undivine qualities within you, then you are not leading a divine life. Self-examination is a part of divine life. To search for the undivine qualities within ourselves and to eliminate them and developing divine qualities is a requirement on our part if we want to lead a divine life. At the end of each day, at the night, sit quietly and introspect, "What all I have done throughout the day till this moment. How many things I have done or spoken which are undivine. How am I to remove them." Daily you must have self-examination. Your divine life must be progressive. And if you find any undivine qualities in you,

then try to remove them.

Make a list of the divine qualities which Bhagavan has enumerated in the Gita and try to acquire them and make a part of your being. Grow more and more divine in all walks of your life. That is divine life. Get by heart the Universal Prayer of Sri Swami Sivananda. In it, Gurudev has given us a blueprint for divine life. If you properly read that prayer, you will have a clear idea as to what divine life means. If you have this prayer ingrained in your heart and if you practise this prayer in your daily life, your life will become divine.

So to sum up, examine yourself, try to be impartial in analysing your inner motives. Find out all that is undivine in you. Ruthlessly eliminate those undivine qualities. Cultivate virtues. Ceaselessly remember God. Do all your actions in a spirit of worship to the Lord and dedicate them to Him. A life without virtues is undivine. Gurudev was fond of distributing a small form which contained the eighteen 'ities' which are the virtues one should cultivate. It used to be one of his Nama

Sankirtanas. It runs like this —

*"Sri Ram Jaya Ram  
Jaya Jaya Ram;  
Sri Ram Jaya Ram  
Jaya Jaya Ram;  
Serenity, Regularity,  
Absence of Vanity,  
Sincerity, Simplicity,  
Veracity (truthfulness);  
Equanimity, Fixity,  
Non-irritability;  
Adaptability, Humility, Tenacity;  
Integrity, Nobility, Magnanimity;  
Charity, Generosity, Purity.  
Practise daily  
these eighteen 'ities'.  
You will soon attain Immortality.  
You must behold unity in  
diversity.  
You will abide in  
spiritual infinity.  
Brahman is the only real entity.  
Mr. So and so is a  
false non-entity.  
You cannot attain this in the  
University."*

These virtues you can get only by practice of self-culture and you cannot get them by book-study. University cannot give you all these virtues. Hence, lead the divine life and attain God in this very birth. Do not postpone.

Hari Om Tat Sat.

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## **SWAMI SIVANANDA AND THE SPIRITUAL RENAISSANCE**

### **Sri Swami Krishnananda**

#### **The Problem Stated**

The world we live in is observed to be a solid mass of matter. Even our own bodies are seen to be parts of the physical Nature governed by mechanistic laws, which alone appears to be all that is real. It has become a commonplace today, especially in the universe of science, that life is strictly determined by the law of causality which rules over the entire scheme of the world. We are told that distinctions that are supposed to obtain between such realms of being as matter, life and mind are only superficial and are accounted for by the grades of subtlety in the manifestation and spreading of particles of matter. Even the organism of the human body which appears to defy the laws of the universal machine that modern science envisages is explained away as only one of the many forms of the workings of the

brute force of matter which is the ultimate stuff of all things. The natural consequence of such a theory as this is the astonishing conclusion that human life, like every other material substance in the world, is completely determined by blind causal laws and the so-called free-will of man is subservient to them, if not a mere chimera. When we protest that man is not merely matter but also mind, it is explained that mind is nothing but a subtle and ethereal exudation of forces of matter. Man is reduced to an insignificant speck in the gigantic machinery of the cosmos which works ruthlessly with its own laws, unconcerned with the weal and woe of man.

This naturalistic interpretation of life, that is fast threatening to become rampant in this modern scientific and atomic age, seems to be really the

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Taken from Swami Sivananda - In Memoriam Souvenir published in 1964

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WORSHIPFUL GURUDEV SRI SWAMI SIVANANDAJI MAHARAJ

philosophy of the common credulous man, and even of the intelligent public who have neither the patience and the leisure nor the equipment of understanding to fathom the greater depths of human experience. Hand in hand with this theory of crass materialism, there is a craze for more comfort and pleasure, by lessening effort and movement of every kind, and an inherent feeling that material progress conceived at its zenith should be the ultimate purpose of existence. Due to an irrational faith in the efficacy and correctness of this doctrine, the man of the world seems to have forgotten the corruption of moral values today, the fall in the mental life and the standard of present-day education, and a sense of monotony and restlessness of spirit, brought about by such a view of life, in spite of his riches and material possessions.

The fact that man is not merely a humble cogwheel in the deterministic machine of a relentless universe and that the

essence of man is a spiritual principle co-extensive and co-eternal with the universal Spirit was easily felt by many as a reaction to the very unsatisfactory and humdrum propaganda carried on by the materialists. The balance swung from the extreme of materialism holding that man is merged in the physical Nature to the other extreme of the idealism which propounded that man is perforce dragged on by the impetus of a cosmic spiritual Substance. The difference between these materialistic and idealistic theories is found finally to be in the conception of the ultimate stuff and constitution of the universe; the one advocating that it is matter, motion and force, and the other affirming that it is pure Mind or Spirit. But both agree in holding that man has no real choice and freedom of his own, he being inextricably involved, merged and lost in the ultimate reality of the universe; be it material, mental or spiritual. Unfortunate man discovered that it was hard for him, under such

circumstances, to live a normal life of the enjoyment of the values the aesthetic, the religious and the moral and at the same time feel his feet well planted on mother earth, with her richness and grandeur, promises and mysteries, who manages in dexterous and wondrous ways to attract his attention and give him a hint that life is reality, beauty and joy, in spite of the ostensible struggle, adventure and hazard to be faced constantly; and yet that life is not all, that there is some awe-inspiring and terrible truth continuously pointed out by the phenomena of suffering, pain and death, by the restlessness of the world and the vicissitudes of life, the endless desires of man and the moral aspirations surging from within. The man of the world required a loving and sympathetic, reasonable and satisfying teaching to enable him to live as an individual, fulfilling his daily duties in life, and yet aspiring for that marvellous and magnificent Beyond which ever seems to beckon him through the

tantalising veils of Nature.

The beguiled minds of the growing Indian youth educated under the artful scheme chalked out by the shrewed Lord Macaulay could be easily led astray, and, as it would be natural to expect, the sublimity and the wisdom of the lives of the ancient predecessors of these young men, come through posterity, were slowly lost, and people began to move along the ruts of a so-called modernism of thinking, a rationality of approach and a scientific attitude to life, so much spoken of in these days, and raised to an almost exaggerated height of apotheosis. There were many who delighted in doubting spiritual laws, in denying superphysical, and went even to the extent of decrying soul and God. The method employed by the alien rulers worked, indeed, like magic, and surprising was the way in which warm-blooded youth succumbed to the glamour of applied science and the utility of an industrial revolution placed before their unsuspecting eyes. People gradually shed the



spiritual legacy of their forefathers and started to strut proudly under the unseen yoke of a civilisation wedded to a secret achievement of suzerainty over them, the simple sons of a hierarchy of an intensely religious and spiritual heroes who had the great privilege of having declared to their brethren the deepest truths of immortal life. Side by side, the world, as a whole, showed tendencies of a sceptical outlook, especially after the stress of the First World War, and the revolutions brought about by the discoveries of twentieth century physics and biology, hand in hand with an insisting demand for reason in everything, hinted that they would deal a fatal blow at all goodness, faith, morality, religion and spirituality, whatever be the conservative attitude to these time-honoured values. The situation called for a revaluation of all values and for the building of man's inner life upon a stronger foundation. There emerged, promptly and vigilantly, several powerful and authentic voices of the irresistible inner Justice, in

the prominent fields of life's activity-politics, sociology, religion, Yoga and spirituality to correct erring minds and give articulation to the requirements of truth, law and morality. Swami Sivananda figures prominently among such leaders that brought about a thorough inner transformation in modern India, and placed the grand spiritual values on a firmer footing and in a proper setting.

### **The Mission of the Philosopher-Saint**

This significant want, this lacuna in the entire structure of life, this error in the aspiring spirit of man was carefully observed by the acute vision of Swami Sivananda who made it his mission to give to the world a comprehensive philosophical theory, striking a balance between and reconciling and blending together the demands of an obstinate empiricism and the principles and teachings of the lofty idealism that the eternal Spirit alone is real, and to design comprehensively a practice of

certain synthesised techniques of inner and outer discipline to achieve perfection. While being fully convinced of and persuaded to accept the doctrines of the metaphysic of a spiritualistic non-dualism, that nought else than God can have any ultimate value, and having entered personally into the stupendous reality of its experience, Swami Sivananda felt the need to intelligently tackle the situations in which the human mind is involved, without disturbing or upsetting the beliefs of the ignorant, and taking, into consideration every aspect of man's life. We cannot teach that life in the sense-sphere is all, that the physical body and the external material world constitute the only reality; for, the thoughtful nature raises the pertinent question that mind cannot be equated with matter, that love and joy refuse to be reduced to movements of electrons and protons, that the never-ending cry of the mystics and the religious men, from time immemorial, who professed to know and proclaimed the

existence of an unknown region and an unexplored reality of spiritual values, and of the clear possibility of such a thing as immortality, cannot be set aside as mere distorted voices of morbid spirits or abnormal natures. Nor is pretentious man, being what he is, to be satisfied by the extraordinary teaching that the world is not at all there, that what he enjoys and suffers are mere phantasms, that life is a delirium of consciousness, that precious values which are so eagerly and anxiously treasured with zealous care are but the busy activities of a confused mind engaged in a long dream in the sorrow of life's disease; for the searching senses and the enquiring understanding vehemently complain that they see a world as hard, concrete and real as anything can be, that the body has its pains and pleasures, life has its duties, its burdens, its griefs, wonders and patent meanings, which cannot be brushed aside by any effort of logic, the experience is real and cannot be abrogated as worthless

by any stretch of imagination, that the visible is real and is valued, as amply testified by everyday experience. We cannot say that God created the world; for, God has no desire to prompt Him to create. We cannot say that the world is God's play; for, a perfect Being needs no play. We cannot also say that the world has no ultimate basis at all, for, the changing phases of the physical Nature and the moral urges of the inner spirit in man assert that God ought to be.

### **Life—A Sadhana**

Swami Sivananda addresses himself to the difficult but important task of taking man as he is, a growing organism of a psycho-physical character, neither wholly restricted naturalistically by the mechanism of the material world, nor fully absorbed spiritualistically in the supermundane aim of divine existence. Man is not merely a body, a mind or a spirit, but a curious mixture of all these in a manner not comprehensible to ordinary intelligence. The Katha-Upanishad says that the true

'enjoyer' or the empirical agent of knowledge and action is a composite structure of the Atman, the mind and the senses, together. Life is not merely a process of swirling masses of matter, groups of molecules, aggregates of atoms or vortices of electrical forces, occasions for the study of psychology or even metaphysics, and an idealistic soaring into the empyrean of logical thought, mental phenomena or mere psychic experience. Not even an exclusively spiritualistic consideration or an occultist interpretation can explain the mystery of life which proves to be a superhuman work of the combination of certain characteristic elements of all these stages and strata of being at one and the same time. Man is at once a physical embodiment, a mental phenomenon and a spiritual entity. He has to appease not only the hunger of the body and the thirst of his vital forces, but has to pay equal, if not greater, attention to the demands of his psychic nature, his moral

tendencies and spiritual aspirations. Life is a synthesis of the forces manifesting in different orders and in a graduated scale, the evolutionary structure of Nature. In this sense the whole of one's life is a Sadhana, an integral endeavour for fullness on the part of mysterious man whose constitution, compelling attention and training ranges at once from the lowest matter to the highest Spirit. As a body he is a creature of natural forces, subjected to the suffering and the mortality attending upon all composite structures in the physical world. He is one with inanimate matter when taken purely as a material structure. But man's tale does not end here. He grows like a plant, feels and reacts like an animal, and insofar as the craving for food, sleep and sex is concerned he is indistinguishable from the inhabitants of the mute kingdom. But conspicuously enough, man struggles to reach above the realm of the brute, exercises a moral consciousness totally absent in animals and displays a marvellous understanding power and reasoning capacity in distinguishing between the true and the false, the right and the wrong, the good and the bad, the beautiful and the ugly, thus making it amply clear that while partaking of the natures of matter, life and mind observable also in the inanimate world, the vegetable kingdom and the subhuman beings, he is also more than all these, and while including these in his individual make-up, he also transcends them in an astonishing degree. The life of man is thus very complex, embracing variegated elements, exhibiting diverse characteristics and manifesting different grades of reality. If life is a Sadhana, a continuous journey and movement and a story of adjusting oneself to and adapting oneself with the vast universe of a similar nature, it is not enough if we merely look into one side of the picture, but have to consider every aspect of the revelation of reality in man. This is precisely the mission of Swami Sivananda, to whom all

life is Yoga, and whose writings are an elaborate dissertation on integral living.

### **The Education of Man**

The human self is constituted of a consciousness which is not pure existence but a dynamic process, being interfused, as it were, with the nature of the circumstances in which it finds itself in the world, with an environment of social elements, political restraints, moral commands, physical needs, vital urges, intellectual situations, and the like. In other words, man discovers, in his activities and in the problems he has to encounter everyday, that his life is related to others' lives and undergoes growth and change as the world appears to change. We have to remember that human life is involved in the time-process and hence bound by temporal laws. The human self is in the world, though not of the world. Thus a study of man is nothing but a reflection on the totality of situations that are comprised within the range of human

knowledge, whether explicit as in the usual everyday experiences and in the themes of the physical and the psychological sciences, or implied as in philosophy, or revealed as in religion. Such a study has to include in its gamut the whole of life's problems, insofar as they affect the human self which is the aspiring individual. Man thinks, feels and wills, and does not merely exist. Hence his approach to the religious value of God, the ethical value of duty and the logical value of truth should proceed from and contain elements in the structure of his own central reality as far as he experiences them in his daily life.

Human life is conceived by Swami Sivananda as a school of education for the Jiva or empirical self caught up in the meshes of ignorance, desire and activity. This education has to be physical, intellectual, emotional, moral, active and spiritual, all at once, in a way beautifully fitted to the conditions in which one is placed. The actual technique of this

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education differs in its details in different individuals, in accordance with their age, health, avocation, stage of evolution, social relations, etc., all which call the attention of the soul in a variegated world. Essentially, any scheme of education should consist of methods for bringing about and effecting (1) the development of personality, (2) a knowledge of the world, (3) an adjustment of self with society, and (4) a realisation of the permanent values. By development of personality what is meant is the wholesome building up of the individual, not only with reference to the internal states of body, mind and consciousness, but also in relation to the external world reaching up to it through the different levels of society. In this sense, true education is both a diving inward and a spreading outward. Knowledge of the world is not merely a collection of facts or gathering information regarding the contents of the physical world, but forms a specific insight into its inner workings as well, at least insofar as man's inner and outer life is inextricably bound up with them. When this knowledge of one's own individuality and personality as it is involved in a world of picturesque colours and varying depths is acquired through intensive training by study, reflection and service of one's preceptor, it becomes easy for one to discover the art of adjusting oneself with society. Truly speaking, this adjustment is not possible for one who has no knowledge of the deeper spiritual nature of humanity, which it is that constitutes society in man's practical affairs. The aim of the individual as well as the society is the realisation of the values, personal, social, political and even universal all mutually related and determined by a common goal to which all these are directed, consciously or unconsciously. Ignorant man may not be fully aware that the eternal values of life are summed up in the all-comprehensive terms: God, Freedom, Immortality, and that all

his daily struggles are nothing but gropings of his mind in the darkness of his ignorance to recognise these and participate in these, by way of all that he sees, hears or understands. To awaken the human spirit to this tremendous fact is the primary mission of Swami Sivananda, and his voluminous works cater variegatedly to the hungry souls who are in search of food but cannot find it for want of knowledge.

### **Characteristics of His Works**

The writings of Swami Sivananda cover a vast range of subjects, in accordance with his plan of approaching man from every side and every aspect. These works treat of, in detail, such diverse topics as anatomy and physiology; health, hygiene and sanitation; physical exercise, first-aid and treatment of diseases; the discipline of the physical body through the technical Hatha-Yoga processes of Asanas or bodily postures, Pranayama or the regulation of

the vital force and of breathing, Bandhas, Mudras and Kriyas all intricate methods of the perfection of the body to prepare it for withstanding the onslaughts of Nature's pairs of opposites, such as heat and cold, hunger and thirst; an exhaustive psychological analysis of the composition, working and behaviours of the inner man, the mental, volitional, moral and rational natures, which so much influence and decide the values of life as a whole; the duties of man, his relations to family, community and nation; his position in the world and the universe; his national, international and world relations; the social, ethical and political structure of individuals; the assessment of the values, both religious and spiritual; and a comprehensive and penetrating discussion of the characteristics of the ultimate goal of human life, as well as an intensive treatment of the nature of the way leading to this goal. In his expositions of these subjects, so very widely spread in apparently isolated

universes of discourse, Swami Sivananda appeals not merely to the rational and the scientific man or the intelligentsia of the society, but also to the devout, the faithful and the believing, the common masses ignorant of higher laws; to spiritual aspirants, Sannyasins, householders, recluses, businessmen, women and children, alike. It will be observed, on a careful study of his writings, that his appeal is more to the heart and the feelings, and his admonitions are mostly of a practical nature adapted for an immediate application in the day-to-day life of man belonging to every class of society.

His works are, strictly speaking, lengthy gospels on the different Yogas: e.g., (1) Jnana-Yoga or the philosophical technique of the rational and the scientific intellect in unraveling the secrets of Nature and living a life of the wisdom, truth and justice of the law of the Absolute; (2) Raja-Yoga or the psychic and mystical way of analysing, dissecting and inhibiting the

constituents and modifications of the mind-stuff, thus enabling man to overcome its tyrannies and to a comprehension of his position in a universality of the Spirit or the Purusha; (3) Bhakti-Yoga or the way of spiritual love and devotion directed to the majestic Sovereign of the universe, the merciful and compassionate Father of all creation, by which emotions, such as those fastening man to relations with his parents, his children, his masters, his friends and his partner in life, are sublimated and ennobled by being centred in the universal nature of God who promises man, when he has surrendered his self completely to Him, with the hope of salvation; (4) Karma-Yoga or the science and the art of spiritual activity, a splendid manner of converting every action and every duty in life physical, mental, moral or spiritual into a Yoga of the Divine, by linking it up with a ceaseless consciousness of the omnipresence of the Absolute, of the surrender of personality to God, or of one's standing as an



unaffected witness of the movements of the internal and the external nature; (5) Hatha-Yoga or the disciplining of the physical body, the nervous system and the vital forces with a view to preparing the individual for the practice of the higher Yoga of inner discipline and meditation; (6) Kundalini-Yoga or the bringing into activity of a highly occult force dominant and latent in the individual, by a rousing of which through a training of the Prana and the mind, the illimitable resources of Nature are spontaneously placed at the disposal of man, and he becomes possessed of a consciousness of his true at-one-ment with the universe; (7) Mantra, Yantra and Tantra Yogas or the ways of certain purely mystic processes of generating spiritual forces and vibrations within, as also of relating these to the without, through the symbology of specific sounds, formula, diagrams and rituals intended to free man from confinement to the lower nature and raise him to the regions of the

higher nature; (8) Japa-Yoga or the spiritual practice of the chanting of the divine Name or certain significant letters, words, phrases or sentences in order to bring about a condition of harmony and illumination in the inner nature of man; (9) Laya-Yoga or the method of the dissolution of the mind in the Spirit by the recession of effects into causes, the merging of the grosser in the subtler, and the raising of one's consciousness and force from the lower to the higher. Swami Sivananda displays a great mastery in the synthesis of these various Yogas for the benefit of men of weak will and assures the aspirant-world that success is bound to come when practice is backed up by sincerity, firmness and patience.

### **His Method of Approach**

It is said that a sage of Self-realisation is like a pure crystal which has, by itself, no colour, but appears to assume the tint of any object that may be brought near it. He is supposed to behave, speak and act like a child with a child, an

adult with an adult, an old man with an old man, a scholar with a scholar and an ignorant one with an ignoramus. The idea behind this spontaneous self-expression, uninitiated by any particularised motive, intention, effort or will, is a close following of one's true nature with the Divine Will, which is immanent and active in all beings, and which has neither partiality nor prejudice, neither preference nor ill-will in regard to anyone. Swami Sivananda, in his personal life and example, as well as in his writings and speeches, reflected spontaneously, as it were, the nature manifested and exhibited by the environment around him, and acted in close keeping with a purely impersonal life. His works are not so much enunciation of principles for the guidance of the intellect and the reason, as is the case with several rationalistic works of metaphysicians, as practical instructions on the methods of the life spiritual, meant to go straight into the hearts of aspiring individuals, whether or not they have carefully

thought out beforehand the conditions and the inner circumstances under which they have been prompted to take to the spiritual way of living by the inner call to discover what seems to be hidden in and is above Nature. There is no circumlocution, no periphrasis, no statement of superfluities or throwing of unnecessary side-lights in his writings, but a clear-cut, well-defined and an open path free from all mystifications and ambiguities is laid before the seeker with an intention not merely to give information but to enlighten and guide him at every step of his Sadhana. His style and expression are remarkably simple, surging from the heart and the feeling of one who has had not only a vision of the perfection and the delight of God-Being, but possesses an insight into the sufferings of man, the depth of his ignorance which is hard to circumvent, and the need for illumination in the human world to lead a normal life, not only physical, mental and moral, but

also spiritual, extended, outwardly in the society, the nation and the world. The entire mass of his teachings is powerfully charged with the dominant spiritual note that all forms of life in society, whether individual or collective, have ultimately to be based on and to derive meaning and inspiration from the recognition of a boundless existence deeper than all the visible and the conceivable orders of Nature. Fired with a deep anxiety to relieve the world of ignorance and pain, Swami Sivananda girt up his loins to face the situation in the best possible manner open to him, and spared no pains in harnessing all his energy for the noble divine purpose which he set before himself. His works are illustrative of almost every way of contacting man through literature metaphysics, ethics, religion, mysticism, psychology, parables, stories, catechism, Yoga, prayer and ritual.

The qualified student to approach his spiritual literature

is, as with the Yogavasishtha, neither one who is totally ignorant of spiritual values nor one who has attained to the apex of spiritual life. The aspirant endowed with the ethical and the moral qualifications of Yama, Niyama and Sadhanachatushtaya; who has, by his purity of mind, received monitions as to the existence of a higher life, and is stirred with the zeal to grasp it and realise it in his own life, but is at the same time troubled by incapacities, doubts and lack of knowledge in regard to the proper method of approaching it and the spiritual way of conducting himself, should turn to the works of Swami Sivananda. As is usually the case with eminent spiritual philosophies and Yoga techniques, most of his writings begin with a vivid and clear portrayal of the presence and the nature of suffering in the world, the detection of which is the first prerequisite and is the fundamental stage of a spiritual way of life. Like Sankara, the philosopher, Swami Sivananda

boldly affirms the existence of a Supreme Absolute, second to which there can be none, and like the Buddha, he gives a colourful picture of the character of pain in life, makes a careful diagnosis of the cause of this pain, a detailed analysis of human psychical conditions, and delineates the laying out of the path running up to the ultimate perfection and peace of man, together with a dignified description of the characteristics of his final destiny.

### **The Philosophic Life**

Swami Sivananda emphasises that life is the working out of a philosophy, and philosophy is the unravelling of the mystery of existence, an all-round consideration of the deeper implications of experience, and not merely arising of the mansions of logical systems. Philosophy is more a digging deep into the abyss of life than a flying into the air of abstract speculation. Swami Sivananda recognises that any philosophy divested of human concerns is doomed in the end to failure and can never appeal to the

restless and inquisitive spirit of man. Philosophy, religion and life mean to him one and the same thing, and they signify not any unworldly or other-worldly concepts, but move in close association with man's demands for hunger and love, fame and power, value for life, concern for others, regard for oneself and his ultimate aspiration for immortality in Brahman. The ringing tone of Swami Sivananda's life and teachings is that of a supernal love based on proper understanding, a love in which the obstructing barrier between man and man is broken open and in which one easily discovers a happy way of participating in the life of others in the world. Endless hope which seems to be the only foundation of all human enterprises bespeaks the remote possibility, if not the immediate fact, of a union of the personal will with the Universal Law of God. It is this love and this meaning of hope and aspiration that can assure a world-brotherhood, a world-government based on universal

sympathy and altruistic considerations. It is this principle of humanitarianism, this relevance to the ultimate good of the human individual and an acute perception of the necessity of rousing mankind to the presence of an Absolute, an Almighty God, that characterise the life and teachings of Swami Sivananda. It is said that the Vedas are infinite, a statement which conveys the idea that knowledge is endless and the wonder of creation impenetrable. The scripture declares that there is no limit to God's glories and there is no cessation of man's endeavour to comprehend His Nature and the path leading to Him. Swami Sivananda caught the significance of this great truth and so never felt that spiritual teachings can have an end, that one can ever be tired of teaching the spiritual way of life or of listening to spiritual instructions, that there could be a limit to the carefulness with which the Guru has to look after the welfare of his disciples at every stage. The whole of life is teeming

with spiritual import, and hence every moment is an opportunity for Sadhana, an occasion to exercise unlimited caution in regard to one's spiritual practices and the chances of temptations, thwartings, side-trackings and stagnations of mind and spirit in one's life. The philosophic life is not a strange way of deportment, but the normal flow of a well-adjusted and perfected activity in the healthy maturity of seasoned knowledge and profound insight into Truth.

### **The Secret of World Peace**

The inspiring teachings of Swami Sivananda constitute one long song of liberation, the liberation of the individual, the society, the community, the nation and the world; physically, intellectually, morally and spiritually. The central burden of this eternal song of all-round freedom is Peace, peace to all, peace everywhere, by learning and imbibing the lesson that Life is One. Every breath that flows from man, every movement of his limbs, every turn of his behaviour, is a

direct or indirect effort towards the reconstruction of his personality to suit a better purpose, to bring about an easier and happier condition of life, with liberty and peace as its emblems. Man represents a microscopic specimen of what happens in the gigantic cosmos in a colossal scale. The aspirations, the changes in the forms of consciousness, the attempt to reach unity, freedom and happiness, which are seen to be vigorously active in man, can also be seen to be busy in the fulfilment of the purpose of the cosmos. In one's own personal life, in society and in the state, man struggles to manifest a regular system and order, abolishing chaos and confusion, an intense passion for the firm establishment of which seems to be innate in the very structure of all beings, especially in the self-conscious ones in whom the development of intelligence has come to the stage of displaying the ability to know the difference between right and wrong, true and false. The

universe does the same thing, with this difference that, while man strives with insufficient knowledge, the universe moves freely with an unrestricted expression of this tendency to realise the highest truth, goodness and freedom in its own bosom.

The changes that take place in the parts are felt in the constitution of the whole. As every cell in the human body organises itself to live in accordance with the law that regulates the whole body, and as every error on the part of a cell in the execution of its meaning brings about a reaction from the entire body with the purpose of setting right the wrong that has entered into its being, so does the cosmic Law correct the errors committed by the individuals constituting the cosmos. Small errors cause mild reactions and great wrongs lead to tremendous upheavals. Even the so-called unobserved acts in the grosser world produce mighty vibrations in the subtler regions. The entire teaching and activity of Swami

Sivananda centres round an untiring stress on the possibility of individual and world peace on the basis of a knowledge and practice of this Dharma, this Law eternal, this rule of Unity in every level of existence, every grade of society, in every individual, every man, woman and child. This is his clarion-call, the ceaseless warning to humanity that peace cannot be had by warfare, by exploitation, by domination, competition; for, these bursting waves on the surface are raised by the storms of desire and greed; and that there can be no rest for man until these violent commotions cease through understanding and co-operation. Man's concept of pleasure is nothing but an outcome of his erroneous judgment of a present good, his desire is the result of a wrong idea of a future good, his pain the consequence of a false notion of a present evil, and his fear the corollary of a mistaken evaluation of the nature of a future evil. All passions and their several variations are veritable diseases brought on by erroneous thinking.

These are to be eradicated, for, they are irrational and founded on ignorance. Man needs proper education of his faculties in the direction of the real and the good in the highest sense. The unfailing working of the classes of society and the stages of life, according to their Dharma, is essential for manifesting in everyday life the peace which is at the bottom of man, the law of God which sustains all things, and for bringing heaven itself here on earth. For Swami Sivananda, every form of life can be transformed into a Yoga of the Divine, provided the requisite knowledge is acquired by study, contemplation and service.

The revered Mahatma Gandhi did a signal service not only in the field of politics but also to religion, philosophy and ethics, when he emphasised the aspect of Truth as God. In the assertion commonly made, viz., God is Truth, the judgment involved is likely to become questionable, for, the predicate 'Truth' is referred to 'God' whose existence is here

presupposed or taken for granted. Naturally, those to whom the existence of God has not become an article of faith and whose rational attitude has not been convinced of it will take the assertion 'God is Truth' as not a demonstrated fact but a hypothetical proposition. But in the asseveration 'Truth is God' no such sublime inconsequence is involved, for none can deny that there is such a thing as Truth. And this Truth is identified with what we have to understand by God. Truth is the law of the universe. This law is not blind but intelligence itself operating everywhere. Law and Law-Giver in this case are one. And likewise, to Swami Sivananda, Truth is not merely truth-speaking but 'That which is' It is the unchanging, infinite and eternal Substance, which is at once the law and the love governing and guiding man, society, nation and world. The true significance of this Truth and of this Love is not properly assimilated in ordinary man's life, but is fully realised in the life of the

superman who is not only a world-ruler but also a self-ruler. It is not Nietzsche's egoistic elevation of man to power, but the Self-realised sage, a veritable embodiment of the Divine that is the ideal superman, a being who is at one and the same time a man of the world and a representative of the Absolute. True knowledge is a knowledge of things in their essences, in their relation to the universe, in the relation of Truth. This Truth, this Law, when it is supported and protected, supports and protects everyone. *'Dharmo Rakshati Rakshitah.'* It is only when we realise that joy is in the fulfilment of the law of God that we become truly free and liberated from all bondage. Dharma is the innermost nature and truth of man and of the universe, for, it is the body of the Divine Will. This is real duty and here is the secret of world-peace. Swami Sivananda has been living and preaching this deathless truth, this law and order of Nature, for the solidarity of the world, for all mankind to emulate



and follow, and his divine mission shall be fulfilled when even a modicum of this knowledge shall succeed in throwing light into the dark corners in man's mortal nature.

### **Unity—The Home of Peace**

Here is the essence of the law and the love that unites all the world. This is the rationale behind all the gospels of world-peace and doctrines of universal love and brotherhood. Scattering broadcast the ancient wisdom of India, the wisdom that discovered the true relation of man to his environment, Swami Sivananda ceaselessly urges humanity to muster in forces for bringing about real peace in the world. All his teachings and messages are lessons in the attainment of unity by the integration of personality in the consciousness of the Absolute. The aim of life is the practical realisation of the eternal spiritual essence which finds itself in man in a very limited and obscure form. Every individual tries to stretch beyond himself by desiring, aspiring, longing. Desire of any

kind is a disclosure, in one's conscious states, that there is something wanting, something lacking, something inadequate. Give the whole world to man; he will not be satisfied. Why? Because, there is that something, beyond the world, lying outside the possession of any earthly individual. Give him the whole of the heavens. He will still be dissatisfied; because, there is yet an unfulfilled want. This grievous mishap is the direct result of man's ignorance of his unity with creation. 'For the magnanimous, the whole world is one family' says the scripture. There can be no peace to man, unless he begins to recognise, live and serve his vast surroundings as his own Self, until he does his best at least to approximate his conduct in daily life to this sublime ideal. Peace is only in God, and the peace which we can hope to enjoy in this world depends upon the extent to which we have succeeded in reading and manifesting this infinitude of the Spirit in our social, national and world relations. This achievement

is not only a consequence of the knowledge and experience of Truth by man, but also a necessary condition of his attaining any success in his endless struggle for perfection. This is the teaching, the religion, the ethics, the philosophy and the gospel of Swami Sivananda to every son and daughter of this earth, of every station in society. This is the hope of humanity.

Towards this end, Swami Sivananda has urged the philosophers of the world to join hands and work together as a confederation of higher rational and spiritual forces. He sends his message: 'If a major world catastrophe is to be prevented in time, the foremost philosophers of the world must come forward. Theirs is this sacred duty; for, the Light of Divine Knowledge, the radiance of the Universal Power that holds all beings together, that supports the whole universe and sustains it, shines through them.' 'It is not enough today if His Message is delivered on a battle-field, or on a Mount, or in a

holy place, and allowed to take its own time to spread far and wide. Simultaneously, all over the world, everybody should hear the Word of God, and take to the right path. This is possible only through the agency of a united body of world-philosophers, and therefore Divine Intervention might well take that form.' Without in any way altering the fundamentals of religion, they will be able to bring about a synthesis of all religions, each religion taking what is the best from others. Thus will a World-Order emerge, through a world-religion.' 'This World Philosophical Congress will provide the correct basis for scientists, economists and politicians to build their mansions on. Thus guided by philosophers, scientists will work for the happiness and welfare of humanity; economists will plan for the commonwealth; politicians will discover ways and means of living at peace and maintaining the peace of the world.'

## SOME UNIQUE FEATURES OF SIVA'S WRITINGS

**Sri Swami Venkatesananda**

First and foremost, Siva writes for the guidance of the aspirant. He writes in order that aspirants might read and be benefited. Very few writers—especially in the field of religion and spirituality—do that. Most writers write with a thought on their own edification; and a simple style is in many cases a nightmare that such a motive keeps at a convenient distance. The less they are understood, the greater is the glory that they assume to themselves. Siva is their antithesis; there is not a line in his writings that an average school-boy cannot understand.

Every article is comprehensive; Siva does not wait to let the next chapter in a book take up the loose ends of the previous one and tie them. Every chapter has its own definite conclusions, even if it means the anticipation of the arguments of future chapters. Purvapaksha and Siddhanta, to use the orthodox expressions, are crushed into each paragraph; and the points again taken up for elucidation later. This is Sannyas-in-action. Nothing should be put off for tomorrow! For, that leaves a Sankalpa in the mind; and a Sankalpa, any Sankalpa, is bondage. If a great idea occurs in the mind, Siva at once gives expression to it; and the entire work is done at one stroke. Certain side-issues or offshoots of this main theme may be dealt with in later articles. Siva does not keep the aspirant in suspense; his philosophy—and the whole of it—is given at every opportunity. If it is an article written for a journal, it contains the essence of the entire Sadhana; the aim is that, if an aspirant possesses this one page—and nothing more than that—he will possess enough to enable him to realise God.

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Taken from D L 1951

### **The Synthetic Blend**

This is all the more true of his books. His are not books as books are nowadays; his are encyclopaedia of spiritual knowledge. A zealous editor has, on one or two occasions, managed to pull out (often without the knowledge of Siva) certain features from a volume, which do not belong there in accordance with the theme selected for the book; otherwise, every one of Siva's books contains (besides the particular subject chosen to be dealt with), select articles on every aspect of Yoga Sadhana. The technique and benefits of Yoga Asanas and Pranayama have thus found a place in more than a dozen books of his. Some articles that would help to induce Vairagya would form an invariable part of every book. Even in books on Vedanta or Jnana Yoga, you will find a lot of instructions on Bhakti, Sankirtan and Karma Yoga. The Sadhaka into whose hands one volume falls, ought to be, in Siva's opinion, able to cross the ocean of Samsara. His thirst for knowledge

should be aroused in the first chapter and quenched in a subsequent one; and he should not be compelled by unfulfilled promises, to get other books of Siva.

This comprehensive handling of each topic enables one to use Siva's books as one uses a dictionary, for instance. You can just open a book, read a page, and be inspired; you can at once close the book and commence your meditation, without feeling that you have to read pages after pages to understand a theme.

This has been very aptly and rightly expressed by the former President of the Indian National Congress, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya who wrote to Siva in one of his epistles, "I keep your books by my side and refer to them off and on more as dictionaries than as text-books. They are a storehouse of ancient wisdom made available to the unbelieving modern generations who have not been divorced entirely from their own culture, hoary with age and sanctified by tradition."

The main subject-matter of the book is plainly, blandly and unmistakably stated in the title of the book. The title of the book does not amuse you, does not puzzle you, nor does it deceive you. We recently came across an extraordinary book (a sizeable-volume!) which is a mere printed Likhit Japa book—one common widely-known, Mantra was written over and over again, a dozen times on each page and on every page of the book; and this book had a lofty title. Only after paying for it and after receiving the first crude shock at the ease with which you have been cheated, are you able to console yourself, “Yes, the Publishers must have meant this by the title!” You can do nothing else than to take recourse to such consolation! But, Siva tells you in the name he gives to the book, what you are to expect in its pages.

### **Revelations of Inner Experience**

Siva's books are the outcome of his inspiration, not of intellectual gymnastics. They do not amuse your senses or tickle your nerves; but they pierce

your heart, pierce the veil of ignorance, lodge themselves in your heart of hearts, and illumine your entire being from there. Seldom can you read a few pages at one sitting, without realising that every word that entered your heart through the eyes or ears has transformed itself into oil that has set ablaze the fire of aspiration that had been thickly overlaid with the ashes of self-forgetfulness, desire and its concomitant evils. Every line proves to be a dynamite that blows up, barricades of misconception and wrong notions. Every sentence poses a challenge before you. At once you want to do something about it, before reading further. Every volume merits study for a life-time.

There is a strange mixture of contraries. Everywhere you find a message of hope, of cheer, of joy, of encouragement, asking the aspirant never to despair; but there would not be a trace of compromise! Siva leads you by the hand; he infuses joy and bliss in you; he points to you the flower-beds that lie on either side of the

path; he shows you the lovely peak that your pathway leads you to—and thus he equips you for the march on the razor's edge; he does not seek to escape from this arduous task; for, in fact, there is no such escape. Rosy promises and stern warnings, keep you company on either side.

### **Controversies Transcended**

Siva does not indulge in controversies. In his eyes, there is no controversy. Advaita is the Ultimate Reality; but all other doctrines have their place. Siva has an innate love and capacity for effecting a synthesis of contraries and a harmony of discordant notes. This is true as much of his

actual life as of his writings. In his writings, one would easily find that he had discovered the golden mean between exclusive worldliness and other-worldliness, between seclusion and getting lost in the crowd, between Tapasya and indulgence, and even between unity and diversity (where Siva recognises the underlying Unity but at the same time recognises the need for the diversity). No Sage's or Prophet's preaching is thus beyond the pale of Siva's all-embracing and unifying influence. On the other hand, the teachings of all Sages and Prophets seem to find their fulfilment in his Divine Life.

Ahimsa is a Mahavratam or great universal vow. It should be practised by all people of all countries. It does not concern the Hindus or Indians alone. Whoever wishes to realise the Truth must practise Ahimsa. You may encounter any amount of difficulties; you may sustain any amount of losses; but you must not give up the practice of Ahimsa. Trials and difficulties are bound to come in your way to test your strength. You should stand adamant. Then alone will your efforts be crowned with sanguine success.

There is a hidden power in Ahimsa which protects the practitioners. The invisible hand of God gives protection. There is no fear. What can pistols and swords do?

**Swami Sivananda**

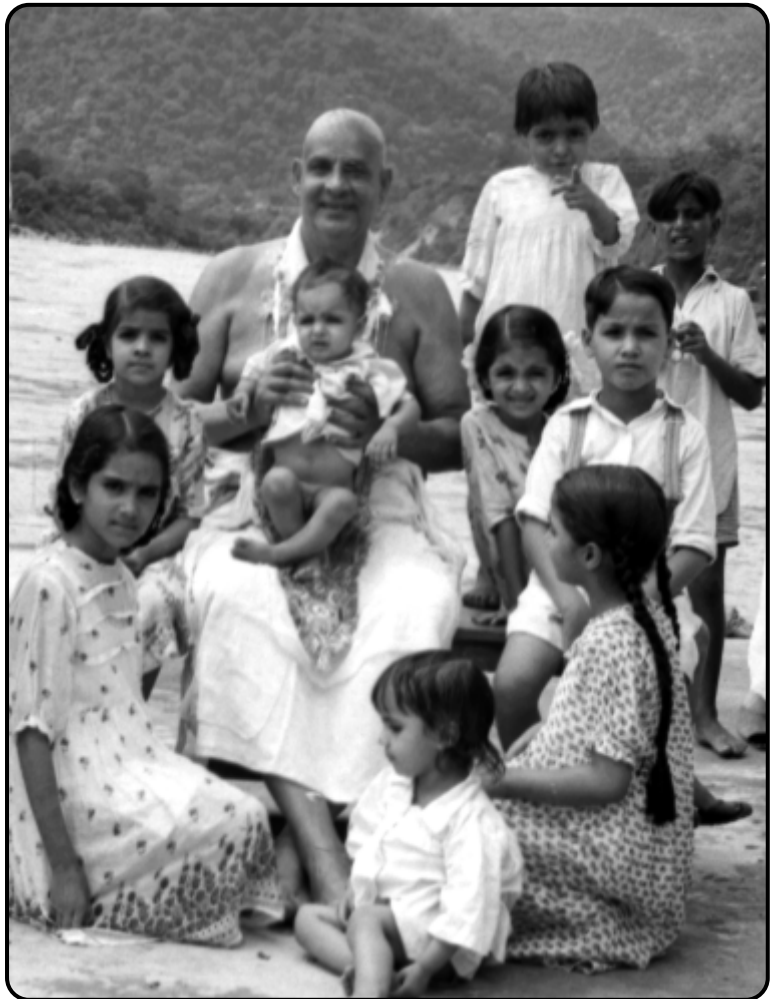


# CHILDREN'S WORLD

## SERVE, LOVE, GIVE

Blessed Immortal Selves!

God is love.  
Love is God.  
Selfishness, greed,  
egoism, vanity,  
pride, hatred  
contract the heart  
and stand in the way  
of developing  
universal love. Feel  
that the whole world  
is your body, your  
own home. Melt and  
destroy all barriers  
that separate man  
from man. Idea of  
superiority is  
ignorance. Develop  
Vishvaprema—all-  
embracing love.  
Unite with all.



Separateness is death. Unity is eternal life.

God is love. The only true religion is the religion of love or the religion of heart. Feel for others as you feel for yourself.

Love expects no reward. Love knows no fear. Love Divine gives—does not demand. Love thinks no evil; imputes no motive. To love is to share and serve.

**Swami Sivananda**

## **CULTIVATION OF VIRTUES**

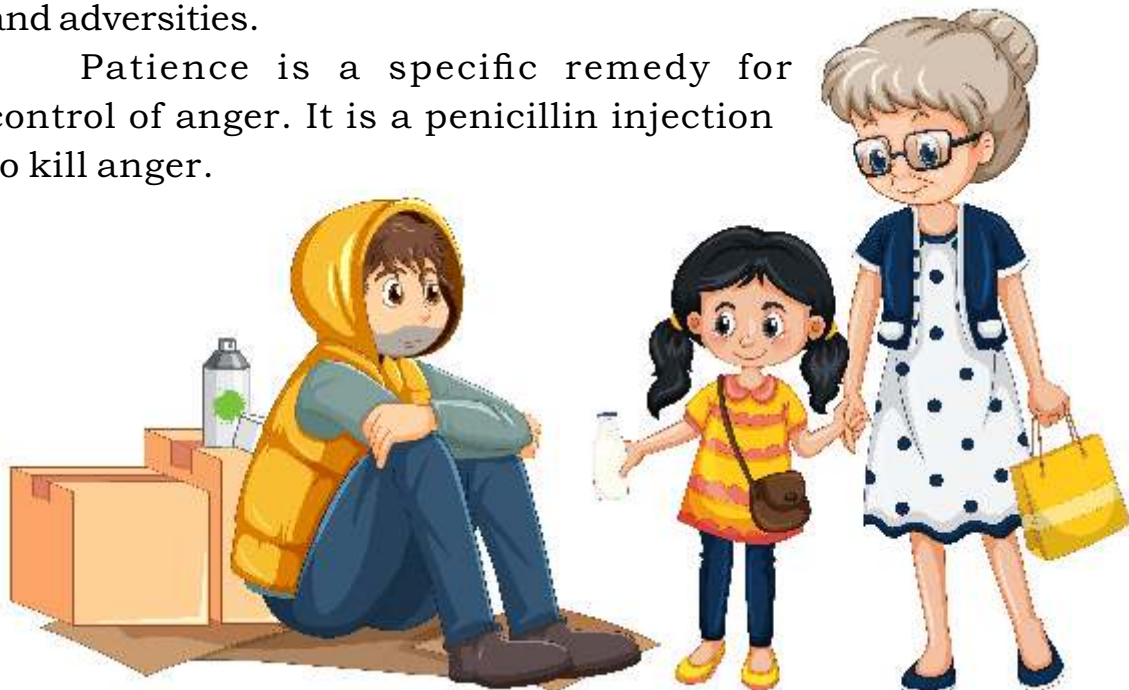
### **PATIENCE**

Patience is the quality of being patient or able calmly to endure. It is the quality of sustaining pain without repining.

A man of patience is not easily provoked. He is calm and serene even under adverse conditions.

Be patient in little things. Learn to bear the daily trials and annoyances quietly and calmly. You will develop great strength and bear severe calamities, privations, sufferings and adversities.

Patience is a specific remedy for control of anger. It is a penicillin injection to kill anger.





Patience is strength. It is the greatest and sublimest power. Patience can work wonders. It can move mountains. Patient working can achieve anything in this world. A patient man can have what he will.

**Swami Sivananda**

## **ERADICATION OF VICES**

### **PREJUDICE**

Prejudice is judgment or opinion formed beforehand or without due examination of the facts or reasons that are essential to a just and impartial determination. It is unreasonable presupposition for or against anything. It is bias.

Prejudice shuts out the truth and often leads to ruinous error. Prejudice is a mist which dims your vision and obscures the good and glorious objects.

Prejudiced persons never speak well, but also never think well of those whom they dislike.

Prejudice is the child of ignorance. It is a great obstacle to progress.

The destructive qualities of prejudice can be removed by goodwill.



**Swami Sivananda**

## **THE WISDOM OF GOD**

Once upon a time, there was a donkey who was as sure as any donkey that there was no one wiser than he in all the world.

Straying into an orchard one day, he observed that the tall apple trees carried only small rosy apples, while huge pumpkins mellowing in a pumpkin patch were hardly clinging to their stems.

He stared again at the apples above and the pumpkins below and shook his ears with disgust.

“How stupidly everything has been arranged in this world!” he shrugged. “If they'd only let me, a truly wise donkey, have my way, I'd fix things differently.”

His words tickled the curiosity of a sparrow on a twig nearby.

“But tell me, most honourable ass,” it piped, “just what is it that you find so wrong?”

“Can't you see for yourself?” replied the donkey with dignity. “Just look at those big trees laden with apples no bigger than the fists of children, while these pumpkins bigger than my head can hardly hang to their skinny stems!”

“But that's just what's wise!” objected the sparrow. “There's nothing wise about it!” fumed the donkey.

“Wouldn't it be more sensible if those great trees carried apples as big as those pumpkins, and the skinny pumpkin stems, pumpkins as small as those apples?”

The donkey then brought his body up against one of the trees for a good scratch, when an apple fell and rapped him soundly on the head.

“Hee-haw' My poor head!” he wailed. The sparrow laughed and laughed.

“There you are, O the wisest of donkeys! You can thank your stars that the apple was not as big as a pumpkin. What would have become of your head if it had been?”

“There's something in what you say!” gasped the donkey, prancing from the apple trees.

**Swami Sivananda**

## SRI RAMANAVAMI CELEBRATIONS AT THE HEADQUARTERS ASHRAM



शान्तं शाश्वतमप्रमेयमनघं निर्वाणशान्तिप्रदं ब्रह्माशम्भुफणीन्द्रसेव्यमनिशं वेदान्तवेद्यं विभुम् ।  
रामाख्यं जगदीश्वरं सुरगुरुं मायामनुष्यं हरिं वन्देऽहं करुणाकरं रघुवरं भूपालचूडामणिम् ॥

Salutations and prostrations to Lord Hari, who is known by the name of Rama, who is the best among Raghu's lineage and is the crest-jewel of kings, who is an abode of compassion and is appearing in human form through His Maya, who is the greatest of all gods and is constantly worshipped by Brahma, Shambhu and Adishesha, who is the Lord of the universe and who bestows supreme peace in the form of final beatitude, who is serene, eternal, immeasurable, sinless, all-pervading One and is known through the Vedanta.



The auspicious day of Sri Ramanavami was celebrated at the Headquarters Ashram with great devotion and spiritual gaiety on 30th



March 2023. The Mula Parayana of Sri Valmiki Ramayana at Sri Divya Nama Mandir from 5th to 24th March marked the commencement of the celebration.

From 25th to 28th March, the holy Mantra 'Sri Rama Jai Rama Jai Jai Rama' was chanted daily for

two hours in the sacred premises of Sri Vishwanatha temple. On 29th March, the Akhand chanting of this divine Mantra from 7 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. filled the atmosphere with the pious vibrations of prayerfulness signifying a devout welcome to the advent of the Lord.

The blessed day of Sri Ramanavami commenced with prayer-meditation session, Prabhat-pheri and Yajna. From 9 a.m. to 12 noon, a grand

worship was offered to Lord Sri Rama with the chanting of Vedic Mantras and soul-stirring Bhajans and Kirtans in the sanctum-sanctorum of beautifully decorated Sri Vishwanatha temple wherein all present



got the opportunity of doing Abhisheka and Archana of the Lord. It was followed by sonorous chanting of Avatar Sarga from Sri Valmiki Ramayana and Sri Ramacharitamanasa. The celebration concluded with Arati and distribution of Prasad.



During the night Satsanga, Sannyasis, Brahmacharis and devotees of the Ashram offered their Pushpanjali at the feet of Lord Sri Rama and Worshipful Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj in the form of Bhajans and Kirtans. The Satsanga concluded with Arati and distribution of Prasad.

May the divine grace of Lord Sri Rama and Sadgurudev be upon all.



## DISCOURSES ON THE 11TH SKANDHA OF SRIMAD BHAGAVATA MAHAPURANA



In continuation of series of discourses given on the 11th Skandha of Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana in May 2022, Pujya Ramana Charana Tirtha Brahmasri Nochur Venkataramanaji, Tiruvannamalai, delivered soul-elevating discourses from 20th to 29th March 2023 during the night Satsanga at the holy Samadhi Shrine. Referring to Lord Krishna's nectarine teachings to Uddhava in 11th Skandha of Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana, Sri Venkataramanaji

inspired all to strive sincerely to attain Self-knowledge as ignorance of one's true nature is the cause of bondage and all miseries. On 29th March, the Satsanga concluded with the release of two books and felicitation of Sri Nochur Venkataramanaji.



May the divine grace of Lord Sri Krishna and Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj be ever upon all.

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## INAUGURAL FUNCTION OF THE 96TH YOGA-VEDANTA COURSE

The 96th Basic Yoga-Vedanta Course was inaugurated on 1st March 2023 at YVFA Hall. Thirty eight seekers from different parts of India joined the course.

The inaugural function commenced with the Puja at the holy temples of Mother Durga and Dattatreya Bhagavan. After the invocatory prayers and welcome address by Sri Swami Sivabhaktanandaji Maharaj, H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj inaugurated the Course with the lighting of the lamp. Thereafter, Br. Sri Gopiji, introduced the students to the Swamijis and the audience.

Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj in his inaugural address, apprising the students of their blessedness of being a part of this Course, motivated them to be regular in their classes and utilise every moment of their stay at the sacred abode of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. The function concluded with the worship of Mother Saraswati and distribution of Prasad.

May the blessings of the Lord Almighty and Sadgurudev be upon all.

Education is the root. Culture is the flower. Wisdom is the fruit. Education is to effect the culture of man's higher nature. Real education is education of man as man. Education should stimulate intellectual virility and make the students pious, sincere, bold and self-controlled. There must be man-making and character-building education that will give full development to the latent powers of children in their ethical, intellectual, aesthetic, physical and spiritual life.

Education is development of the whole man. Head, heart and hand—all three must be trained by artistic, scientific and practical education. The body, mind, intellect and spirit must have harmonious development. Only then will evolution be quick.

**Swami Sivananda**

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:generalsecretary@sivanandaonline.org)** and **[gs@sivanandaonline.org](mailto:gs@sivanandaonline.org)** and the online donation portal is **<https://donations.sivanandaonline.org>**

Universality is the very root of all morality. Without universality, morality will die.

Do not do any act which brings no good to others or which will make you repent later on or feel ashamed. Do such acts which are praiseworthy and which bring good to you and to others. This is a brief description of right conduct. Moral precepts have been made to free one another from all injuries.

**Swami Sivananda**



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## **SRI GURU PURNIMA, SADHANA WEEK AND THE SACRED PUNYATITHI ARADHANA OF GURUDEV SRI SWAMI SIVANANDAJI MAHARAJ**

The Holy Sri Guru Purnima will be celebrated at the Headquarters Ashram on the 3rd of July, 2023, and the 60th Anniversary of the Punyatithi Aradhana of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj will be observed on the 11th of July, 2023. In between the two functions, Sadhana Week will be organised from 4th July to 10th July.

As you all know, sixty years ago, on the Navami Tithi of Krishna-paksha of the Sravana month i.e. 14th July 1963, Worshipful Gurudev left his mortal vesture and merged into the Supreme. To commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the Punyatithi Aradhana of Sri Gurudev, a 60 days' Akhanda Mahamantra Sankirtan is also being organised from 12th May to 10th July 2023.

Devotees who intend to participate in the above programmes, are requested to write to us well in advance through Email or letter, giving complete Postal address, number of persons, date of arrival and departure etc.

Persons with any kind of physical handicap, or health problem, may consider to avoid the strain of the concentrated programme during Sadhana Week and visit the Ashram at some other time. Further, this being Shravan month, there will be large floating pilgrim population in the whole of Uttarakhand, disrupting traffic.

This period will be in the monsoon season when there is likelihood of heavy rains in this area. As such, devotees who are coming for the celebrations may kindly bring with them necessary requirements befitting the season, such as an umbrella, a torch and the like.

Due to difficulty in accommodating large number of persons, the Ashram has to request for rooms from neighbouring Ashrams. Guests may kindly bear with these difficulties and adjust themselves, lovingly. Devotees are requested kindly to come one or two days earlier only and also not to extend their period of stay in the Ashram beyond one or two days after the function is over.

May Sri Gurudev's Blessings be upon all!

Shivanandanagar

1st April, 2023

—THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY



# 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 **97th** residential Basic YOGA-VEDANTA COURSE of two months' duration, i.e., from **3-5-2023** to **25-6-2023**. 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](http://www.sivanandaonline.org). Candidates can also apply for the Course using Online Mode through the link given in our website [www.sivanandaonline.org](http://www.sivanandaonline.org). Duly filled Application Form should reach the undersigned by **31-3-2023**.
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  
February, 2023

Registrar,  
Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy,  
Phone: 0135-2433541, email—[yvfacademy@gmail.com](mailto: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 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and subsequently in the 'Board of Trustees' Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021 that any donations to The Divine Life Society will be received only under the following 'Heads of Accounts' with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021: –

## General Donation

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

## Corpus Donation

Sivananda Ashram Corpus (Mooldhan) Fund

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## REPORTS FROM THE D.L.S. BRANCHES

### INLAND BRANCHES

**Ambala (Haryana):** Weekly Satsang on Sundays with Prayer, Bhajan, Swadhyaya etc. was continued by the Branch. Free Homeopathy Dispensary continued to serve the people. Special Satsang was held on 8th January.

**Brahmapur (Odisha):** The Branch had weekly Satsang on Sundays. There were Gita chanting on Ekadasi day and Sundarakand Parayan on Sankranti day. Harikatha was conducted on 30th January. Sadhana day was held on 3rd Sunday of every month. Maha Sivaratri was celebrated on 18th February. A Special Satsang was arranged on 25th and mobile Satsangs were conducted on 20th and 26th February at the residence of devotees.

**Bargarh (Odisha):** The Branch conducted daily Puja, Swadhyaya, Yoga and Pranayama, Rudrabhishek on Mondays, Guru Paduka Puja on Thursdays and weekly Satsang every Saturday, and recitation of Bhagavad Gita and discussion on Sundays. Homeopathic treatment of poor patients was carried on regularly. Maha Sivaratri was celebrated on 18th February with Rudrabhishek, Bhajan and Kirtan.

**Bikaner (Rajasthan):** The Branch continued daily Yoga class, recitation of Hanuman Chalisa, Sundarakand Parayan and Maha Mantra Kirtan on Saturdays. Besides this, Hawan was conducted on Pradosha

day. The Branch arranged a five days meditation camp from 10th to 14th February. Maha Sivaratri was celebrated on 18th with Rudrabhishek. Srimad Bhagavat Saptah was conducted from 20th to 27th February.

**Bhimkand (Odisha):** The Branch had daily Paduka Puja and weekly Satsang on Sundays. Srimad Bhagavat Parayan and Pravachan were conducted from 24th February to 2nd March. Besides this, special talks were also arranged from 24th to 28th February.

**Bhubaneswar (Odisha):** The Branch had daily Puja and Narayan Seva, weekly Satsang on Thursdays, and free health service four days in a week. Special Satsangs were arranged on 4th, 6th, 14th, 23rd and 26th February. Maha Shivaratri was celebrated on 18th with Abhishek and chanting of "Om Namah Shivaya". The Branch conducted Nama Sankirtan on 10th, chanting of "Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram" on 24th, and Hanuman Chalisa on 25th.

**Chhatrapur (Odisha):** Weekly Satsang on Thursdays and Paduka Puja on 8th and 24th of every month were continued by the Branch. In the month of January eleven special Satsangs were arranged at different places. Saraswati Puja was observed on 26th with Bhajan, Kirtan and recitation of Vishnu Sahasranam. Sadhana Day was held on 28th. There was Sundarakand Parayan on 10th and 26th January.

**Chandapur (Odisha):** Daily two times Puja, weekly Satsang on

Saturdays, Guru Paduka Puja on Thursdays and mobile Satsang on 8th and 24th of every month were the regular programmes of the Branch. Sundarakanda Parayan was done on Sankranti day. Mahasivaratri was celebrated on 18th February with Abhisheka and Akhanda Nama Sankirtan.

**Choudwar (Odisha):** The Branch continued weekly Satsang on Sundays with Paduka Puja, Gita Path, chanting of Hanuman Chalisa. Srimad Bhagavat Parayan and Pravachan were arranged from 23rd February to 1st March and also the Branch foundation day and 50th year golden Jubilee of the Branch were celebrated.

**Gandhinagar (Gujarat):** The Branch had daily two-session Yogasana class and weekly Satsang on Sundays. Under the guidance of Sri Swami Dharmanisthanandaji of DLS Hqs, Rishikesh, the Branch had arranged special Satsang from 12th to 14th February.

**Kabisuryanagar (Odisha):** Daily Narayan Seva and weekly Satsang on Thursdays and Sundays were continued regularly. Besides this, Pravachan on Sadhana Panchakam was arranged from 9th to 14th January. The Branch inauguration day was observed on 28th with Paduka Puja, Bhajan and Kirtan. Maha Shivaratri was celebrated on 18th February with Archana and chanting of "Om Namah Shivaya".

**Kakinada (A.P.):** The Branch continued weekly Satsang on Saturdays with Pravachan on Bhagavad Gita.

Monthly Satsang was arranged on 8th January with Japa, Meditation, Bhajans and Pravachan. 14th Anniversary of the Branch was celebrated on 22nd.

**Kakching (Manipur):** The Branch continued daily Puja with Rudri Path and Shiva Mahimna Stotra. Maha Shivaratri was celebrated on 8th February with Rudri Path, Bhajan and Kirtan. Special Satsangs were arranged on 9th and 14th at the residence of devotees. Maha Mantra Kirtan was held on 12th.

**Lanjipalli Ladies Branch (Odisha):** The Branch had daily Puja, weekly Satsang on Sundays, Paduka Puja and mobile Satsang on Thursdays. Besides this, Ekadasis were observed with chanting of Srimad Bhagavad Gita, and there was recitation of Hanuman Chalisa and Sundarakanda Parayan on Sankranti day. Srimad Bhagavat Parayan and Pravachan were arranged and it was followed by Narayan Seva. Maha Shivaratri was celebrated on 18th February with Abhishek, chanting of "Om Namah Shivaya" and Sundarakanda Path etc.

**Lucknow (U.P.):** The Branch conducted special Satsang at Lekhraj Homes on 5th and 19th February with Prayers, Bhajans, and Mantra Japa etc.

**Mahasamund (Chattisgarh):** The Branch continued daily Prayers, meditation and Yogasans, and in the evening session Gita Path and study of Mahabharat. Weekly Satsang was held on Tuesdays with recitation of Sundarakand and Hanuman Chalisa. Maha Shivaratri was celebrated on 18th

February with Abhishek and Akhand Naam Sankirtan of “Om Namah Shivaya”.

**N a n d i n i n a g a r (Chhattisgarh):** The Branch had morning prayers, Yoga class, Gita Path, chanting of Hanuman Chalisa, 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 Sundarakand and Hanuman Chalisa. A Special Satsang was conducted on 13th January. Maha Shivaratri was celebrated on 18th February with Abhishek, chanting of Panchakshari Mantra, Bhajan and Kirtan.

**Pattamadai (Tamilnadu):** The Branch continued Paduka Puja on 8th of every month. Special Satsangs were held on 5th February with talk on Antaryogam and Bhajans, and on 28th study of Thiruvagasam. 400 free books were distributed to all the Divine Life Society Branches of Tamilnadu.

**Panchkula (Haryana):** The Branch conducted Satsang on Sundays with study of Bhagavad Gita and Prayers for world peace etc. Besides this, Narayan Seva was done on 8th February at Civil Hospital, and on 24th, green fodder was offered at a Goshala.

**Puri (Odisha):** The Branch had daily Satsang, weekly Satsang on Thursdays and Sundays, and Guru Paduka Puja on 8th and 24th. There was recitation of Hanuman Chalisa on Sankranti day, and Gita Path on Ekadasis. Saraswati Puja was arranged

on 26th January.

**Rourkela (Odisha):** Daily Yoga class and weekly Satsang on Thursdays and Sundays continued with Paduka Puja, Archana and chanting of Vishnusahasranam etc. As usual, free Acupressure treatment and medicines were provided to needy people. Special Satsangs were arranged by the Branch on 4th, 6th, 8th and 19th February. Maha Shivaratri was celebrated on 18th with Abhishek, Paduka Puja and chanting of “Om Namah Shivaya”.

**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. Special Satsang was held on Sankranti day. Gita Path, and recitation of Vishnu Sahasranam and Hanuman Chalisa were done on Ekadasis. There was Akhand Mahamantra Sankirtan on 3rd January and 25th February. Maha Shivaratri was celebrated on 18th February with chanting of “Om Namah Shivaya”.

**Visakha Rural Branch (A.P.):** The Branch had daily Puja and Bhagavannama Sankirtan on Mondays at Vishwanath Mandir. Six days in a week Satsang was conducted at different neighbouring villages. Nagar Sankirtan was arranged on 4th February. Monthly Satsang was held on 5th with Japa, Dhyana and discourse on Bhagavad Gita. Mahashivaratri was celebrated on 18th with Abhishekam and Naama Smarana. A Special Satsang was held on 19th at Kottavalasa.

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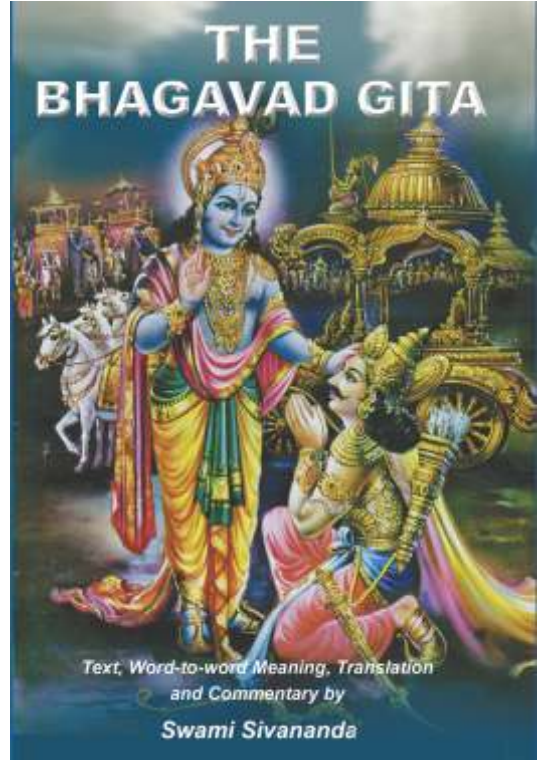
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# **THE BHAGAVAD GITA**

**Swami Sivananda**

**Text, Word-to-word meaning,  
Translation and Commentary**

**Pages: 624      Price: ₹ 500/-**



# **ESSENCE OF RAMAYANA**

**Swami Sivananda**

**Pages: 208      Price: ₹ 180/-**

## 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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## **THE FIRST-FRUITS OF PRAYER**

Prayer generates good spiritual currents and produces a rare tranquillity of the mind; it elevates the whole emotional nature and is accompanied by the growth of inward grace, inner strength, and a sense of at-one-ment with the Supreme Being. The intensive purified feelings raised in acts of prayer, bring about the most beneficial inner change in the heart; the receptive attitude of the silenced praying mind puts the soul of man in tune with the Infinite, links it with the cosmic powerhouse of inexhaustible energy and surcharges it with strength, grace, energy, light. When prayers are raised on foundations of absolute devotion, purity of motive, detachment from all worldly concerns, and unyielding faith in the Divine, they lead the inner being of man into highest spiritual Experience.

*Swami Sivananda*

**To**