

PRADOSHA VRATA

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

All things in this vast creation function upon definite Laws. There is always a beautiful system and sound rationale governing every phenomenon and process, mundane or mystical. Just as the gross elements and physical forces operate variously under different sorts of states and conditions, subtler *tattvas*, higher forces, too respond and react similarly in the inner mystic planes and the purely spiritual processes like *upasana*, prayer, worship, meditation, etc. Therefore you find definite injunctions for performing certain types of *puja* in the morning time, certain others at mid-day, while some forms of worship are to be done at night. Again some observances are meant to be done during certain phases of the moon, some when a particular star is in the ascendant or at the time of a peculiar conjunction of planets.

The *Pradosha* worship is to be done during evening twilight on the thirteenth day or *trayodashi* of each *paksha*. It is a special worship offered to Lord Siva for victory and success in all undertakings and the fulfilment of all your heart's cherished desires. When you wish to propitiate a superior person and to obtain some favour from him, you naturally approach him at a moment when he is likely to be in a very pleasant frame of mind. You will perhaps see him after he has taken a good dinner and is cheerfully chatting with a friend in a hearty, expansive mood. Even so the Hindu who is especially engaged in the *sakamy* type of worship usually selects the *soumya* (out of the two aspects *Soumya* and *Rudra*) for his *puja* and does it at a time which

the *Puranic* sages experienced as being most efficacious in propitiating the deity. Thus Shakti is approached in Her gentle aspect as Jagadamba, rather than as Bhadra Kali. Lakshmi-Narasimha is often worshipped, but seldom Ugra-Narasimha.

The *Pradosha* day worship, based upon such mystic psychology, is the *puja* of Parvati-*sameta*-Siva in an extremely propitious mood. Repeatedly worsted in war by the *asuras*, the *devas* approach Lord Siva to bless them with a leader for their celestial hosts. They come at twilight, on a *trayodashi* day and find the Lord in the blissful company of his consort. Hymned and glorified by them, Siva immediately grants them their prayerful request. Hence the extreme auspiciousness of the moment.

The Skanda Purana relates how Sandilya Muni prescribed this *vrata* to a certain Brahmin lady. She comes to the sage with two boys, her son and an orphan prince, his father slain in battle and the kingdom overrun by enemies. Acting upon the sage's advice, the woman and the boys perform the *vrata* with great devotion. After four months during the 8th *Pradosha puja*, Suchivrata obtains an *amrita kalasha* and drinks the ambrosia. The prince Dharmagupta gets the hand of a Gandharva princess and the help of the Gandharva king himself by the command of Lord Siva. His enemies are slain and after ruling over his kingdom Dharmagupta attains Kailasa. So easily, yet so very greatly is the Lord of Kailas pleased by this *vrata*.

One who does this *vrata*, fasts on that day and keeps vigil at night after the worship is over. Bathing an hour before sunset the worshipper first performs a preliminary worship of Lord Siva with all the Upa-devas, Parvathi, Ganesh, Skanda and Nandi. Then after Ganesh *puja*, Lord Siva is invoked in the special *kalasha* placed on a square *mandala* with drawn lotus, spread over with darba grass. After systematic worship with the *poorva* and *uttara shodashopachara pujas* with *anga puja*, *archana*, etc., the Pradosha story is to be read out and heard. This is followed by a Mrityunjaya Homa with 108 *ahutis* and *mahapuja* at the close. In the end, *mantra snana* with the sacred *kalasha* water is taken, the sacred ash applied to the forehead and the *tirtha* drunk. A *dana* of the *kalasha*, *vastra* and a *pratima*, should be given to a Brahmin in the end.

A very important point to be remembered in this connection is that during this auspicious *muhurtha* the hosts of celestial

beings, the *devatas*, come from Deva Loka and attend the worship in their subtle forms. This immensely adds to the great sanctity of the worship.

This *vrata* is highly lauded by the scriptures and is of very great sanctity and importance to the Saivites. The mere *darshan* of the deity in a temple during this *muhurtha* will destroy all sins and bestow bountiful blessings upon the fortunate beholder. Even a single *bilva* offered to the Lord at this unique auspicious moment equals more than a hundred *mahapujas*. It is usual to have special illumination during Pradosha and to light even a single wick at this juncture is very meritorious and productive of untold benefits, material as well as spiritual. Fortunate and most blessed is the person who performs the *Pradosha vrata*, for upon him Lord Siva showers His choicest grace and blessings in a very short time.

Glory to the unique, great and marvelous *Pradosha vrata*!

BALANCE OF MIND

He who is attempting to develop his will should always try to keep a cool head. He should keep a balanced mind under all conditions. He will have to train or discipline the mind. It is worth practising.

Balance of mind is one of the vital characteristics of a developed Jnani or Yogi. That Yogi who can keep a balanced mind at all times is really a strong and happy man. He will get sanguine success in all his undertakings. You may fail to maintain the balance in fifty attempts; but from the fifty-first endeavour, you will get strength of will. You will slowly manifest balance of mind. You should not be discouraged in the beginning. Remember the story of "Bruce and the Spider". Bruce learnt from the spider. He failed seven times but succeeded in the war in his eighth attempt.

Sivananda

CHOOSE TO MANIFEST WHAT YOU ARE

(Sri Swami Chidananda)

What will you yield, in the form of the living of your life, in the world into which God has sent you? The oyster yields a pearl because that is what it holds within its bosom. The gold mine yields gold because that is what it holds within its bosom. What will you yield from within the depths of your own personality, your nature, your individual identity? What will be your gift to the world? It is for you to choose. It is for you to make this choice and to live your life in this grand arena, which gives you the occasion, the opportunity, and the unlimited scope and freedom to be what you are.

God did not send His own radiant ray, His own *amsa* (part), His own individualised expression, to spread darkness where one has the full potential to manifest light. God did not send His own chosen ones, His children, to do anything except to manifest His love, His purity and peace, His kindness and compassion, the fragrance and beauty of His all-virtuous divinity. All that is positive, auspicious, blessed and beautiful inheres in God as His transcendental, perfect, pristine nature. And He dwells within you. He is manifest here as you. You choose whether you will withhold it or gloriously manifest it.

To make the right choice—purposefully, intelligently, wisely, with discrimination—is the great privilege of only one species of creatures on this planet Earth, and that is the human being. Reflect well on this, and act in harmony with this inner fact.

When you can make your life beautiful,

why should you allow it to give place to ugliness? When you can make your life wonderfully fragrant, why should you allow any contrary factor to mar its fragrance? When you can make your life luminous, effulgent and radiant, why should you deny yourself this privilege? When you can make your life all that is good, auspicious and beautiful, why should you not do so and be a blessing to all?

For, this is your birthright which you can claim. Therefore, throughout the day always let your choice be for Divinity and the expression of what you really are. Let each word that you speak, each thought that you harbour in your mind, each sentiment or emotion that you cherish in your heart, each action that you engage in, bring forth, express and actively manifest the purity, the sublimity, the blessedness, the auspiciousness and the radiance that you are.

What a great blessing, what a great privilege this life is! It would be a pity not to see it as such. Make up your mind, therefore, that each day, every moment, at every step, your choice will be to manifest the Truth within you, and never anything else but this. Choose always to be the best, the highest. Choose to be what you really are. Choose to be the source of blessedness.

In this choice lies not only your own highest good, but in it lies the good of all creatures. In this lies the highest well-being of the contemporary world in which you live. This is the truth, and this is the occasion and the op-

portunity: This is for you the moment to prove your wisdom in all your life each day.

Choose to manifest the glory that you are, the grandeur that your true identity constitutes, the sublime loftiness and nobility which is your true dimension. Choose to manifest the divinity that you have been made aware of by the awakening teachings of Gurudev and that you have been awakened to by the Being who sent you here and brought you here, and who indwells you as the great Light of lights beyond all darkness shining in the innermost chambers of your heart.

When God and Gurudev have offered you this priceless gift and this unique privilege, will you turn away from it, reject it and

refuse to receive it, or will you eagerly grasp it and make your life sublime? This choice is not a single act at some time in your life. This choice is an ongoing, continuing process forming the very living of your life—day by day, moment by moment, in each and every act—mental, verbal and physical.

This choice has to be made constantly, and the right choice at each moment and each step constitutes the steps of the shining stairway that leads to the highest state of blessedness, divine perfection and liberation. May every moment of each day be an upward ascent upon this shining stairway that leads to the Goal Supreme. Thus determine within yourself and crown yourself with glory!

You have this great blessedness of having a dual awareness—a lesser awareness which is an error, and a greater awareness which is the truth, the correct awareness. And this wonderful fact grants you the privilege of being in a position to make yourself an instrument, not merely of the limitations, finitude and imperfections of your temporary, fleeting human personality, but choosing, on the other hand, to make yourself an instrument for the expression and manifestation of all the perfections that comprise your true, essential divine nature.

You have the privilege of making this choice: I shall make myself an instrument of my divine perfection, not my human imperfections. I shall make myself a centre of God's perfection, beauty, truth, purity, compassion, forgiveness, wisdom, harmony, love, tolerance, peace, friendship, helpfulness and divinity.

In short, I shall choose; and I will apply, and utilise this great privilege that I have of making myself an instrument of all that is lofty, noble and sublime. I shall supply to the world that which it lacks. I shall not add more clouds to the firmament. I shall bring a ray of sunshine!

—*Swami Chidananda*

MANTRA JAPA

(Sri Swami Krishnananda)

This has reference to the great system of yoga known as Japa—the chanting of a Mantra, which is a principle method of religious practice in the various faiths of the world. While religions vary and differ from one another, in this one particular mode of practice they are almost the same. Every religion recommends and considers as primary the chanting of the Divine Name, repetition of a formula or recitation of what we know as a Mantra. There is the Patra Nostra in the Christian circles, and you must have seen clergymen tying a rosary around their waist even when they are walking about in the public. A Mala is held by a religious man, and a bead rolled by any devotee exclusively dedicated to any particular faith.

The repetition of the Divine Name is known as the Mantra Japa, and such a great gospel as the Bhagavad Gita holds it that among all the spiritual or religious sacrifices or sacraments, Japa should be regarded as the most pre-eminent. In the Shantiparva of the Mahabharata there is a story of one devotee having taken to Japa alone throughout his life, and attained spiritual mastery. It is therefore not for nothing that it is said Japa is the foremost of religious practices. It includes within itself the principles of Svadhyaya (sacred study) and even meditation. According to Patanjali, in one of his Sutras, Svadhyaya includes even chanting of Om, recitation of a Divine Name.

It is a direct approach that we make to the divine principle when we take to Japa Yoga. The Mantras, so-called, are the spiri-

tual formulae into which one gets initiated into by a superior; it's a potent magazine of energy. There are many things which are connected with the practice known as Japa. A Mantra (this is a Sanskrit word) means a talismanic combination of letters which produce an effect of their own when they are articulated in the requisite manner.

It is believed that Mantras are not created—they are only visualised and the seers of a Mantra are known as Mantra Drastas. We do not say they are Mantra Kartas; a Mantra is not manufactured or created by the intellectual operation of an individual. It is visioned and seen as a force that is present, and is not created by any master. There is a seer, known as the rishi of a Mantra. It is the tradition that when we take to the repetition of a Mantra, the rishi should be remembered at the same time, just as when you read a book you also know the author thereof. The thought of the characteristics of the author has very much to do with the zeal with which you will study the book, and the result it produces thereby. The Mantra is not supposed to be suddenly taken into chanting without an obeisance offered to the great master who envisioned this Mantra in his meditations.

The great system of religious practice known as Agama, sometimes known also as Tantra, has it that every Mantra has a deity. The deity is, properly speaking, a superintending divine principle which works at every juncture of the seer and the seen, the subject and the object, and determines the nature of every kind of perception or knowledge of ob-

jects. We are aware of the things of the world on account of the functioning of a deity. The Vedanta Shastra tells us that every limb of the body, every organ of perception, every sense of knowledge is controlled and directed by a deity. We know very well, as we are told in the Shastras, that the presiding deity of the eye is Sun or Surya, and there are other deities for the other senses; which means to say the organs of cognition or perception in the individuals are only external instruments which are pulled by the strings of the intentions of the deity that is above the operations of the senses, and it is not merely above the senses of the individual, but also far beyond the comprehension of this triad forming the perceptual process. The triad consists of the seer, the seeing and the seen. In a way we may say what you call the seeing is the deity, yet it occupies a position which is superior to these processes known as seer, seen and seeing. The three appear to be a single compact process on account of the existence of a deity; so in every act of perception and even thinking, a deity is operating, and a deity is one degree of the descent of God Himself in the realm of creation.

So in the recitation of a Mantra, we are invoking a god. This god, this deity, this principle superintending over the perceptual process is a force, something like a jetting light, with a form compatible with the nature of the perception or awareness at any given moment or degree or level of manifestation.

We have been told many times that there are many gods. There is Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, Indra, Gopalakrishna; God knows—endless gods. These are not many gods, really speaking. They are the many forms of control exercised by the one superintending, all-pervading principle in its entry into the process of the degrees of perception

and experience through the levels of creation. There is a gradual descent from the Supreme Universality to the lowest of experiences, and in all these levels there is the presence of this principle of Universality, bringing together the two particulars of the seer and the seen object. Whatever be the degree of the descent and whatever be the density of it, even the lowest conceivable one, even there, there is a deity superintending over the process of the seer coming in contact with the seen; and thus in religion we seem to be worshipping many gods, while they are not many gods. Just as a hundred mirrors placed on the walls of this hall may produce a hundred varieties of reflections of a single object placed in the center of the hall, according to the structure of the mirror that is fixed on the walls and the variety of the reflections produced by the different mirrors hung on the wall, cannot be regarded as representing different objects because there is only one object reflected through various mirrors; and they may not be of uniform character because the mirrors may be constructed in different ways—concave, convex, coloured, not coloured, etc., there can even be a broken mirror; according to the nature of the particular structural pattern of the mirror, the reflection will be produced of one single object that is in the centre of the hall. Some such thing can be regarded as the explanation of the many gods in religion. They are the variegated reflections of a single entity of the all-pervading universality made visible to our experiences through the mirrors of our personalities which are of variegated types.

Now the Mantra, coming to the point, is a vibration that is produced by this deity, and the vibration is, in a way, inseparable from the existence of the deity, as the light of the Sun can be said to be inseparable from the very being of the Sun himself. The vibration is an

emanation from this deity, and sound is nothing but vibration. If a Mantra can be identified with the form of a particular intonation or the sound produced in the sound box within us, it can, by a stretch of its logical limits, be considered as a vibration finally. A Mantra, therefore, is not merely a sound, but a vibrational process, even as a sound that is projected into the microphone in a broadcasting station gets converted into a vibration through the ether of space and is transmitted to the receiver somewhere else, getting converted once again into a sound, though when it traveled through space it did not travel as sound but only as a vibration which could not, with any stretch of imagination, be identified with the sound that we could hear with our ears. Electricity is not heat or cold, though it can appear as heat and cold. In a stove it is heat, in a fridge it is cold, and it can be a motion when electricity is connected to a vehicle that moves on a track. Just as electricity is not heat, cold or motion yet it can produce heat, cold or motion, a vibration is not a sound, yet it can appear as a sound—it can appear as colour even.

So the Mantra has a sound form and also a colour form. The colour form is the vision that you have often in deep concentration, and the sound form is what you inaudibly feel inside as the Anahata Shabd. It is not merely sound and colour, it can be even tangible – you can touch. In fact the touch the fingers feel when they come in contact with a solid object is only an electrical repulsion produced, and there is no such thing as real touch. When the fingers come in contact with a hard object like a cot, a table, a desk, etc., an electrical vibration of repulsion of particles is produced. That is a sensation of touch that we feel – the object is really not solid, and therefore the world is not there, another answer to the question that was raised yester-

day. The world does not exist; it is only a huge mass of vibrations, and we seem to feel that the world is there really because of the tangibility of the so-called substances of the world, and tangibility is nothing but an electrical vibration that is produced comparable to the weight that you feel suddenly in your hand when you get an electric shock of some 300 volts of power. This can be experimented by you at your own risk, if you like. You touch a high voltage wire, 300 volts or so, not still higher up, you may be burnt to ashes; immediately you will feel a sensation of heavy weight in the hand. I myself had an experience of this kind, so I speak with experience. By mistake I touched some live wire once without knowing that the wire was outside, and it gave such a shock that I felt a heavy stone was hanging on my hand. There was no stone or anything, it was only a feeling in the nerves. The feeling of the nerves can be of a tangible, visible, solid, heavy object, while the object is not there at all. Don't you hit your head against a hard wall in dream, and bleed? Is there a wall really? If you can really bleed and feel a real pain by hitting your head against a wall that is not there, why should you not be under any delusion that the world is there when it is really not there? Well, this is not my subject, I am only digressing as a sort of side-answer to the questions raised by someone yesterday – whether the world is real or not. It is not real, and it is just not there, though it appears to be there because of the vibrations impinging upon our personalities which take the form of colour, sound, tangibility, taste, etc. Even the taste is an illusion—there is no such thing as taste. It is, again, an electrical repulsion produced by the contact of certain taste buds in the tongue when a particular object emanating a particular shape of vibration comes in contact with it, so that the whole universe is electrical vibration, and solid objects do not exist.

(To be continued)

WHAT ARE WE TO BE LIBERATED FROM?

(Sri Swami Atmaswarupananda)

One morning, when he went to Gurudev's Samadhi Hall, Pujya Swami Chidanandaji asked a rhetorical question: "What are you to be liberated from?" After a few moments, he answered in one word: "Yourself!" But who is yourself? It is who we think we are, rather than who we really are. And who do we think we are? The body and mind. Who are we really? "Immortal Self you are," Gurudev said.

So to correct that error we do our spiritual practices. We try to understand our wrong identification, and through meditation, enquiry, devotion, try to experience our true Self. But then, perhaps we're getting a little ahead of ourselves, because while our fundamental error is wrong identification with the body and mind, we have another identification—that we're not as aware of—that is blocking any effort we make to change our body-mind identification.

And that is a very subtle and insidious conviction that we are the centre of the universe. We are the subject and everything else is an object. As we are the subject, it is quite natural for us to believe that the whole world is there for our purposes, to be of service to us, to be in harmony with us.

That would be quite alright as long as we as individuals were the only ones that thought that way. But every other human being in this world thinks the same way. And, therefore, naturally if everyone is thinking that the world should suit them, fights and quarrels are inevitable. And the more we function from our position as centre of the universe, the stronger the "Yourself," that we are meant to be liberated from, becomes.

So while our fundamental error is identification with the body and mind, our real problem is this conviction that we are the centre of the universe. That is why be good, do good is so fundamental to our *sadhana*. That is why the practice of *ahimsa*, *satyam* and *brahmacharya* is so fundamental to our spiritual life. These practices of ethics and morality, of treating others the way we would like to be treated, are the only way to start wearing away this false conviction that we are the centre of the universe.

First that has to be dealt with. Then perhaps, when that illusion gradually begins to dissipate, of itself our true universal identity will begin to reveal itself.

Meditation is a condition of the mind which is independent of external objects. It keeps the mind in tune with God.

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Merge your mind in Him. Constantly meditate upon Him. Speak of Him. Sing of Him. Live in Him for ever and ever.

—Swami Sivananda

BRAHMACHARYA SADHANA

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

(Continued from the previous issue)

FASTING AND BRAHMACHRYA

Fasting controls passion. It calms the emotions. It controls the Indriyas also. Fasting is a great Tapas. It purifies the mind. It destroys a great multitude of sins. Sastras prescribe Chandrayana Vrata, Ekadasi Vrata and Pradosha Vrata for the purification of the mind. Fasting controls particularly the tongue which is your deadly enemy. When you fast, do not allow the mind to think of delicious dishes. Then you will not derive much benefit. Fasting overhauls the respiratory, circulatory, digestive and urinary systems. It destroys all impurities of the body and all sorts of poisons. It eliminates uric acid deposits. Just as impure gold is rendered pure by melting it in the crucible again and again, so also, this impure mind is rendered purer and purer by fasting again and again. Young, robust Brahmacharins should observe fasting whenever passion troubles them. You will have very good meditation during fasting, as the mind is calm.

The chief object in fasting is to practise Dhyana rigorously during that period as all the Indriyas are calm. You will have to withdraw all the Indriyas and fix the mind on God. Pray to God for guiding you and throwing a flood of light on the path. Say with Bhava: "O God, *Prachodayat, Prachodayat*—guide me, guide me. *Trahi, Trahi*—protect me, protect me. I am Thine, my Lord." You will get purity, light, strength and knowledge. Fasting is one of the ten canons of Yoga.

Avoid excessive fasting. It will produce weakness. Use your commonsense. Those who are not able to observe full fast, can fast for nine or twelve hours and can take milk and fruits in the evening or at night. During fasting, the internal digestive organs, such as stomach, liver, pancreas, etc., take rest. Epicureans, gluttons and those who are tireless eaters do not allow rest for the organs even for a few minutes. Hence these organs get diseased soon. Diabetes, albuminuria, dyspepsia and hepatitis are all due to over-feeding. After all, man wants very little on this earth. Ninety per cent of the people in this world take more food than what is absolutely necessary for the body. Over-eating has become their habit. All diseases take their origin in over-eating. Complete fast is a great desideratum for all to keep up good health, relieve the internal organs and maintain Brahmacharya. Diseases that are pronounced incurable by allopaths and homoeopaths are cured by fasting. Fasting develops will-power. It increases the power of endurance. Manu, the great Hindu law-giver, prescribes in his code the remedy of fasting for removal of the five capital sins also.

It is better to drink large quantity of water, either tepid or cold, according to the temperament and inclination during fasting. It will flush out the kidneys and remove poison and all sorts of impurities in the body. In Hatha Yoga it is termed as Ghata-Suddhi (purification of the flesh pot, the physical body). You

can add half a teaspoonful of soda bicarbonate to the water. Those who fast for two or three days should not break their fast with any solid food. They should take some kind of fruit juice, either sweet orange juice or pomegranate juice. They should slowly sip the juice. You can take an enema during fasting.

Fast for a day to start with. Then slowly increase the number of days according to your strength and capacity. In the beginning you may feel slight weakness. The first day may be very tiring. You will feel real Ananda (bliss) on the second or the third day. The body will be very, very light.

You can turn out more mental work during fasting. Those who are in the habit of fasting will rejoice. On the first day the mind will tempt you in a variety of ways to eat something or the other. Stand firm. Be bold. Curb the mind at once when it hisses or raises its

hood. Do more Japa of Gayatri or any Mantra during fasting. Fasting is more a spiritual Kriya than a physical Kriya from the viewpoint of health. You will have to utilise the fasting days for higher spiritual purposes and in the contemplation of God. Always entertain thoughts of God. Dive deep into the problems of life such as the why and wherefore of the universe. Enquire: "Who am I?" "What is this Atman or Brahman?" "What are the ways and means to attain knowledge of God?" "How to approach Him?" Then realise your Nijananda state and rest in purity for ever and ever.

My dear brothers! Will you start the fasting Tapasya from the very second you read these lines and send an accurate report of your experiment to me?

Peace be unto all beings!

(To be continued)

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO AFTER RETIREMENT

When one has successfully finished his duties as a householder, when his sons are all fixed up in life, when the daughters are given in marriage, he should devote the remaining years of his life in spiritual pursuits, study of religious literature and divine contemplation.

Many people have no definite ideas as to what they are going to do (after retirement). After retirement from active service, they take to some other avocation. They are still greedy. Till the end of life they count money and entertain thoughts of grandchildren and great grandchildren. Pitiably is the lot of these men indeed! Blessed is he, who spends the whole time in study and meditation in a solitary place after retirement from service. —*Swami Sivananda*

Sivananda's Gospel of Divine Life

THE WORLD AND YOU

DUTIES OF A SADHU

“The essential qualification in a Sadhu is that he should adapt himself to all conditions and circumstances, causing no inconvenience to others. His duty is to serve, not to worry others. Very few Sadhus know what they are and what they should be.

“This morning an old Sadhu from Swarg Ashram came here. He was there when I also was at Swarg Ashram. He is aged eighty now. There was only rice and sambhar in the kitchen, but the Sadhu would not take it. He wanted *roti* only. It seems that rice will produce wind. If you allow him, he will lecture to you for half an hour on the evil effects of eating rice. But he will refuse to be reminded that a very large population of India and the world lives on rice alone.

“This is all that he has understood of Sadhana during these thirty years of Sadhu-life—rice should not be taken, *roti* alone is good for health and meditation. Such people waste all their lives in this one thought of the right food and the wrong food. What is there if on one day you do not get food to your liking? Even your own wife will not tolerate you if you are so particular about what you should have.

“It is the special duty of a Sadhu not to cause any inconvenience to householders. We are not to be a burden upon householders but of some service to them. When will this Sadhu understand this?

“And the worst part of it all is that this Sadhu, who is adamant in his longing for *roti*, will not get anything else except rice here! I

had to go about here and there asking this man and that cook to prepare a few *rotis* for him.

“The Sadhu has his own specifications for the *roti* also—it must be extra thick! This is a most convenient method of escaping the criticism that he is a glutton. Instead of taking twenty *rotis* of the usual size, he will now take only six of the abnormal size!

“If I merely tell someone here, nothing will be done. Some cook or some worker will just look up at me with his mind somewhere else, and then forget all about it when he sees my back! And a few have the mentality that their will alone should be done. So my worry is all the more. I have to sit beside the cook and see that the Sadhu is given the *rotis*.

“Here, some aspirants also have the impression that since they are living in an Ashram, this one consideration ought to be sufficient to open the gates of liberation to them. I can assure you that even if they live for hundreds of lives near the greatest saint in the world, they will not improve even a bit unless they themselves exert. Each one must think and act for himself.

“There have been some aspirants here whom I myself trusted and put in charge of the affairs of the Ashram. Then I myself used to dread to approach them. If, for instance, I went to them and requested them to prepare a little more of what they give me for my food, in order that I may give the extra quantity to someone else, I would be refused. What I do on such occasions is to reduce my own consumption and distribute the surplus to others.

“If an aspirant gets real Samadhi after a hundred births, that is a very great achievement. God is perfect, and unless and until all the evil qualities are eradicated and divine qualities acquired to the degree of perfection, there will be no Samadhi.”

The Master made the above observations to some of his disciples in the office one morning.

STEPS TO PERFECTION

The Master then turned to Sri Rajagopalan, who had asked during the morning class the methods for shutting out extraneous thoughts during the practice of meditation.

“Meditation is the seventh step in Yoga,” the Master began. “Without first attending to the preliminaries, you desire to establish yourself in the seventh limb. Is this possible? First get established in Yama and Niyama. This alone is sufficient work for several lives.

“Study the Gita. Find out if you have developed even one hundredth part of one virtue which the Lord has prescribed for all aspirants. If you have done this, you have deserved this human birth. The eradication of evil qualities and the cultivation of virtuous ones is such a difficult task that there is no use in treating the matter lightly.

“Anyone can unite inspiring articles. Anyone can solve the difficulties of others, so long as the solution is not applied to one’s own self. You can turn out tremendous work but these are all faculties only. Even singing Bhajans and Kirtans very melodiously and with inspiration is the development of a fac-

ulty that God has given you. Do not mistake this for the acquisition of Sadhu-qualities. They are entirely different. It is extremely difficult to develop even one quality which is necessary in a Sadhu.

“Still I am not discouraging you all. Go on introspecting and eradicating the evil qualities one by one. You will soon find yourself in the region of perfection.

“First get rid of the gross impurities. Take anger for example: how many are easy victims of the grossest forms of anger. This fighting nature is inborn in everyone. A Sadhu should completely eradicate this evil. It should have no place in him.

“Someone here abused R. and he went away. Even if a person is undesirable we should not abuse him. This is why the greatest sages prescribed mercy, compassion and tolerance for a Sadhu.

“One should practise friendship towards equals, love and sympathy towards inferiors, admiration and respect towards superiors, and indifference towards undesirable persons. When you take Sannyas, you take the great vow: ‘I grant fearlessness to all’. Even an ant should not be afraid of you. You give Abhaya (the guarantee of fearlessness) to all. Even the worst of men should not be afraid of you.

“Without these qualities there is only a change in the garb of a Sadhu but the nature remains the same. Try to improve yourself little by little. Be on the alert. So long as you are on the right path, there is no fear and you are sure to reach the goal.”

Yoga is a systematised process of establishing permanent friendship with Nature in all its levels—friendship in the physical, vital, mental, intellectual and spiritual levels.

—*Swami Krishnananda*

Children's Page

THE GREATEST SACRIFICE

(Sri Swami Ramarajyamji)

This is the story of Sage Dadhichi.

The demon Vritrasura used to torment the gods. They were not able to vanquish him. Someone advised them, "You can kill this demon only with a weapon made from the bones of some saintly person."

In those days the austere spiritual practices done by Dadhichi were known all around. Who else could be more saintly than him in the eyes of the gods? The gods approached him and narrated to him the sad stories of the sufferings caused by Vrittrasura. On hearing those stories Dadhichi was in great anguish. He said, "Let me know how I can be of any help to you."

The gods said, "Please give us your bones. We will kill Vrittrasura with the weapons made of them."

Dadhichi replied, "My mind is where God is. My body is at the disposal of those for whom it may be of any use. I gladly allow you to use this body for their sake."

After saying this, he stopped breathing and departed from this life voluntarily.

A 'Vajra' (a strong weapon) was made of his bones. Vrittrasura was killed with that weapon. The gods and the whole society were freed from this demon's terror.

We should be prepared to sacrifice even our lives for doing away with the injustice done and the feelings of insecurity aroused by others. This would be the greatest sacrifice.

Dear children, are you prepared to become like Dadhichi?

This body is the product of Prarabdha. It is an ever changing, unreliable vehicle which we have assumed to enter into this earth life. You are the glorious Self or the Atman that shines radiant and ever abides in its changeless shape of peace, bliss and fullness. For, it is the Divine Spark, a ray of radiance emanating from the Supreme Lord SHRI HARI Who is its Source, Support and Ultimate Destination. Body is not your true Self. It is both the vehicle and a vexing bondage too; but it is a blessing in as much as we are enabled to worship the Lord, take His Name and meditate upon His wondrous Divine Being with the help of this body. But, even independent of it you ever abide in your primal, shining state of pure Atmic being. You are Nitya, Nirmala, Sasvata, Amara Satchidananda Svarupa.

—Swami Chidananda

Yoga in Daily Life

KARMA YOGA

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

(Continued from the previous issue)

ATTAIN NIRLIPTA STATE

Lord Krishna says in His Gita: "*Tasmat sarveshu kaleshu mam anusmara yudhyacha*—Therefore, at all times think of Me and fight." Give the mind to God and the hand to work. The typist works at the machine and talks with his friends. The player on the harmonium plays on the organ and talks and jokes with his friends; the lady knits and talks with her comrades. The mind of the girl who has a water pot on her head is on the water pot, though she is talking and joking with her companions while she is walking on the road. A nurse while she is nursing the baby of another lady has her mind rivetted on her own baby. A cowherd while he is looking after the cows of other people has his mind fixed on his own cow. Even so, have your mind fixed at the lotus feet of the Lord, while you are doing your household duties and office work. You will realise Self-consciousness quickly. Just as the water remains unaffected in the lotus leaf, just as the oil floats upon the surface of the water without being affected in any way, so also you should remain in the world amidst pleasures and difficulties.

Just as the tongue is not affected by taking ghee, so also you should remain unaffected even amidst worldly activities and troubles. You must keep up the Nirlipta state. This is Jnana. This is balance (Samata). You may fail to keep the balance and Nirlipta state a thousand and one times. But in the long run you are bound to succeed if you persist in your practice and if you discipline the mind properly. Every failure is a pillar for future success. Remember this point well.

A Karma Yogin should not expect even return of love, appreciation, gratitude, admiration from the people whom he is serving.

Only he who has reduced his wants and controlled the Indriyas can do Karma Yoga. How can a luxurious man with revolting Indriyas serve others? He wants everything for himself and wants to exploit and domineer others.

Another qualification is that you must be balanced in success or failure, gain or loss, victory or defeat. You must be free from Raga and Dvesha. "An action which is ordained, done by one undesirous of fruit, devoid of attachment, without love or hate, that is called pure." (Gita XVIII-23)

WHAT IS KARMA

Karma means work or action. According to Jaimini, rituals like Agnihotra, Yajnas, etc., are termed Karmas. There is a hidden power in Karma termed Adrishta which brings in fruits of Karmas for the individual. Karma is all for Jaimini. Karma is everything for a student of Mimamsic school of thought. Jaimini is the founder of Purva Mimamsa. He was student of Maharshi Vyasa, the founder of Uttara Mimamsa or Vedanta. The Mimamsa school deny the existence of Ishvara who awards the fruits of works.

According to the Gita, any action is Karma. Charity, sacrifice, Tapas are all Karmas. In a philosophical sense, breathing, seeing, hearing, tasting, feeling, smelling, walking, talking, etc., are all Karma. Thinking is the real Karma. Raga-Dvesha constitute the real Karma. **(To be continued)**

SRI GURU PURNIMA MAHOTSAV AT THE HEADQUARTERS ASHRAM

The full-moon day of the month of Ashada, observed as Guru Purnima is the most blessed day to reaffirm anew and afresh our love and devotion to the lotus feet of Guru—the spiritual preceptor. As per yester-years, the auspicious day of Guru Purnima was celebrated with great solemnity and sacredness on the 25th July 2010 at the Headquarters Ashram.

Devotees from all over the world had gathered at the Ashram on the holy banks of Mother Ganga for the sacred function. Swami Sivananda Satsang Bhavan (Auditorium), the venue of the celebration, was splendidly bedecked with flowers and huge picture frames of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj and Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj. The Celebration commenced at 4.30 a.m. with Brahmamuhurta prayers and meditation. H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj, Vice-President, DLS, in his address inspired the devotees to feel the eternal divine presence of Guru and re-establish themselves in true Guru-Bhakti. Sri Swami Atmaswarupanandaji Maharaj spoke on the glory of Guru's grace. This was followed by Prabhat-Pheri with chanting of the Divine Name. A special Havan was performed at the Ashram Yajnasala for the peace and welfare of the world.

In the forenoon session, a special worship was offered to Gurudev Sri Swami

Sivanandaji Maharaj at the Holy Samadhi Shrine and a grand worship was offered to the Sacred Padukas of Sadgurudev at the auditorium before a huge concourse of devotees. The entire atmosphere was charged with divine vibrations. After the Paduka-Puja, H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj, General Secretary, DLS, made invocations to Vyas Bhagavan and read first four Sutras of the Brahmasutras. Seven DVDs and some books in Hindi, English, Tamil and Gujarati were also released to mark this sacred occasion. The forenoon session concluded with the blessing message of H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, President, DLS.

In the afternoon session, Sri Swami Yogavedantanandaji Maharaj, Swami Tyagananda Mataji and other devotees spoke on the life and teachings of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. During the night Satsanga, in addition to regular chants and prayers, a melodious and soul-stirring Sitar-recital was presented by Sri Hari Krishna Shah. The celebration concluded with *arti* and distribution of sacred Prasad.

May the blessings of Vyas Bhagavan, Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj and other Brahmavidya-Gurus be upon all to raise us to the highest realms of eternal light and infinite bliss.

PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATION OF THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

By the grace of the Lord Almighty, the Divine Life Society will complete Seventy Five years of its Glorious spiritual service to the humanity on 13th January 2011. The seed of this Divine Tree was sown by Worshipful Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 13th January 1936 at Ambala with the sacred aim of dissemination of spiritual knowledge. The formal registration of the Divine Life Society under the Society's Act was done on 16th April 1939 at Lahore.

It is a great privilege and divine blessing for all of us to celebrate this auspicious event of Platinum Jubilee of Sadgurudev's Divine Mission. The Headquarters Ashram proposes to organise a two-day Spiritual Conference in January 2011 to commemorate this sacred occasion.

The Headquarters Ashram has already instructed all the DLS Branches vide letter dated 19th December 2009 to celebrate this

august occasion by organising appropriate programmes such as the Divine Life society Conferences, Sadhana Weeks, Camps for Youth and Children, Yoga Training Camps, Spiritual Seminars and Free Medical Camps, etc. The programmes may be organised on any dates suitable during the year 2010. Some Branches have organised marvellous programmes befitting this auspicious occasion and some are in the process of organising such programmes.

We request all the Branches again to observe this glorious occasion with due sacredness and send us the reports of the programmes for the publication in the magazine.

May we all work together to hold aloft the banner of Divine Life and receive the grace of Lord Almighty and Sadgurudev in abundance.

—The Divine Life Society

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CHILDREN CAMP AT THE HEADQUARTERS ASHRAM

Children, the future hope of the World, are to be inspired and trained to lead Divine Life. Following this sublime dictum of Holy Master Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, the Children Camp was organized at the Headquarters Ashram from 12th to 19th June 2010. Fifty Six students from Ashiana (Association for Social Health in India) Panchkula, Chandigarh, accompanied by their teachers visited the Ashram in two groups to participate in this camp. Mrs. Vibha and Mr. Chander Mohan of the DLS Chandigarh Branch were the facilitators of the camp.

The activities of the camp were specially





designed with a view to providing the children

a glimpse into the Ashram life and imparting moral and spiritual training as well. The children participated enthusiastically in all the activities. Ganga-snan, Bhajans-prayers in the Samadhi Shrine, Arati in the Viswanath Temple and dedicated service in Sivananda Home impressed them most. They were also quite overwhelmed by the clean, serene, loving and blissful atmosphere of the Ashram. All of them felt immensely blessed to be the part of this camp.

May the grace of Lord Almighty be upon them all.

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GUJARAT STATE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY CONFERENCE

The Divine Life Society Vadodara Branch founded by Worshipful Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Gurjar Divya Jivan Sangh Samiti are jointly organising a 3 day All Gujarat Divine Life Conference at Vadodara to mark the Platinum Jubilee of Divine Life Society Hqrs. and The Diamond Jubilee of Vadodara Branch from 30th October to 1st November 2010.

The conference will be blessed by senior monks from Headquarters and saints and scholars from other institutions. Soul elevating and inspiring programmes will be conducted in English and Hindi besides local language. The venue for the conference is the Urmi School near Sama Water Tank. Devotees from all the Branches of the society are cordially invited to participate in the programme aimed at dissemination of spiritual knowledge and world peace.

Registration fee: Rs.500/- with hospitality and accommodation and Rs.300/- without accommodation.

For Enrolment and information please contact: dlsvadodara@yahoo.com

Address: Sivananda Bhavan, Ramjimandir's Lane, Near Government Press, Kothi, Vadodara 390 001, Gujarat. Ph: 0265-2412176.

Mobile: (1) Dr. Jayant B. Dave: +919825035232; (2) Mahesh Trivedi: +919724348239

BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN'S ESSAY COMPETITIONS RESULT—2009

It is for the information of Readers that the following three participants have been declared as the Prize-winners at the Swami Sivananda Memorial Essay Competition which was held by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in the year 2009. The details of the prize-winners are as under.

Shri Mukesh Singh
S.T.C. (Dubbi)
Sri Mahvirji-322220 First Prize
Jhike, Karoli,
Rajasthan

Sri Ankur Shrimali
Hamlog Co-Hsg.Society
Building No. 75, "A" wing Second Prize
102, Tilak Nagar, Chembur
Mumbai—400 089

Shri Govind Upadhyaya
Flat No. 4, 1st floor
Tribhuvan Society, Third Prize
Rambaug, Lane No.4
Near Ganesh Temple,
Kalyan (West)-429309

—*The Divine Life Society*

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MANTRA-DIKSHA OR INITIATION INTO THE DIVINE NAME

It is better if you get your Mantra from your Guru. This has a tremendous effect on the disciple. The Guru imparts his Sakti along with the Mantra. The Mantra-Chaitanya, the power hidden in the Mantra, is easily awakened.

If you cannot get a Guru, you can select any Mantra according to your own liking and taste, and repeat it daily, with Sradha and Bhava. This also has a great purificatory effect. You will attain realisation of God.

It is better to stick to one Mantra alone. If you love Krishna, love Him alone till the end. See Lord Krishna in Rama, Siva, Durga, Gayatri and everyone. To love Lord Krishna for three months, Rama for another three months, Sakti for six months, Hanuman for sometime, Lord Siva for some time, is not good.

—**Swami Sivananda**

REPORTS FROM THE D.L.S. BRANCHES

Agra (U.P.): The Branch held the weekly Satsanga on Sundays, Havan and recitation of Sri Hanuman hymns, and daily Yogasana class. It arranged discourses on 13th April and free mineral water hut from 23rd May.

Ahiwara (Chhattisgarh): During the month of June 2010, the Branch conducted daily Satsanga and collective Japa of Mahamrityunjaya Mantra on Ekadasis. It organised a special Satsanga on the birth anniversary of H.H. Sri Swami Devanandaji Maharaj.

Bangalore (Karnataka): The Branch conducted weekly Satsanga with Paduka Puja, Svadhyaya of Gurudev's writings, Arati and distribution of sweets. Friday Satsanga included Devi Puja, recitation of Sri Lalita-Sahasranama and Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotras, and Bhajans. The programmes on Sundays were Abhishekam, Svadhyaya of gurudev's writings, and distribution of Jnana-Prasad and Maha-Prasad on the first, 3-hour Akhanda Japa on the third, and Bhajans and Svadhyaya on the fourth Sunday.

Barbil (Orissa): The Branch conducted the weekly Satsanga on Thursdays, and on all the Mondays weekly Satsanga at the Ashram premises in the name of specific devotees, Chidananda Day is Sadhana Day with Paduka Puja in the morning and a special Satsanga in the evening. Swami Sivananda

Charitable homoeopathy dispensary treated 865 patients in two months.

Bellary (Karnataka): In addition to the daily Puja, the Branch conducted the weekly Satsanga with Paduka Puja on Sundays.

Bhilai (Chhattisgarh): The Branch held its monthly Satsanga with Paduka Puja, Bhajan-kirtan, Bhog-Arati, etc. On 23rd May and 13th June. The Matri-satsanga included besides Bhajan-kirtan, recitation of Sri Hanuman Chalisa on Tuesdays, of Sri Lalita-sahasranama Stotram on Fridays, and of Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotram and Srimad Bhagavad Gita during the two Ekadasis.

Bhongir (A.P.): The Branch conducts daily Satsanga with Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotra Parayana in Sri Kanyaka Parameshwari Temple, Tagore Road, as well as Puja, Arati, Satsanga at Sri Muralee-krishna Temple, Vidyanagar. It also organised a special Satsanga on the birth anniversary of H.H. Sri Swami Devanandaji Maharaj.

Bikaner (Rajasthan): The Branch conducted twice-a-day Puja and special Pradosha Puja in the Mahamrityunjaya Temple, weekly Satsanga, Svadhyaya on Sundays, and Matri-satsanga with Sri Sundarakanda Parayana and Svadhyaya of a Sikh Scripture. Paduka Puja was performed on Sivananda Day, and Havan on Chidananda Day. It organised special

programmes on Sri Parasurama Jayanti, Sri Sankaracharya Jayanti, Sri Buddha Jayanti, Gurudev Sri Swami Sivananda Maharaj's Sannyasa Day Anniversary and Nirjala Ekadasi. It also conducted month-long Parayana of Sri Rama-charit-manas during the holy Purushottama month. It continued its social service through daily Yogasana class, scholarships to poor students, Sivananda Library, and Satsanga and cultural training to very poor children of slums.

Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh): The Branch continued its regular Satsanga and Paduka Puja, and also organised Shodashi Utsava of Revered Swami Sivananda-Gurusevanandaji Maharaj and distributed food to the poor and Prasad to the devotees.

Buguda (Orissa): The Branch held the weekly Satsanga at its Sivananda Ashram. It conducts special Satsanga on Sankranti Days, and weekly mobile Satsanga at the residence of devotees. Earlier, it organized Srimad Bhagavata Saptaha with Parayana and discourses from February 10-16, held a special Satsanga on the visit of Revered Swami Vaikunthanandaji and Revered Swami Devabhaktanandaji on 4th January, and special spiritual programme on its Foundation Day on 27th January.

Digapahandi (Orissa): The Branch conducted biweekly Satsanga with Svadhyaya of Gurudev's writings on Sundays and Thursdays, a mobile Satsanga on 27th May, Sadhana Day on 30th May, and

Paduka Puja on Sivananda Day and Chidananda Day.

Faridpur (U.P.): The weekly Satsanga of the Branch was on Wednesdays. Havan along with Sri Rama-charit-manas is performed on all Purnimas. Besides its regular social service of distributing free water pouches on the Railway station, it also distributed sweetened water (Sharbat) throughout the day on Ekasasis.

Kakinada-Madhavapatnam (A.P.): The Branch held Satsanga on Sundays and Tuesdays at two different centres, and on Fridays with Parayana of Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotra and 108 names of Sri Lakshmi Devi at a third centre. It also held special Satsangas on the birth anniversary of Revered Swami Hamsanandaji on 18th May and of H.H. Sri Swami Devanandaji Maharaj on 22nd June. It also arranged free Homoeopathy Medical camps on 6th and 20th June.

Kantabanji (Orissa): The Branch held Satsanga with Puja and Svadhyaya of Bhagavad Gita on 6th, 13th and 20th June.

Khatiguda (Orissa): In addition to daily 2-time Puja and weekly Satsanga on Thursdays, the Branch conducted Ekadasi Satsanga with Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotra Parayana, a mobile Satsanga on 9th May and 11 hour Akhanda Mahamantra Kirtan and Narayana Seva on 2nd May and 6th June.

Nandini Nagar (Chhattisgarh): Regular Activities: 2-hour Brahma-muhurta ses-

sion with recitation of Stotras, Kirtan, etc; daily evening Satsanga; weekly mobile Satsanga on Thursdays; Matri-satsanga on Saturdays with Sri Sundarakanda Parayana and on two Ekadasis with Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotra and Srimad Bhagavad Gita Parayana.

Special Activities: (1) Residential youth Camp—50 participants from Ahiwara, Bhilai and this Branch at Swami Sivananda Bhajan Mandir from May 2 to 8. (2) Havan on 20th June. (3) Birth anniversary of H.H. Sri Swami Devanandaji Maharaj on 22nd June.

New Delhi, Vasantg Vihar: The Branch held regularly weekly Satsanga on Sundays with Sri Sundara-kanda Parayana on the first, meditation and Bhandara Prasad on the second, Svadhyaya of Gurudev's writings and question-answer on Sadhana on the third, and a talk of a saint on the fourth Sunday. In May, on the fifth Sunday there was Satsanga followed by Bhandara Prasad.

Phulbani (Orissa): The Branch conducted 2-time Puja, weekly Satsanga on Sundays, and Paduka Puja on Sivananda Day and Chidananda Day. It organized 9-day Navahan Parayana and discourses of Sri Rama-charita-manas from June 17 to 25.

Salipur (Orissa): Regular Activities: Daily Puja, recitation and meditation in the morning, Yogasana, Svadhyaya and Satsanga in the evening; Srimad Bhagavad Gita Parayana on the First Sunday, Yogasana-Pranayama-Meditation on the second, Sadhana Day on the third and spe-

cial Satsanga on the fourth Sunday; on 30th May, the fifth Sunday Mahamantra Akhanda Japa; and Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on the last Saturday; The special activity of the month was celebration of Sri Sankaracharya Jayanti.

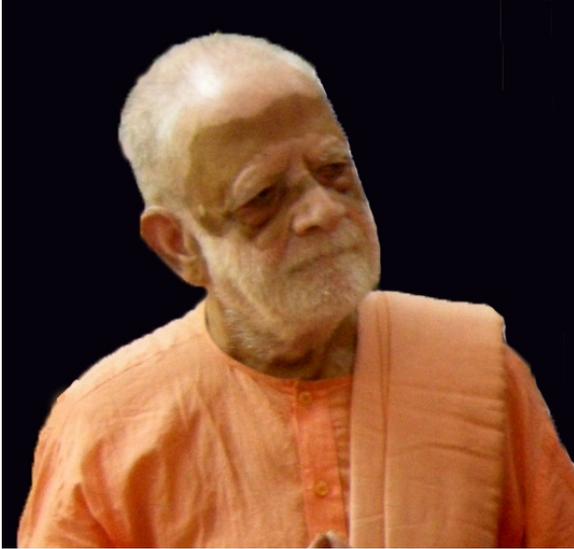
South Balanda (Orissa): The Branch conducted twice-a-day Puja, weekly Satsanga on Fridays, 2-hour Sankirtan on Wednesdays, Chidananda Bal-vikas programme on Sundays, 3-hour Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Japa, and Paduka Puja in the morning and special Satsanga in the evening on both Sivananda Day and Chidananda Day as its regular activities. In the monthly 3-hour Akhanda Kirtan of Mahamantra on 27th June 125 devotees participated and had Prasad Sevan.

Sunabeda (Orissa): The Branch held Satsanga on all Thursdays and Sundays with Svadhyaya of our Gurus' writings. A saint from Brindavan visited the local Sivananda Ashram and gave discourses.

Varanasi (U.P.): The Branch held Satsanga on 13th and 20th June.

Visakhapatnam (A.P.): In addition to the daily evening Bhajans for 1½ hours, the Branch held weekly Satsanga on Sundays. Daily morning Yogasana class and free medical check-up on Sundays were the other regular activities. The newly built Swami Chidananda yoga Hall was inaugurated on 3rd April, and after Bhumi-Puja on 6th June, the construction work of Sri Vishwanatha Mandir began on 7th June.

IN MEMORIAM



With a great sense of loss and profound sorrow we report the final departure of Sri Swami Saravanabhavanandaji Maharaj at 12 noon on 4th July, 2010 who moved on to the higher realms of existence leaving his mortal coil behind. The poignant scene during the funeral procession and condolence meetings on the 4th and 5th July, 2010 was the final testimony to the greatness of the man.

Born in Ooty, Tamilnadu on 17th June 1923, he was called A.P. Venkatachalapathy. He had strong spiritual inclinations even as a small child. He divided his time between playing with the idol of Lord Rama, singing hymns and teaching poor children. He went to Pachayappa School and later joined Loyola College, Chennai for higher education. An evolved soul that he was, he could empathise with everyone. He frequently distributed eatables and books among school children besides feeding beggars around his school.

He joined the Office of the Accountant General, Bangalore as an Accountant and went on to serve there till his retirement at the age of 55 years.

He joined the Divine Life Society in 1956 and received Mantra Diksha from Sri Gurudev in the year 1959. He also had the privilege to do Pada

Puja to Sri Gurudev. He distinguished himself as a great Karma Yogi by constantly doing excellent service for the cause of the Divine Life Society while at Bangalore and later at Pattamadai. He was also a great devotee of Lord Muruga and devoted considerable time to the worship of Lord Muruga.

He had a small Kutir built in his house at Bangalore for H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj and whenever Pujya Swamiji visited Bangalore, he stayed in the house of Sri Venkatachalapathy. He took Sannyasa in the year 1994. Pujya Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj requested him to serve at the Swami Sivananda Centenary Hospital at Pattamadai.

Sri Swamiji did Seva at the hospital from 1994 onwards in various capacities—as a Trustee, Finance Controller, Managing Trustee and Chief Administrator. While rendering service at the hospital, Sri Swamiji also worked tirelessly towards furtherance of Sri Gurudev's mission of dissemination of spiritual knowledge by publishing the Tamil magazine "Pattamadayin Kural" (Voice of Pattamdai) and also conducting spiritual retreats for the benefit of the village folk in and around the Pattamadai village. Swamiji was also responsible for setting up a few branches in the area. His own contribution towards these branches in financial terms was substantial and he used to take personal interest in the hospital as well as these branches. Swamiji's pleasing nature and loving care extended by him to everyone made him a guide and mentor of the distressed souls. On his entering the Mahasamadhi, the entire hospital staff and the devotees in the nearby villages felt a vacuum as could be seen from the serene homage paid to him during his last journey and the subsequent condolence meetings.

Although Sri Swamiji has left his mortal coil, his memory will remain ever green in the minds of the poor, rural folk whom he very affectionately served, and also the hospital staff.

May his soul rest at the feet of Worshipful Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj!

Hari Om Tat Sat. Jai Gurudev.

