



THE DIVINE LIFE

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KATHOPANISHAD

CHAPTER II

VALLI iii

यदा पञ्चावतिष्ठन्ते ज्ञानानि मनसा सह ।
बुद्धिश्च न विचेष्टति तामाहुः परमां गतिम् ॥१०॥

10. When the five organs of knowledge are at rest together with the mind, and when the intellect ceases functioning (becomes calm), that they call the highest state.

शिवानन्दस्तोत्रपुष्पांजलिः

SIVANANDA-STOTRA-PUSHPANJALI

(Sri Swami Jnanananda Saraswati, Sivanandanagar)

(Continued from the previous issue)

लोकक्षेमाय नित्यं निजमनसि जगन्नायकं प्रार्थयन्तम्
 शोकक्षामाय नृणां समुचितसुपथान् सन्ततं दर्शयन्तम्।
 स्तोकव्याहारपानाशनभजनगुणान् बाढमुद्बोधयन्तम्
 योगासीनं महान्तं हृदि भजत शिवानन्दयोगीन्द्रमेनम्॥३३॥

33. Worship in your heart the great sage Sivananda who always prays for the welfare of the whole world and attenuates the miseries of the worldly-minded by giving them proper guidance in the path to be followed, who constantly gives instructions to them to have regulated food, drink, speech, etc., and who is always established in Yoga.

वेदान्तोत्कृष्टतत्त्वान्यखिलजनगणान् नित्यमुक्त्वा नितान्तम्
 मोदावेशप्रकाशप्रकरमविरतं गाढमुत्पादयन्तम्।
 सादापेतं सुकर्माण्यनवरतमरं कर्तुकामं निकामम्
 लोकाचार्यं मुनीन्द्रं हृदि भजत शिवानन्दमानन्दकन्दम्॥३४॥

34. Adore the great Jagad-guru Swami Sivananda, who is the root of all bliss, who always spreads the high philosophical truths amongst humanity at large which generate the highest Bliss and happiness in them and who is always desirous of doing virtuous acts without any kind of weariness.

(To be continued)

Navaratri Message

THREE ASPECTS OF THE DIVINE MOTHER*

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

The annual nine-day worship of the Divine Mother is a national festival in this country. In Eastern India it is called Durga Puja, and in Southern India and elsewhere it is known as Navaratri Puja.

On the first three days, Durga, the consort of Siva, representing the cosmic Power of the Lord, and adored as the Mother of the universe, is worshipped.

The next three days are devoted to Lakshmi, the consort of Vishnu, who is the Goddess of Wealth, material and spiritual, representing auspiciousness and benevolence, and adored as the presiding Deity of all Hindu households.

The last three days are devoted to Saraswati, the consort of Brahma, who is the Goddess of Learning, representing the highest excellence in the knowledge of different forms of art, including literature, music, classical dancing, sculpture, painting and so on, and specially adored by all students.

To the spiritual aspirant, Navaratri is an occasion for intense Sadhana, and re-dedication of oneself to the Divine Mother—praying for the destruction of the animal within (as Durga killed Mahishasura or the 'Buffalo Demon'), and sublimation of one's nature.

It is an occasion for resolving to a concerted effort for the cultivation of the auspicious qualities characteristic in

divine life. It is also an occasion for self-surrender and prayer for enlightenment.

The allegorical import of the warfare between the gods and the demons, described in the Devi Purana, pertains to the eternal conflict between the higher mind and the lower mind, between the forces of noble sentiments, or the urgings of the conscience, and the lower impulses, or the urgings of the senses.

In the warfare between the gods and the demons, the former, being overwhelmed by the superior physical power of the latter, sought the help of the all-powerful Divine Mother, who ultimately won a decisive victory over the redoubtable armies of the demons, in order to save the gods from humiliating subjugation.

Similarly, in the case of the spiritual aspirant, while he has to strive his utmost for vanquishing the forces of his lower nature, success is ultimately possible only through divine grace. His little individuality, however strong the urgings of the conscience, will be of no consequence in overpowering the deep-rooted worldly tendencies, without the grace from above, which, nevertheless, is effective only in the case of those who are intensely sincere and persevering, but would refuse to

*Taken from DL 1960

penetrate the hard crust of indolence, insincerity and inadequacy of faith.

Durga is the giver of victory in the battle of self-discipline, Lakshmi is the bestower of inner spiritual wealth, and Saraswati endows the aspirant with the highest wisdom.

Thus, by the grace of the Divine Mother, who is really one but appears to Her devotees in different forms and

represents Her divine agency in these three principal aspects, all spiritual aspirants, renunciates as well as householders, can undoubtedly attain victory in their daily battle of life, and rapidly progress on the path of God-realization.

May the Blessed Mother be gracious to shower Her benedictions to one and all, deserving and undeserving.

MOTHER

O adorable Mother of love and compassion!
Thou art the heart of my heart;
Thou art the life of my life,
Thou art the light of this world.

I am Thy child, O Mother dear!
I think and sing of Thee alone
I weep and pray to Thee alone,
I behold Thee in every form.

Thou art the source of life and light,
Thou art the light of my eyes,
Thou art the Shakti of Lord Shiva,
Thou art Lakshmi and Saraswati.

I take my refuge in Thee alone,
Thou art my Mother dear,
Where else can I seek shelter
When I am in trouble and distress?

I find solace when I sing Thy name,
I get peace when I think of Thee;
I get power when I remember Thee,
I find joy in Thy radiant smile.

This path is thorny and slippery, O Mother,
I tremble and fall down at every step;
When I cry out to Thee, Thou liftest me up;
I feel Thy grace and gentle touch.

Remove my veil and show Thy form, Mother,
Take me to Thy bosom and remove all obstacles,
Make me fearless, and desireless,
Let me abide in Thee for ever and ever.

—Swami Sivananda

DUSSERA MESSAGE^{*}

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

Beloved Immortal Selves,

To-day you have all assembled in shrines and temples devoted to the great Goddess, the Divine Mother, for celebrating the Dussera. This function is celebrated in various parts of India in different styles. But the one basic aim of this celebration is to propitiate Sakti to bestow upon you all wealth, auspiciousness, prosperity, Vidya and all other potent powers. Whatever be the particular or special request that every one of you may put before the Goddess, whatever boon you may ask of Her, the one thing behind all these motives is propitiation, worship and linking oneself with Her. There is no other aim. This is being effected consciously or unconsciously. Everyone is blessed with Her loving mercy and is protected by Her.

This unique aim is your cherish not only in this particular occasion but every moment of your life. There is incessant struggle within you. The inner self struggles to escape from the clutches of the various senses being sheathed and suppressed by them. It constantly warns you to identify this self with the major Self. It reminds you that you are on return journey unto the place whence you started. Whether it is your will or not there is no second course or second destination left or reserved for you. You have to retrace your path. And on no spot can you dwell longer than the wink of an

eye. Any amount of retardation on your part will not arrest this onward course. The more the momentum you gain, the sooner you will return to the destination or the goal. Therefore equip yourself with proper contrivance and speed up. Don't waste a single minute. The leading of your life and the various aspects of it may differ from others, as the boon you ask of the Mother is different from your neighbour's. But the view of both is the same and the views of different lives too. Every one yearns for liberation.

Throw a ball on the floor. It rebounds. It attempts to reach the same point wherefrom it was thrown. But there is a difference in the return of one ball from the other. A ball with a thick cover, air fully inflated rebounds quickly whereas a Japan ball takes a longer time, Why? There is no sufficient stuff in the latter ball. As soon as it reaches the ground it loses its spherical shape. It gets deformed. The impact is too heavy for it. It has lost everything. It has to gain slowly its momentum.

We are all like Japan balls. We must cover ourselves with Vairagya Inflate with Bhakti and devotion. Kirtans and prayer are double piston air pumps. Meditation is the space of travel. Jnana is the acceleration which takes the ball to its original position. This overcomes Avidya, the down-pulling gravitation.

^{*}Taken from DL 1945

Selfless duty removes all the dust particles adhering to us in the form of egoism and vices. These are the equipments. These can be manufactured by one's own self as the outcome of various experiences in life. But it is better that it is acquired from parents. You can save much time.

Parents are the well-wishers of the children. They should not allow their children cultivate bad habits. They must not sing cinema songs and other meaningless blabbering to lull their babes. Only Kirtans glorifying the various forms of the Lord should be used. Sing "Hari Hari Bol, Bol Hari Bol, Mukunda Madhava Kesava Bol," This tune is very melodious. It is a sweet lullaby. At the same time it leaves deep imprints in the mind of the babe. You do not know what the mind of a child is. You are not capable of understanding its language. A child is full of divine qualities. It is only due to the bad company of yours the child is spoiled. You nurse the child too much. You train the child with toilets and luxuries. You make these articles indispensable for him, in later life,

"As is the father, so is the son." What habits you have acquired in the circle of your movement creep into him also. If you play cards, your son too will do so stealthily, if not openly before you. If you smoke, your son is sure to smoke. First correct yourself. The moment you realize that a son will be born to you, eradicate all the evil habits. Grains will grow perfectly only if the weeds are removed. The birth of a child is an A. R.

P. siren. It is a danger signal for you to be cautious.

The mud pot is useful only as long as the seed or the bulbous plant grows roots. Afterwards it should not be kept in the pot. If it is kept not only the plant will suffer undergrowth but the pot will be broken. It must be immediately transplanted in a fertile field. The child must be kept in the house only as long as it is not in a position to discriminate between good and bad. The day the child shows a tendency to like or dislike, it must be taken to a tutor and entrusted to him. It is no more a child. Now he is a boy fit to receive instruction. Any parent, who, ignorant of this fact, keeps the boy at home virtually stifles and snuffs out the moral, ethical and cultural life growth in the boy.

Only such tutors who feel it their responsibility to make an ideal man of the boy entrusted to them are to take up the training. Here comes the duty of the tutor. The tutor is not merely to cram certain portions from the prescribed text-books and lecture them to the boys. He is to teach and not to lecture. He must live what he teaches and transform by shining example. He must carefully watch the individual progress and satisfy himself as to the mental and ethical growth of every boy. More than teaching subjects such as science, history, arithmetic, the tutor must give enough of moral instructions to the boys. Their character must be built in such a way that it can never be shaken by any amount of adverse influence of the society in which the boys may have to move after their pupil ship.

The father, the mother and the Guru are solely responsible for the righteous behaviour of the boy. Brimming with knowledge all-round the boy comes out as a full blossom. This blossom floats its sweet smell over a vast area. Attracted by the smell, bees crowd to extract and enjoy the honey of wisdom contained in this boy. Now no more a boy full blown yogi he stands he mines mines treasures of secret as wisdom not only for the benefit of others but for his own, "In Quest of God." He is an ideal man. He is the ideal Yogi. He is fit to be called the son of God. He brings name and fame to the parents. A Collector or a Governor is revered or recognised only as long as he holds the post or at the most to the end of his life. But this Jnani, this realised soul is remembered and worshipped not only in this cycle of evolution but eternally.

O mothers! Pray for such a child. Even if you give birth to hundred children without good qualities you won't be happy and children too.

Gandhari had hundred sons, Kunti gave birth to five. Kausalya Devi to one and only one. Whom do you like to be? Gandhari or Kausalya?

Pray unto the Goddess to bestow upon you one such son to keep your progeny. Sakti is all. She can do anything. She can make or mar. She can mend or end. You can worship Her in any form. The very creation of this universe is solely due to Her. We are all spring-dolls in Her hand. Kriya, Iccha, Jnana are the three forms of Power by which this world is ruled. Worship of Sakti gives not only prosperity but liberation from all bondages. Devi declares: "I am of the nature of Brahman, I am of the nature of Prakriti, Purusha. I am Knowledge and ignorance. I am the Self-power. I am the eternal Truth. I am the non-dual power of Brahman."

May you all celebrate this Dussera with full faith and sincere devotion. May the choicest blessings of Goddess Sakti be upon you all!

PURITY OF MIND AND SELFLESS SERVICE

Karma Yoga prepares the mind for the reception of Light and Knowledge. It expands the heart and breaks all the barriers that stand in the way of oneness or unity. Karma Yoga is an effective Sadhana for Chitta Suddhi or purity of the mind-stuff and the heart. Therefore do selfless service constantly. Take delight in service.

The more the energy you spend in elevating and serving others, the more the divine energy which will flow to you. Work with the awareness of being pulled by the Cosmic Will. You will have more strength, less vanity. You will not be bound, as there will be no 'mine-ness'.

—**Swami Sivananda**

PARA-SHAKTI: A WONDERFUL CONCEPTION OF COSMIC DELUSION AS ALSO OF COSMIC DELIVERANCE*

(*Sri Swami Chidananda*)

Prostrations again and again to the Blessed Divine Mother who is the source, substratum and the ultimate goal of all creation! The Mother is a mysterious, indescribable power of the Supreme Being. She is the dynamic aspect of the Supreme, Transcendent Being, which is infinite, eternal and ineffable peace, beyond the cognizance of the mind and the senses.

Upon the very solemn and auspicious occasion which marks the commencement of the Navaratra, the sacred annual nine-day worship of Para-Shakti culminating in Vijayadasami, aspirants throughout the country commence their Puja with all reverence, adoring, worshipping and praying for the Mother's grace to enable them to attain success and fruition in all their endeavours, be they material or spiritual, secular or sacred. To a devout Hindu, the Grace of the Mother is an indispensable factor to attain the final goal of life.

In this country, aspirants fall under four or five broad religious divisions. They are: the worshippers of the Supreme Being in its aspect of Siva, called the Saivites; then there are the worshippers of the self-same Supreme

Being in its aspect of Vishnu, called the Vaishnavas; a third section of the people (quite a number of them) who worship the Supreme Being as manifest in the form of the great Goddess, the Devi Shakti, are referred to as the Shaktas; and there are again two lesser sects called the Ganapatyas who worship the Supreme Being as Lord Ganesha; and the Sauryas or the worshippers of the Supreme Being manifest as the splendorous light embodied in the visible orb of the Sun, the sustainer of the life-principle in this planet of ours.

The Navaratra worship of the Devi is eminently a Shakta-worship and has come down to us through the Shakta-tradition. On the auspices of the sacred Navaratra celebration, we shall devoutly offer our humble worship at the Mother's Blessed Feet in the form of a few words describing some aspects of Her glory. In doing this, let us be aware that even this privilege of worshipping Her, glorifying Her and dwelling upon Her greatness is only due to Her compassion and grace.

The Mother is whatever is. The essence of pure existence is the Supreme Being or Para Brahman. The Mother is whatever that we know. That which is

*Taken from DL 1967

beyond our knowledge is the Purusha, the transcendental Para Brahman. That which we know through our mind and senses is nothing but the manifestation of the Mother. She is not only the Universe which we know and conceive of (all this is but an infinitesimal speck), but is even beyond all this, infinite phenomenal existence; in short She is whatever that exists. She is all-power. She is the great transcendent power that is at the back of all manifestation, the primal cause of all manifestation and embodiment. She is not only the creatrix of this world but even the creator, preserver and dissolver of the whole universe. Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara have their being in the Mother. Inasmuch as She is all-power, all powers are Her Play; and therefore all the three dynamic manifestations,—Brahma, Vishnu and Siva—also are modifications of the Mother as Adi-Shakti. She is also Brahma-Shakti manifest to us in and through the form of Saraswati, Vishnu-Shakti manifest in and through the form of Lakshmi, and also Siva-Shakti manifest in and through the form of Parvati or Durga.

In this aspect of all-power, She has a twofold form, and the devout Hindu worships Her as both. It is a beautiful conception with a wonderful depth of significance—that of Cosmic Delusion as well as of Cosmic Deliverance. She binds down all to this mysterious, illusory appearance, this world-play and turns them in Her own playful manner in the wheel of birth and death. In this aspect, She is known as Avidya-Maya, the

delusion that is opposed to spiritual wisdom or knowledge. In Cosmic Deliverance, She smiles upon Her children and releases them from the delusion of Her aspect as Avidya-Maya. In Her aspect as this Cosmic Deliverance, we know of the Mother as Vidya-Maya. People have, therefore, visualised Her in the form of a radiant being, a Goddess having in one hand a noose or a type of rope by which She binds, and in the other hand a sharp knife by which She snaps the bondage if She is propitiated. Thus She is a mysterious combination of Avidya-Maya and Vidya-Maya, and, therefore, She is called indescribable. Thus have the devotees of the Mother intimately conceived of this world-play with the Mother both as the one who initiates it and as the one who ends it.

In this Supreme Force or Para-Shakti that we worship during the nine days through the medium of certain modes, this great Power of all powers is conceived of in certain distinct aspects—in her three aspects as Mahakali or Durga, Mahalakshmi and Mahasaraswati. Popular religion has identified Shakti with Mahadevi (Magna Mater), the eternal consort of Siva and the adorable sister of Srīman Narayana. But the Shaktas realise that the Supreme Mother transcends the Divine Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva. She is Durga or power of action (Kriya Shakti); She is Lakshmi or power of Will (Iccha Shakti); She is Saraswati or power of knowledge (Jnana Shakti). For the first three days of

Navaratri, She is worshipped as Durga, for the second three days She is worshipped as Lakshmi, and for the last three days as Saraswati, and on the tenth day, on Vijayadasami, She is adored as Rajarajeswari, the Queen Mother, transcending the triple aspects that go to constitute the changing universe.

Vijayadasami is the glorious day of the celebration of the Mother's victory. It is a day of Vijaya, when all the gods rejoice and all aspirants are in an exuberance of joy; for they have received the supreme assurance that so long as they turn to the Devi in their extremity and distress, there will be no lack of support and of strength. For, the Mother is the solace and strength of those in distress and seek refuge at Her divine feet. She is strength infinite, Maha Shakti, and as such we have but to turn to Her and no more will weakness persist in us. The supreme victory over all the forces of darkness, ignorance, is achieved and we shall be partakers together with the Mother of the joy of Vijaya. Vijayadasami is a supreme day of confidence, strength and courage to all seekers.

On this day, all Shakti-worshippers in particular, and those in quest of the Supreme Being in general, have the greatest strength and courage for by the annihilation of all the forces that stand in the way of the fullest manifestation of divinity, the Mother has thrown open the gateway, as it were, to the abode of Para Brahman. The worship of the Mother

upon this auspicious day is the worship of the Maha Maya in her purest and absolute Vidya (knowledge) aspect. Till now, during the Navaratra, the Mother is worshipped in her different aspects as She is manifest in this phenomenal world of human affairs. But when we come to Vijaya, we transcend the Mother in all Her external and Vidya-Avidya aspects and we gaze on Her face as the pure Vidya-Maya, the Para-Shakti, to gaze at Whom is verily to gaze into the Infinite and the unfathomable depth of Para Brahman Himself, for, the Mother is none else than the Supreme Being, Para Brahman, the Absolute. Therefore, in Her pure aspect as Vidya-Maya, She is Para Brahman Itself; and it is in Her radiant and all-glorious form of Vidya, the radiance of Atma-Jnana (Self-Knowledge) that we offer our salutations and adorations to the Mother upon this holy and blessed day of Vijaya Dasami. On this day, there no longer exists any element of the lower, base or animalistic nature. All that is darkness has been completely annihilated. There reigns the high and sublime nature of the Mother alone in all Her supremacy. To invoke Her in this radiant, all vigorous aspect is to plunge ourselves in the supreme worship of the Transcendent Being. Thus do we offer our homage, our worship and adoration of the Supreme Being, reaching which man has no more to go this round of painful birth and death. That is the abode of everlasting Light from where there is no more return to sorrow and pain. Once for all, we

reach our Goal which is beyond all sorrow, all pain and all delusion. In fact, this human birth has been given to us for that purpose of the highest attainment. All other pursuits are delusions and the one purpose of attaining the Supreme Being is the sole meaning, aim and end of this invaluable and precious human birth.

On this auspicious occasion, let us take the opportunity of looking into one very great secret of the spiritual life. We have considered the Mother in Her threefold aspect of Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati. But this is more or less in an impersonal way. She is also manifest in a special and an occult form, and this occult form of Her is in the nature of a divine personality. The manifestation of the Mother as our spiritual preceptor is a rare secret that is revealed to the heart of the spiritual seeker only through the grace of the Lord, of Mother Saraswati. This secret of the direct personal manifestation of the Mother in Her supreme aspect of Vidya-Maya and Vidya-Shakti is the Guru to the disciple. To a spiritual seeker, that spiritual being whom he has accepted as his spiritual preceptor and Guru is, in the complete sense, the visible personal manifestation and embodiment of the Supreme Divine Mother, and upon this conception rests the entire foundation of the seeker's spiritual life. Thus, to every circle of spiritual seekers, that particular personality to whom they have surrendered themselves and whom they have accepted in the core of their hearts

as their spiritual guide, is the supreme embodiment of Para-Shakti; he is Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, he is Shakti, he is Akshara-Brahman Himself. This is the truth which no aspirant earnest in his quest for the Eternal can afford to lose sight of or miss or forget even for a single moment of his spiritual life. For him, the human aspect of the Guru's personality should vanish; in its stead, there should stand before him only the radiant embodiment of the Supreme Divine Power. This is a reminder of the attitude which the aspirants should adopt towards their Preceptor, be they the followers of any spiritual personage whom they have accepted in the innermost core of their hearts as their spiritual guide or Guru. For, the degree and the measure to which we shall be fully aware of this special manifestation of the Mother in Her purest Vidya-Maya aspect in and through the personality of the Guru, to that degree and in that measure will be the unfoldment of the divine knowledge in our consciousness; to that degree and measure will be the success of our spiritual realisation.

On this glorious day of Vijayadasami, our worship of the Divine Mother in Her victorious Vidya-Maya aspect, in reality, constitutes the adoration of the Supreme Brahman as manifest and embodied in and through the spiritual personality of the Satguru. During the Navaratra, we worship the Mother in various ways, and on Vijayadasami day, we specially try to adore Her in the form of the written

word, the lofty scriptures: the Vidyarambha (commencement of learning) with the reading of the Gita, the Brahma Sutras, the Upanishads, the Bhagavata, the Ramayana, etc. Upon this Vijayadasami day with which culminates the nine-day worship of the Supreme Divine Mother, let us all pray that She may illumine our hearts as Buddhi, as Smriti. Let us all pray to Her that as Smriti, She may ever keep alive the great truths of the scriptures in our hearts so that we may base our entire lives and mould our conduct upon a vivid consciousness of these truths. For mysterious is Her power as Bhranti and Maya that even though we know these truths, we hear of them again and again and we try to remember them, yet somehow in the twinkling of an eye, She makes us forget them and we are only aware of these external objects of short-lived pleasure of the phenomenal world. We become conscious, through Her Maya, only of things that give us momentary pleasures and bind us to this world of names and forms. We should, therefore, fold our hands, bow at Her feet and pray: "O Mother! Manifest Thyself to me in Thy illuminating aspect and save me from the aspect of Thy Avidya-Maya." She will be propitiated; She will be pleased; the All-Merciful Devi will smile upon us. Then all our delusion, all our sorrow, all darkness will come to an end, and we shall see Her as the Satchidananda Para Brahman.

Therefore, let us all endeavour to offer our worship to Mother Para-Shakti

in all humility with Puja, Archana, Swadhyaya of Durga Saptashati or Devi Mahatmya, Nama-smarana and Sankirtan with a view to invoke Her blessings and Grace to dispel the darkness of ignorance, Avidya-Maya. May the Devi, Para-Shakti, confer upon us all seekers, the requisite strength to cross the ocean of Samsara, of birth and death, and may we be bestowed, by Her Grace, the wisdom to attain the radiance and illumination of Atma Jnana and the bliss of Satchidananda! Adorations to Devi by whose grace alone the knowledge of the Ultimate Reality dawns upon the consciousness of earnest seekers! Adorations to the great Mother who keeps up this mysterious divine Drama of creation, preservation and destruction. Salutations to Her who makes the transcendent, unmanifest essence to be manifest as infinite names and forms, through Her mysterious power, and who deludes and binds the Jivas to this world process. Salutations and adorations to Devi again as the supreme Vidya-Maya who, in her extreme compassion towards Her children, brings about ultimate deliverance from the bondage of nescience and phenomenal existence and bestows upon the seekers the highest transcendental beatitude or Supreme State of Kaivalya. May the divine blessings of Mother Para-Shakti be upon all the seekers of Truth, and may their endeavours be crowned with Vijaya.

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THE INNER MEANING OF THE DEVI MAHATMYA

(Sri Swami Krishnananda)

The remembrance of Devi pulls our hearts, draws our affections and fills us with great joy during these festival days at least once in a year, and the reason for this great enthusiasm religiously and spiritually felt by people throughout the country can be regarded as explicable only by the great importance that is associated with this novel occasion.

We have been reading the holy Sri Devi Mahatmya and also listening to messages during the past few days, touching upon the importance of these worships conducted for nine or ten days during this time of year. We are familiar with the names Durga, Lakshmi, Saraswati, Shakti, Prakriti, etc. These are divine appellations with which everyone is familiar, and it appears that we are offering our obeisance and worship to these divinities named in this manner. But we have also been told again and again that the divine Shakti is also the Supreme Shakti, the power which is unsurpassed. The power of the whole universe, the energy of the cosmos can only be considered as unsurpassed, because beyond that nothing is conceivable.

The stories about these battles between the Devi and the Asuras are interesting, but it is difficult to make out much meaning in them concerning the other aspect of the teaching that the

Shakti is all-in-all. *Ekaivaham jagatyatra dvitiya ka mamapara* (Devi Mahatmya 10.4). This is what Devi says to Sumbha: "I am alone here. How do you say there are many with me?" If she, or however we may try to name this power, is single, it becomes difficult for us to understand the location of these Asuras. From where have they come, and with whom is she fighting?

The supernal, indivisible, all-pervasive Shakti is one whole completeness. Therefore, the Asuras have no place to stay, yet they seem to be fighting. This is something difficult for us to understand. Wherefrom do they emerge? Where are they situated? Are they outside this dominion of Devi, or are they also within the jurisdiction of the operation of this power? *Dvau bhutasargau loke'smindaiva asura eva cha* (Gita 16.6) says the Bhagavadgita: From Being's nature, two energies manifest themselves in two opposite directions, as it were, called the divine and the undivine. This is something akin to the Mahabharata war that took place between the Pandavas and the Kauravas, both of whom were descendants of Kuru, and so both the Pandavas and the Kauravas were called Kurus. The celestials and the demoniacal elements were both children of Kashyapa, a single parent. Through

Aditi, Kashyapa had all the Devas, or angels and celestials as their children; but through Diti, the very same Kashyapa had all the demoniacal elements. So one father had two opposite types of children. Kuru produced the Pandavas and the Kauravas.

A similar situation seems to be here before us when we read the inner meaning of the Devi Mahatmya. With whom is Devi fighting? Devi is fighting the Rakshasas, the demoniacal elements. Where are they seated? They are seated within the universe. But the whole universe is pervaded by Devi. So it would appear as if a dramatic picture is presented before us of an inscrutable occurrence within the bosom of the cosmos, and it is not actually a battle between the Allies and the Axis powers or any other war that we can think of in this world. It is not an outer fight, though it can take an outer form when it descends into the lower planes of physical perception and pure material operations. The wars that are described in the Devi Mahatmya, at least from the point of view of the intentions of a spiritual seeker, are deeper in their content and significance than what would occur on the surface.

The whole universe is doubly manifest in two forces, the positive and negative powers. A reference to this is also made in the Bhagavadgita when Bhagavan Sri Krishna says, "My Prakriti is higher and also lower." So there is what is called the higher Prakriti and the lower Prakriti. Though the Asuras with whom a war has to be waged cannot be considered as outside the area of the operation of the universal power, yet there is a circumstance under which

such a battle takes place, like the constructive and the destructive forces working together in our own physiological organism, which doctors call the anabolic and the catabolic powers. They are both inside us only. It does not mean that the constructive forces are inside us and the destructive forces are outside. Both the health forces and the disease forces are working in a very mysterious manner inside us. So just as both disease and health can be inside us—not merely inside us, but inseparable from us—the divine operative Shakti, called the Devi, and these elements which are opposing divine influence can be within the cosmos itself. They cannot be discovered separately by observation through a microscope, just as disease and health cannot be separated by any kind of observation. They are impossible of perception by any means. The urges or impulses towards contact—desire, anger, greed, grasping, enjoyment, possession—constitute the demoniacal urges which are also within the universe itself. And there is another force which moves towards the centre of being: God-oriented impulse.

The higher power referred to in the Bhagavadgita as Paraprakriti is the Devi Shakti, and the lower Prakriti is what we see with our eyes—the five elements and everything that is constituted of them. The physical body of ours and the sense organs, with their impulses towards contact and enjoyment materially, physically, are one side of the matter. But there is an impulse within us to move towards God, to integrate things and work for the unity of purpose. Two

operations take place simultaneously in the world. The ocean can madly operate within itself and dash powerful waves causing destruction, devastation and cataclysm everywhere, yet it maintains its oceanhood at the same time. The ocean has never ceased to be the ocean together with its devastating activity and ebullient waves rising up to heights of several feet. In a similar manner, there seems to be a secret operation within the universe, including within our own bodies, a double action taking place simultaneously, one moving towards the outer contacts of things, which is the catabolic action of universal powers, and another moving towards the centre of Reality, God-oriented impulse, aspiration for moksha or liberation of the spirit, which is the anabolic activity of the cosmos.

Hence, the higher reason that is operating within us is the controlling agency both within our personality as well as in the universe. The battles we speak of are against these outward-oriented urges descending into matter in the form of the five elements of earth, water, fire, air, ether, and all the embodiments constituted of these elements. Our bodies, as well as animals, plants, and even inanimate matter, are all lower Prakriti urging for self-preservation and struggling for survival even at the cost of others. The lion jumping on weaker animals, the tiger attacking cows, the more powerful attacking the weaker, the larger fish swallowing the smaller fish, the law of the mighty as superior to the weaker—these are all catabolic activities of the lower Prakriti, the Rakshasas

operating. All the drama of human life today is the lower Prakriti operating. That is why we are restless. We do not have one moment of peace in this world because the divine power has escaped our attention and we are caught in the mesh of these downward movements of impulses rushing outwardly into contact with physical objects for selfish sense enjoyment, even at the cost and destruction of other people. To overcome this outward impulse the higher, superior reason—the Mahatattva-shakti, Hiranyagarbha-shakti, Ishvara-shakti, Brahma-shakti, Vishnu-shakti, Siva-shakti, whatever it may be called—may have to act.

Thus is the internal significance of the wars described in the chapters of the Devi Mahatmya. It is a spiritual drama, and not a bloody war as it would appear on a mere literary reading. It is a highly esoteric technique of spiritual ascent that is described in these chapters. It is not a novel, it is not a story, it is not a narration for cajoling us during the few hours of the worship of the Divine Mother. It is a secret technique of spiritual ascendance from the lower to the higher, both inwardly as well as outwardly, and this is the purpose of these narrations in the Devi Mahatmya and the meaning behind the worship of Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati, the power which dominates our *tamas*, *rajas* and *sattva*. The material universe which is *tamasic*, the subtler higher levels of the planes of being which are *rajasic*, and the highest *sattva* which is Brahmaloka all come under the purview of Prakriti herself. *Aabrahmabhuvanaalokaah punaraavartina* (Gita 8.16): Everything,

even up to Brahmaloaka, is within the purview of Prakriti, the only distinction being that the higher ones are *sattvic*, the middling ones are *rajasic*, and the lower ones are *tamasic*.

But there is something transcendent which operates this Shakti. When we say Brahma-shakti, Vishnu-shakti, Siva-shakti, and so on, we imply that there is something called Brahma, Vishnu, Siva wielding this force of Durga, Lakshmi, Saraswati, or Shakti, as fire wields heat, the sun wields brilliance, and we wield our own energy when we lift a heavy object, for instance. The Shakti of Brahma, the Shakti of Vishnu, the Shakti of Siva are not like three women sitting beside them like husband and wife; they are inseparables like fire and heat, sun and light, and our own self and our strength. We have got Shakti. With our Shakti, with our strength, we can lift things. We cannot say our Shakti is sitting outside somewhere and we cannot see it. It is inseparable from us. It is our capacity to operate that is called Shakti. So the capacity of Brahma to operate, the capacity of Vishnu to operate, the capacity of Siva to operate is the Shakti operating in the creative, the preservative and the destructive levels.

Thus, the distinction that we make in our days of worship between Durga, Lakshmi, Saraswati, and the final victorious worship on Vijayadasami, and the narrations in the Devi Mahatmya all point to the same fact that there is a divine purpose operating in the cosmos, a divine purpose operating within each one of us and within even a little atom, tending towards the coming together of

all things in a fraternal embrace in Godhood. That is the Vijaya, the victory finally won, the great cessation of battle, the entering of all the rivers into the ocean. The tumult and noise and activity of the river ceases when it reaches its parent, the ocean. Likewise, all activity ceases when the purpose of the universe is served, when the opposing Rakshasa *vruttis*, the downward and outward movements, are turned backwards by a reversal process, by a recession of the effects into their causes so that the effects merge into their causes.

Thus the Supreme Cause operates, and the final victory of the Ultimate Cause is celebrated on Vijayadasami wherein all the truant and intractable elements, which are the lower effects and which extend themselves outwardly in space and time towards the enjoyment of sense objects and battle one another, are reversed, turned back into the centre of Being. That is the overcoming of the lower elements called the Rakshasas, or the demons, by the higher power of supreme spiritual integration demonstrated in the ascending series of the activities of Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati, culminating in final victory which is the union of all the souls in the Supreme Soul, Paramatman.

So here we have a spiritual drama enacted in a most beautiful ritualistic fashion of worship and the epic grandeur of the Devi Mahatmya, and also in the form of a deep sadhana that we ourselves are expected to perform inwardly through japa, prayer and meditation during these days of Navaratri, which fulfils itself in a *purnavati puja* during the holy Vijayadasami. □ □ □

OUR TWO INNER IDENTITIES

(Sri Swami Atmaswarupananda)

Almost all religions have their version of heaven and hell. Normally it's a way of trying to bring some understanding of justice into the human situation—where life is often seen as not being fair. Thus they suggest that after death we will be rewarded as we deserve, according to our behavior here on earth. Others, however, suggest that we create our own heaven and hell here on this earth.

The word heaven comes from the same root word as harmony. So it is not supposed to be some place of jumping joy, but an inner harmony, a sense of well being. The word hell comes from an old English word meaning to be walled off from. It means a sense of isolation, a lack of harmony with others and our environment.

Is there anything within us that can make evident the choice between those two? If we examine ourselves, we can discover that underneath all our thinking and feeling we have two fundamental identities that are almost polar opposites. One identity thinks that we are the center of the universe. It is an identity that constantly changes depending upon the mood of our mind. The other is an identity that feels that we never change. We feel that we are exactly the same person we have been since the day we were born, and that that won't change as long as we live.

The nature of the second identity is one of steady awareness. It has always been with us, observing all the activities of our mind. It never criticizes us, it never

praises us. It has goodwill for all. Not praise, but goodwill. It just is, whereas the centre of the universe, feeling itself to be the subject and everything else, including God, being its object, cannot escape a feeling of importance. It feels that others and the world are there to serve it, and it becomes disturbed when the world doesn't adjust itself to its desires.

The more we live as the centre of the universe, the more we feel separated, walled off from the rest of the world. On the other hand, the more we identify with that within us that has never changed, never judges, has goodwill for all, there comes into our being a sense of harmony. We feel connected with all, the enemy of none.

Therefore, the more we live our life identified with the centre of the universe, the more we feel walled off from, out of sorts, discontented. The more we live in harmony with that within us that is conscious, but never changes, the more we feel an inner harmony, a connection to all of creation.

Gurudev wants us to practice ahimsa, satyam and brahmacharya. He wants us to serve, love, give, purify, meditate, realize, to be good, do good, be kind, be compassionate, to enquire, Who am I? It is all meant to lead us away from our identity of being the centre of the universe to that inner identity of harmony. That is the simple choice we all need to make. It means the difference between heaven and hell.

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THE MASTER LIVES IN HIM*

(Prof. J.N. Asopa)

*"I was a gem concealed,
Me, my burning ray revealed!"*

Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj so often put me in contemplation of these lines from the Koran. From Sridhar Rao (that was how Chidanandaji was known in his Purvashram) to Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, the journey has been one of aspiration and attainment excelling each other and the burning ray revealing itself. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj is indeed towering in the attainment of the values of the transcendent. What at once strikes one about him is his humility and sense of service. He is an incarnation of humility. I, for one, feel he is not just that. To me, he is humility itself. I say it with no hyperbole. Humility is concretised in him; humility finds its fulfilment in him. His sense of service is robust, his love for life-as-such is unending. I am only repeating what is so very obvious. Serve, Love, Give, Purify, Meditate, Realise! The Master's dictum lives in him.

One beholds him serving man and monkey alike. He who beholds Sriman Narayan in an oozing leper or a maimed monkey or an injured squirrel is indeed the loved of Narayan. Narayan unto Narayan. Blessed Divinity pervades all. Blessed are the meek and the humble, for verily they are the salt of the earth. Blessed are those too that behold the spectacle of Narayan beckoning the

Narayan on the branch yonder, frolicking and itching. That is Chidanandaji's sport. The service nearest to his heart is the leper's. One is irresistibly reminded of St. Francis of Assisi. From Narayan contemplation to Hari Kirtan and Harijan Seva and Kusht Nivaran may appear odd, but Sri Swami Chidanandaji is most at home with it all. This is the culture of our Bharatavarsha. This is the legacy from the Rishis of yore.

Chidanandaji marks a step ahead in the march of our ancient culture. A nation's culture is epitomised and made tangible in the lives and deeds of a few savants of society who appear on the arena of life to soothe the despairing hearts and failing faiths of human kind caught in the eddy of Samsara. Chidanandaji has everything to give that is highest and noblest and therefore finest in our culture. Austerity and piety, service and sincerity, benevolence and abnegation are his attributes par excellence. The ideal Sadhu, the supreme Sannyasin, the benevolent master that he is, our culture finds its consummation in him.

A birthday tribute is a time of reminiscing. Way back, a couple of decades ago, I can behold Chidanandaji chanting "Sri Ram, Jaya Ram, Jaya Jaya Ram" on Ekadasi evenings in the night Satsang. Otherwise, he would be almost

*Taken from *An Apostle Of India's Spiritual Culture*

invisible, engrossed in study or rapt in Sadhana or lost in service. His relationship with the Master has been unique. It is the Master living in him all over again.

Many years ago, on a visit to Belur Mutt near Calcutta, I was thrilled to behold everywhere the mark and memory of the Master that was Thakore. Everything there spoke of Thakore and Thakore alone. I knew that the temple

and the Mutt had been raised by Vivekananda to perpetuate the memory of the Master and I asked if there was any monument to the disciple also. My attention was drawn to a stone engraving of Vivekananda in an obscure corner almost surrounded by wild vegetation. The engraving is indeed a foil to the stature and glory of the Master. Chidanandaji reminds me, of that moment.

A Parable by Swami Sivananda:

FAITH IN THE CREATOR

A party of six people was having a pleasure-ride in a motor-boat near the Bombay Harbour. Suddenly the weather grew bad and the sea became turbulent. Several people in the boat grew panic-stricken; but one Sikh alone remained unperturbed.

An Anglo-Indian woman was greatly worried over her safety and was annoyed to see the Sikh sitting apparently without the least worry, with a serene smile playing on his face.

“Are you mad,” asked the Anglo-Indian woman. “The boat is about to sink and you are sitting there as though nothing has happened.”

“Mother! Did we create ourselves? No. Someone, God, has created us. Does He not have the power to protect us? Is He not protecting us? Who is responsible for our life? It is God. Who feeds us daily? God. Who makes our breath flow in our nostrils? God. Who enables us to digest our food? Who makes our heart pump blood? God. We are His responsibility. His Will be done, mother. Fear not. He will protect us.”

“Fool!” cried the Anglo-Indian woman, “your foolishness is surely going to land you at the bottom of the sea. Come, be wise; put on the life-belt and jump with us. We will float along till someone rescues us.”

The Sikh looked away apparently deeply immersed in thought. The Anglo-Indian lady jumped off the boat with some others. They were promptly seized by a shark which had a nice meal of her. Tossed about on the waves, the motor-boat danced its way to the shore safely with the Sikh and a few others. The co-passengers of the Sikh admired his faith in God and became his followers.

THE RIGHT WAY TO WORSHIP

(*Swami Ramarajyam*)

Satyabhama was one of the wives of Lord Krishna. One day she thought she would weigh Lord Krishna with her ornaments. When Lord Krishna came to know about this, He smiled but said nothing. Satyabhama made Him sit on one pan of a balance and started putting her ornaments on the other pan; still, the pan, on which Lord Krishna was sitting, did not move. Satyabhama continued to put the ornaments one after the other, yet the pan did not move. And, it did not budge a jot even after the whole lot of ornaments had been put. She felt defeated.

At that moment, Rukmini happened to come there. Satyabhama told her what had happened. Rukmini brought all the articles of worship immediately. She worshipped Lord Krishna. As a part of the worship, she washed Lord

Krishna's feet with water. She put the bowl containing this water on the pan filled with ornaments. In a trice this pan became weightier than the other one. How did it happen? What could not be brought about with piles of jewellery could be achieved with the help of this water!

Look children! In the act of worshipping God, wealth and gold do not matter in the least. On the other hand, it is love for and devotion to God which matter the most. Rukmini's feelings of love and devotion got imbued with the sacred water. What else can be heavier than love and devotion? That is why the pan with the bowl containing this water became heavier.

God is worshipped with love and devotion and not with wealth and gold. That is the right way to worship.

Love all. Serve all. Be kind, truthful, pure, humble, merciful and generous. Be kind to animals. Never hurt the feelings of others. See God in all. Obey parents, elders and teachers. In reality thou art the immortal Self—birthless, deathless, diseaseless. Thou art all Bliss, all Wisdom, all Knowledge. Feel this. Realise this. This is Divine Life.

—*Swami Sivananda*

INAUGURAL FUNCTION OF THE 81ST BASIC YOGA-VEDANTA COURSE

The 81st Basic Yoga-Vedanta Course was inaugurated on 1st September 2015 at YVFA Hall in the august presence of H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj and H.H. Sri Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj. Forty seekers from different parts of India got the blessed opportunity to participate in this sacred Jnana Yajna.

The inaugural function commenced with the Puja at the holy temples of Mother Durga and Dattatreya Bhagavan. After the invocatory prayers, H. H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj inaugurated the Course with the lighting of the lamp. Sri Swamiji Maharaj in his blessing message highlighting the significance of human birth apprised the

students of the supreme goal of life and inspired them to utilize this precious opportunity of their stay at the holy abode of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj to their utmost benefit. H.H. Sri Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj in his message advised them to give due place in their lives to four Gs i.e. God, Gita, Gayatri and Guruseva but never to indulge in the fifth 'G'—gossiping and return to their homes as representatives of Sadgurudev. 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.

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IN MEMORIAM

With a deep sense of sorrow, we report the passing away of Prof. Hrudananda Ray of Cuttack, Odisha on 27th July 2015.

Prof. Hrudananda Ray, one of the founding members of the Divine Life Society, Cuttack was an eminent educationist, Advait Vedantin and well known writer in Odia. He has authored over twenty spiritual books in Odia and has been recipient of Odisha Sahitya Academy award for his voluminous autobiography.

He was blessed with Mantra Initiation by Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on 7th July 1990. Since 1951, he had been serving Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj's sacred mission by spreading His divine teachings in Odisha. He served the Divine Life Society, Cuttack Branch as the President from 15th August 1998 till he breathed his last on 27th July 2015.

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

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SEVA THROUGH SIVANANDA HOME

'Sivananda Home is a Center for the loving care of the destitute and the dying people who are found by the roadside, with no one to care for: the people who are home-less, temporary or permanent, fell sick, got lost or were abandoned.

(Swami Chidananda)

It was on the night of Krishna-Janmashthami that a small puppy was found inside the premises of Sivananda Home. It remains a miracle how he came inside, since the gate was closed and nobody had seen him coming inside. He was shivering from fear and anxiety and hiding behind a wooden fence. Slowly, he gained the courage to come out, and he started to get familiar with the people around—a friendly, scared one, eagerly waiting to be petted and consoled. Where there are so many different people in one place, always someone is attracted to the dog and he really found some nice looking-afters, who cared for him, fed him, nourished him and poured out all the love upon this little brat. It is interesting to observe how even this creature fitted in and had his own role to perform, because "...each one is most necessary and indispensable for that particular set-up, in that particular time-space context." (Swami Chidananda, From "You are unique in the eyes of God.")

Other newcomers this month were an elderly Leprosy patient, suffering from severe osteoporosis of the spine, with bowel and bladder involvement, so

much so, that she had become completely bedridden and could not move at all on her own effort. Male patients were admitted with asthma, and another with infected wounds on the ankle. One of the female inmates had become severely sick, with high fever and continuously vomiting and was treated with intravenous drip and medication, after which she recuperated, bit by bit.

But the highlight of the month was the visit of Revered and Respected President Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj and Revered and Respected General Secretary Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj, Sri Swami Satyakamanandaji Maharaj and Sri Gopi Swamiji Maharaj who graced Sivananda Home with their presence, on the occasion of the 7th Punyatithi of His Holiness Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. The beautiful newly constructed building being an extension of Sivananda Home was inaugurated on this day and all were happy to have the Darshan of Respected Swamiji's. May His Grace continue to shower upon all who have taken refuge at His Holy Feet. Om Sri Satgurudevaya Namah.

"Let us behold Thee in all these names and forms. Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms. Let us ever remember Thee. Let us ever sing Thy glories. Let Thy Name be ever on our lips. Let us abide in Thee for ever and ever."

(Swami Sivananda)

SPIRITUAL CONFERENCE/DIVINE MEET
26th – 28th February 2016
At BARSANA, MATHURA DISTRICT,
UTTAR PRADESH.

By the grace of Worshipful Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj , under the aegis of Birth Centenary Celebrations of Pujya Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, Divine Life Society Lucknow Branch is organising a Divine Meet from 26th to 28th February 2016, at Barsana, Mathura District, Uttar Pradesh.

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

Delegate fee for participation in the Conference will be ₹ 1,100/- per person inclusive of food and accommodation which may be sent by DD/Cheque in favour of “ The Divine Life Society, Lucknow Branch”. There is no delegate fee for Children up to 12 years.

The last date for enrollment is 31-01-2016. Delegates would be restricted to 500 in number in view of available accommodation. Delegate fee along with the Registration Form has to be sent to: Sri Jagdish Dayal, A-669, HAL Old Colony, Faizabad Road, LUCKNOW, UP-226016.

For downloading Enrolment Form and other details kindly visit the website: www.dlslucknow.org , or Contact:

1. Sri Naresh Singla	Convenor	0 84273 32211
2. Sri N K Aggarwal	President, DLS Lucknow	0 93357 10601
3. Sri Chandra Mohan	Co-ordinator at Barsana	0 99972 42111
4. Sri Rakesh Goyal	Vice-Pres, DLS Lucknow	0 96210 87893
5. Sri C L Manikant	Vice-Pres, DLS Lucknow	0 94509 30777
6. Sri Jagdish Dayal	Secretary, DLS Lucknow	0 94151 35046
7. Sri Sushil Awasthi	Treasurer, DLS Lucknow	0 94512 50390

—The Divine Life Society



REPORTS FROM THE D.L.S. BRANCHES

INLAND BRANCHES

Ambala (Haryana): The Branch conducted Satsang on Sundays and Tuesdays. 52nd Punyatithi Aradhana of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was observed on 8th August with Paduka Puja. Free Jala Seva and Homeopathy Dispensary continued to serve the people.

Badhiausta (Odisha): The Branch conducted a special Satsang on 7th and 12th July with Paduka Puja and Inspiring talks on Bhagavad Gita. On 31st Guru Purnima was celebrated with Paduka Puja, discourses on Guru Tattva and Guru disciple relationship and Prasad distribution.

Balangir (Odisha): The Branch conducted daily Paduka Puja, Yoga class and evening Satsang as well as weekly Satsangs on Sundays and Thursdays. On 31st July Guru Purnima was celebrated with Paduka Puja, Pravachans and chanting of "Om Namoh Bhagavate Sivanandaya", "Om Namoh Bhagavate Chidanandaya" and Mahamrutyunjaya Mantra for world peace. Punyatithi Aradhana of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was observed on 8th August. Pavitra Shravana month Rudrabhishekh Anustan was held at Vishwanath temple. During the month of July and August, around 1200 patients received treatment in Chidananda Health Centre run by the Branch.

Bangalore (Karnataka): The Branch celebrated Gurupurnima with Bhajans and talk on the relevance of Gurupurnima. Punyatithi Aradhana of

Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was observed from 4th to 8th August with Prayers, Bhajans, Paduka Puja, discourses and cultural programmes. This was concluded with Arati and Narayana Seva. Under Birth Centenary Celebrations of worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, the Branch organised a special Satsang on 24th, followed by discourses on Bhagavad Gita, and a quiz programme on life and teachings of Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj.

Barbil (Odisha): Five weekly Satsangs and four residential Satsangs were conducted by the Branch. Sadhana day was observed on 24th of the month. Around 535 patients had free Homeopathic treatment in Sivananda Charitable Dispensary. Balvihar classes were conducted every Sunday for school-going children. Guru Purnima was celebrated on 31st. There was a Sadhana Saptah from 24th to 30th July, with Bhajan, Kirtan, and Paduka Puja.

Bellary (Karnataka): Daily Puja continued regularly. Paduka Puja and Archana were on all Sundays. On 19th Birth Anniversary of Sri Swami Devanandaji Maharaj was celebrated with Archana. On 31st Gurupurnima was celebrated with Paduka Puja, Archana, and concluded with Arati.

Bellagunta (Odisha): Daily morning Meditation class, weekly Satsang on Sundays, mobile Satsang on Thursdays, Sadhana day on every Sankranti and Paduka Puja on 8th of every month were the regular programmes of the Branch. 18th chapter of Bhagavad Gita path was

done for Birth Centenary Celebration of Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. Gurupurnima and 52nd Anniversary of the Punyatithi Aradhana of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was celebrated with prayers, Paduka Puja, Gita Path, discourses on life and teachings, and concluded with Arati.

Bhubaneswar (Odisha): Daily and weekly mobile Satsang were continued. On 31st July Gurupurnima, Sadhana Saptah from 1st to 7th August and on 8th Punyatithi Aradhana of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj were celebrated with prayers, Paduka Puja, Gita Path, recitation of Hanuman Chalisa, Vishnusahasranam and Pravachans. All the programmes concluded with Narayana Seva. On 22nd Tulasi Das Jayanti was observed with recitation of Hanuman Chalisa, Sundarakanda Parayan and Havan. Free medical treatment continued as usual.

Chandigarh: Weekly Satsang was held on Sundays and it concluded with Narayana Seva. Under the aegis of Swami Chidananda Birth Centenary Celebration, the Branch conducted 24hour Ramayan Path, Gita Path and Mahamantra Kirtan. The Yoga Shivar is going on. Punyatithi Aradhana of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was observed on 8th August. Free medical consultations and distributions of medicines were arranged on Sundays.

Chatrapur (Odisha): During the month of July and August, daily evening Satsang, weekly Satsang, Special Satsangs, and Monthly Jayanti ceremonies on 8th and 24th were held in the Branch. On 31st July, Gurupurnima was celebrated with Paduka Puja and

Archana, and Dhyana class arranged from 1st to 7th August. On 8th Mahasamadhi Day of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was observed with Paduka Puja, recitation of Bhagavad Gita and Ramayan. It concluded with Narayana Seva and Vastra Danam. For the Birth Centenary Celebration of worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, the Branch recited Sundarakanda. On 22nd Tulasidas Jayanti was observed with Archana and Swadhyaya.

College Square Aska (Odisha): Daily Puja, weekly Satsang on every Thursday and Paduka Puja on 8th and 24th of every month were the regular programmes of the Branch. There was a special Satsang on 29th July. On 31st Gurupurnima was celebrated with Paduka Puja, Swadhyaya and recitation of Sundarakanda.

Digapahandi (Odisha): Satsang activities continued regularly. Sadhana day was observed on 26th July. Gurupurnima on 31st and 52nd Anniversary of Punyatithi Aradhana day of H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj were celebrated with Paduka Puja, Bhajans, Pravachans and Gita Path. The programme concluded with Narayana Seva.

Dolamandap Dhenakanal (Odisha): On 31st July Gurupurnima was celebrated with Paduka Puja, Bhajans, Pravachans, and distributed free literature and Prasad. 52nd Anniversary of Punyatithi Aradhana day of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was observed on 8th August. 2015.

Gandhi Nagar (Gujarat): The Branch conducted daily Yogasana class and weekly Satsang on Thursdays. On 31st July Gurupurnima was celebrated with Paduka Puja, and through Sivananda Seva Nidhi, fruits, biscuits, ball pens and spiritual books distributed to the poor students. The Branch organised a Yogasana Training Camp from 1st to 12th August.

Jajpur (Odisha): Daily Guru Paduka Puja, weekly Satsang on Thursdays, daily Yoga classes, Paduka Puja on 8th of every month were the regular programmes of the Branch. During Navakalebara Rath Yatra, the Branch distributed water pouch for Yatris. On 31st July, Guru Purnima was celebrated with chanting of "Om Namo Bhagavate Sivanandaya" and "Om Namo Bhagavate Chidanandaya".

Jamshedpur (Jharkand): weekly Satsangs were held every Friday with Bhajans and Swadhyaya. There were free drawing and Yoga classes for poor children of the "Antyodaya Bastee", Gurupurnima and Punyatithi Aradhana were celebrated with Paduka Puja and evening Satsang.

Khatiguda (Odisha): The Branch conducted weekly Satsang on Thursdays. On 2nd August Sadhana day was observed with Narayana Seva. Recitations of Vishnu Sahasranam were held on Ekadasis. Sadhana week were arranged from 1st to 7th August with Parayana of Bhagavat Mahapurana and Havan. Punyatithi Aradhana day of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was observed on 8th with recitation of Mahamrityunjaya Mantra.

Khajuria (Odisha): On 31st July Gurupurnima was celebrated with Paduka Puja. The Branch conducted 52nd Sadhana week from 1st to 7th August, with Prayers, Bhajans, Guru Paduka Puja and recitation of Srimad Bhagavat Mahapurana. On 8th Aradhana day eloquence competition was arranged for students, and concluded with prize distribution and Prasad Sevan.

Khurda Road Branch (Odisha): The Branch conducted morning prayers, Meditation and Swadhyaya from Gurudev's literature. On 31st Gurupurnima was celebrated with Paduka Puja, 8th August, the Aradhana day of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was observed with Bhajans and Paduka Puja.

Kodala (Odisha): Daily and weekly Satsang activities were carried on regularly. Gurupurnima and Aradhana day of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj were celebrated with Paduka Puja.

Lanjipalli Ladies Branch (Odisha): Daily, weekly and mobile Satsangs were held regularly. There were also Swadhyaya, Gita chanting on Ekadasis, recitation of Hanuman Chalisa and Sundarakanda Parayana on Sankranti day and Narayana Seva for poor and needy people. The Branch celebrated Netra Utsav and Niladri Bije during Navakalebara Mahaleela (Martya Leela) of Lord Jagannath.

Lanjipalli (Odisha): In the month of July and August, daily Puja, weekly Satsang, mobile Satsang, and recitation of Hanuman Chalisa (108 times) on Sankranti day were held in the Branch. On 31st July Gurupurnima was

celebrated with Paduka Puja. There were a Sadhana week from 1st to 7th August and Aradhana day was observed on 8th with 52 Deepa Prajwalana and Paduka Puja.

Lucknow (U.P.): Satsangs were conducted on 9th and 23rd August, with Bhajan and Arati. A special Satsang was arranged on 30th with a talk on personality development and drawings for children (13 children participated). It concluded with distribution of the childrens book "Bal Nirman Ki Kahaniya" and Prasad Sevan.

Madhavapatnam (A.P.): The Branch held Satsang with Bhajan, meditation, recitations of Sloka, and Pravachan regularly on all Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays of the month, besides every Sunday Narayana Seva for the poor and needy people. In connection with the Birth Centenary Celebration of His Holiness Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, the Branch organised a special Satsang on 5th July in which Sri Swami Tatvavidanandaji Maharaj (Arsha Vidya Gurukulam) Hyderabad released the book "Divya Bhajana Sangraha". On 31st Gurupurnima was celebrated with Paduka Puja, Bhajan, and Pravachans.

Moirang (Manipur): The Branch celebrated 1st Anniversary of Vishwanath Mandir with Puja, Bhajan, Kirtan, and other spiritual activities. On 18th July, a special Satsang was held with Hari Nam Sankirtan.

Nandininagar (Chattisgarh): Daily Satsang activities continued with Prayers and recitation of Srimad Bhagavad Gita, Vishnu Sahasranam and Hanuman Chalisa. Weekly Satsang and mobile Satsang were also continued. On

3rd Mahamantra Kirtan was done. Gurupurnima on 31st July and Aradhana day on 8th August were celebrated with Paduka Puja. Tuladidas Jayanti was observed on 22nd August 2015.

Pattamadai (Tamilnadu): The Branch continued daily Puja, weekly Satsang on Thursdays, and Antaryogam on every 1st Sunday of the month. Monthly magazine "Voice of Pattamadai" is being published every month for free distribution. On 31st Gurupurnima was celebrated with Paduka Puja. The Branch conducted Sadhana week from 1st to 7th August, and Aradhana day was observed on 8th with Nagar Sankirtan, Paduka Puja and discourses. It concluded with Arati and Prasad distribution.

Puri (Odisha): weekly Satsangs were held on every Thursday and mobile Satsang at the residence of devotees. Ekadasis were observed with chanting of Vishnu Sahasranam. Bhagavat Parayan was held on 23rd July, for world peace and universal brotherhood. Gurupurnima was celebrated with Paduka Puja and collective Japa. The Branch conducted car festival from 18th to 26th July. There was a special Satsang on 30th August which included Bhajan, Kirtan and teachings of H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj.

Rourkela (Odisha): Regular Satsang activities continued. Paduka Puja, Abhisheka and Archana were done on 8th and 24th of every month. In connection with Sri Swami Chidananda Birth Centenary Celebration, the Branch observed four Sadhana days during the month of August. Punyatithi Aradhana Day of Sadgurudev Sri Swami

Sivanandaji Maharaj was observed on 8th with Paduka Puja and talks on life and his teachings. It concluded with Prasad distribution to mentally retarded students and devotees. Golden Jubilee celebration of the Branch: Gita chanting competition was conducted for students (90 students participated). Sivananda Accupressure Centre served 24 people as Narayana Seva.

Salipur (Odisha): Daily and weekly Satsang continued in the Branch. Sivananda day on 8th, Sundarakanda Parayana on 13th, Sadhana day on 21st, Akhanda Mahamantra Japa on 28th June were main events. Swami Sivananda Charitanble Hospital continued its services on every Sunday.

Sirpur Khaghaznagar (Telangana): The Branch conducted weekly Satsang on Tuesdays and mobile Satsang on Sundays. Paduka Puja was performed in Dhyana Kutir on Thursdays. On 31st July Gurupurnima was celebrated with Paduka Puja and Nama Sankirtan and concluded with Prasad distribution.

Steel Township Rourkela (Odisha): Satsang activities continued. Free Yoga and Music class on Mondays, Paduka Puja on Thursdays and Swadhyaya on Saturdays were held in the Branch. Sadhana week was held from 1st to 7th August with evening Satsang. Aradhana day was observed on 8th with Paduka Puja, recitations of Bhagavad Gita, Hanuman Chalisa, Vishnu Sahasranam and talks on Gurudev's life and teachings. It concluded with Narayana Seva.

Sunabeda (Odisha): The Branch continued daily, weekly Satsangs and

matri Satsangs. Paduka Puja and Archana on Ekadasis along with chanting of Vishnu Sahasranam were held on Sankranti day. Guru Purnima was celebrated with Paduka Puja, Archana and Havan on 31st July.

South Balanda (Odisha): Twice a day Puja, weekly Satsang on Fridays, special Satsang by the Ladies on Ekadasis, Paduka Puja on 8th and 24th of every month were regular activities of the Branch. There were a Sadhana week from 1st to 7th August and Punyatithi Aradhana celebration of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj with Paduka Puja on 8th with recitation of Vishnu Sahasranam and Gita. It concluded with Prasad Sevan. Under Birth Centenary Celebrations of Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, Gita Parayan and chanting of Vishnu Sahasranam were conducted on every Sunday.

Varanasi (U.P.): The Branch conducted Satsang at Vridhasram on 12th and 26th July. On 31st Guru Purnima was celebrated with Paduka Puja, Shatanamavali, Gayatri Chalisa, Japa, Shanti Mantra and Arati.

Visakhapatnam (A.P.): The Branch continued with daily Yoga class and Vishnu Sahasranam Parayan, Gita Pravachan on Sundays, Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Japa and Havan on Trayodasi, Sri Satyanarayana Swami Vratam on full moon day and Rudrabhishekam on Masa Srivaratri. Dr. Nageswar Rao's free medical camp also functioned on Mondays.

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