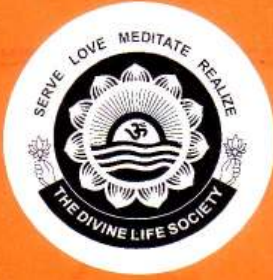


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The **DIVINE LIFE**



The Lord is within
you, He is seated in your
heart. Whatever you see,
hear, taste and touch is God.
Therefore hate not anybody,
cheat not anybody, harm not
anybody. Love all and be one
with all. You will soon attain
eternal bliss, immortality,
and perennial joy.

Swami Sivananda

APRIL 2018



THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

O Adorable Lord of Mercy and Love!
Salutations and prostrations unto Thee.
Thou art Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient.
Thou art Satchidananda (Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute).
Thou art the Indweller of all beings.

Grant us an understanding heart,
Equal vision, balanced mind,
Faith, devotion and wisdom.
Grant us inner spiritual strength
To resist temptations and to control the mind.
Free us from egoism, lust, greed, hatred, anger and jealousy.
Fill our hearts with divine virtues.

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

—Swami Sivananda

HOW TO STRENGTHEN YOUR WILL

Get up at 4 a.m., and sit on Virasana and meditate on these formulae. Repeat them mentally with feeling.

My will is pure, strong and irresistible.

Om, Om, Om.

I can do everything through my will now.

Om, Om, Om.

I have an invincible will.

Om, Om, Om.

Meditate on the immortal Atman and develop the will. It is the best method. Do not use will in the wrong directions. You will have a hopeless fall. Do not test the strength of your will in the beginning. Wait till it becomes strong and pure. Will is the King of mental powers. When will operates, all the mental powers, such as the power of judgment, power of memory, power of grasping, power of conversation, reasoning power, discriminating power, power of inference, power of reflection—all these come into play within the twinkling of an eye.

Swami Sivananda



THE DIVINE LIFE

Vol. LXXVII

APRIL 2018

No. 1

PRASNOPANISHAD

DVITIYA PRASNA (QUESTION II)

BHARGAVA AND PIPPALADA

एषोऽग्निस्तपत्येष सूर्य एष पर्जन्यो मघवानेष
वायुरेष पृथिवी रयिर्देवः सदसच्चामृतं च यत् ॥५॥

5. This (life), as fire (it burns), as the sun (it shines), as Parjanya (it rains), as Maghavan (Indra) (it reigns), it is the wind, it is the earth, moon, Deva, what has form, what is formless, and what is immortal.

शिवानन्दस्तोत्रपुष्पांजलिः

SIVANANDA-STOTRA-PUSHPANJALI

(Sri Swami Jnanananda Saraswati, Sivanandanagar)

(Continued from the previous issue)

अभिनवशुभमार्गान् मार्गयन् मानवाना-
मभिरुचिमवगच्छन् भव्ययोगाय तेषाम्।
अभिनुतगुणराशिः सर्वलोकाभिवन्द्यो
जयतु सुचिरमेवं श्रीशिवानन्दयोगी॥९३॥

93. May the great sage Sivananda who is every moment, as it were, conducting research into the novel paths to suit the mental development of all aspirants, for their prosperity, and who is worshipped by all people because of his praiseworthy traits, attain everlasting victory.

अनुदिनमनुवेलं सूक्तिपीयूषवर्षै-
मनुजनिकरतापं सर्वमुन्मूलयन्तम्।
अनुपममहिमाढ्यं दिव्यदीप्त्या विराज-
त्तनुमखिलनिषेव्यं श्रीशिवानन्दमीडे॥९४॥

94. I adore Sri Swami Sivananda who destroys every day the miseries of worldly people by the shower of the nectar of his sweet words, whose greatness is unparalleled, who is shining with divine splendour, and who is served by the world at large.

(To be continued)

Sri Sankara Jayanti Message

SRI SANKARA—THE SAVIOUR OF HUMANITY*

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

Priya Atman!

Great men are not those who speak much or run fast, but think deep and live rightly. Right thinking consists in the sinless attitude of the mind, and sin is belief in things that perish. They are great heroes who have gone to the other shore of the ocean of death and suffering and greater still are the saviours who offer the redeeming hand to the soul that writhes to have a glimpse of the Light that shall never flicker, that shall never fade away.

We have in Sankara, the simple lad of Kaladi, an orthodox upholder of Sanatana Dharma, a sweet poet of refined feelings, an exemplary saint of pious determination, a stern philosopher of rigorous logic, a matchless savant of extensive erudition, a serene mystic of high Yogic achievements, a religious reformer of the foremost rank. Such a rare combination is found only in special geniuses who speak and work out the inarticulate longings of the deepest spirit that is ever trying to realise its own true Self. We remember Sankara, because we profit ourselves thereby; we profit ourselves by taking share of his wisdom.

Wisdom is the perception of non-difference, ignorance is the reverse of it. Knowledge ascends by steps in sense, reason and intuition. Sankara said that sensing is false knowledge, intuition is right knowledge and reason is midway between right and wrong and can be utilised to serve either end. Human knowledge ends with reason and this reason is always used to serve sense-knowledge. According to Sankara, reason justifies and strengthens faith in intuitional declarations; for, to man, intuition is only a matter of unquestioned faith, not an experience, and hence, nothing that is unreasonable appeals to the human heart. Logic that turns against intuition is untrustworthy, it being unbridled. Revelatory statements appear to be arbitrary assertions and they can become the stuff of the general culture and knowledge of humanity only when they are attested by reason which is the highest reach of human intelligence. The strictly logical presentation of the superhuman ecstatic intuition is the immortal work which Sankara achieved for the good of mankind at large. If the Sruti declares that absolute truth is the infinitude of supernatural objectless knowledge,

*Taken from DL 1949

reason verifies it and says that it is correct, because our empirical truths can have no meaning except on that hypothesis. Thus reason is a help in Self-realisation; reason is a hindrance only when its logic gets perverted through selfish interests.

But we will not be giving a true picture of Sankara if we merely look at him through his gigantic logical brain; he had also a sympathetic devotional heart of kind feelings besides his mighty head. His writings disclose a curious admixture of high humanistic love and deep philosophic insight. It is this that makes Sankara really great. A very strange combination indeed is the togetherness of his filial piety, his Brahmanical rigidity, his religious fervour, his penetrating intellect, his devotional attitude towards God, in spite of his "world-crushing philosophy". It is this all-inclusive nature of his that earns for him love and admiration, that makes him an object of adoration and worship by millions of people, that immortalises his name and that allows his spirit to run through generations to come. All glory be to Sankara, a veritable teacher of humanity in general.

Buddha laid stress on the way but Sankara disclosed the way as well as revealed the destination. Desires are the real chains that bind the soul to transmigratory life. Sleep is the inactive condition of desires and waking their active condition. When

desires are vanquished, there is victory over Rajas and Tamas, which means the state of Self-realization. The self-withdrawal from external aberrations is possible only through careful self-investigation and the discovering of the fact that the whole world is a husk, an unsubstantial show, an empty shadow, a dry shell behind which lies the kernel of being, the imperishable conscious Spirit which is the only reality. To realise this Eternal One is the salvation of the individual, the endless supernal beatitude.

Such a realisation is not given to all and sundry, it does not fall from the sky. The cost is very high, though it is open to all who are prepared for that. The price demanded is the very beloved self, the relinquishment of the entire universe, the sacrifice of all that is dear and near. No tall-talk, no excuse, no trick can help one in Self-realisation. It requires a conscious self-abandonment, an emptying of the self into an utter zero, a becoming totally non-existent as it were, to become truly existent. The difficulty is well pointed out when Sankara explained the statement of the Upanishad that even the gods will not allow a man to reach Brahman, for they do not wish that a mortal should become superior to them. Sankara prescribes worship of gods in the beginning in order to appease them so that they may not shower obstacles on

the path. Devotion and Yoga are necessary auxiliaries of Jnana. The Yamas and the Niyamas of the Yogins and the Sadhana-chatushtaya of the Vedantins are the strong foundation-stones, without which the edifice of abstraction, concentration and meditation is bound to collapse.

Seekers of Truth! Sankara teaches the world the lesson of plain living and high thinking. What a glorious life ! He owned nothing of the world, he was a Paramahansa-parivrajaka right from his boyhood, a Sannyasin who paved the royal road for future austere aspirants, and his thoughts yet vibrate through zenith and nadir, consoling forlorn hearts, raising depressed minds, illumining searching intellects, enriching the false-poverty-stricken men, with the bold and weighty message that none is a sinner in truth, none need weep, none need shed tears; for, all is well with itself, the existent is the Sole Brahman which is absolute and perfect.

O Man! Fear not! Where there is no desire, there is no fear too. You are not a lamb but a lion, not a wretch but a god. Cast off your fears, raise up your spirit and assert your deathless nature of wisdom, purity and peace. No more cowardliness! Enough of idiocy! Soldier, put on your armour of right understanding, take up the relentless sword of real renunciation, be brave! Tumble not on the way, be

well-prepared, walk in the light, soldier! Fight the battle of life and conquer darkness and blindness. You shall be enthroned in the kingdom of everlasting blessedness, the bliss that knows no bounds. Sankara's words are the guiding commandments, the orders of the chief in the spiritual army. Listen to him, think and then, act. Victory is yours, stand up!

Suffering shall be the lot of the world as long as it refuses to think in the light of the purified nature freed from mental desires. The criterion of rectitude, truth and justice cannot be established through intellects which have at the background impious hearts swayed by personal interests. Even polished selfishness and refined desires shall not qualify a person to think rightly and act wisely. Hence, only the verdict of the Self-realised ones shall be the final authority. Against their words, no logic can stand. Sankara taught us to discriminate in terms of the Vedas and the Upanishads, to use practical efficiency in coordination with the Sruti, to look to God and then, do the right in God's spirit even if it may contradict human ingenuity. Dharma is based on this. Law is based on this. Success is rooted in this.

May the Divine Light enlighten the world! May the blessings of Sri Sankara and of all Brahma-vidya-Gurus be upon all!

BUDDHA'S FOUR TRUTHS

(Sri Swami Chidananda)

When Buddha attained the Illumination, he discovered four great truths pertaining to the human life:

- 1) Life is full of suffering
- 2) The cause of the suffering is craving, desire (Trishna)
- 3) The possibility of complete cessation of the suffering by destroying desire and
- 4) The way to bring about the ultimate cessation of the suffering

The first step is to become convinced that this world is an abode of sorrow and suffering. The next step is to know the cause of the suffering. Once we know the cause of the suffering, there is an unending hope for the mankind. Because, once you remove the cause, the suffering will end. The suffering is an effect. Once the cause is removed, the effect does not arise at all, it is automatically eliminated. If you know the cause, you can find out by one way or the other, some device to remove it. The first discovery everyone knew; but so long as they do not know the cause of the suffering, people live with it thinking 'I can be happy with the coexistence of sorrow'.

The third discovery is also very important. All these sufferings are not unavoidable or inevitable. They are not permanent. If the sufferings were eternal, if there had been no possibility of ending the sufferings, the question of finding a way to end them would have not arisen at all. But Buddha discovered that we can put an end to all the sufferings. He assured us that this is certainly possible.

Lastly, Buddha discovered the way to end all the suffering and putting completely an end to all the suffering. It is called The Noble Eight-fold Path. Like the eight-stage path to Liberation given by Maharshi Patanjali in his Yogasutras, Buddha has also discovered an eight-fold path to cessation of suffering—right views, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort or endeavour, right mindfulness and right meditation. Like in Yogasutras, Buddha also gives minute details of each of these.

Today I am telling this to reiterate that death is inevitable. Therefore, be alert! Be up and doing. Apply yourself quickly to whatever you have to do. Fulfil all your obligations and duties. Be up and doing on the path of

Liberation, on the path of Divine Perfection, the great grand, glorious Goal of human life. You have to apply yourself to that Goal right now. What is that comes in your way as an obstacle? The delusion of happiness here. Convince yourself firmly that there is no happiness here and there can never be happiness here. This world is petty abode of *janma-mrityu-jaraa-vyaadhi-duhkha* (the evils of birth, death, old age, sickness and pain. Gita XIII-8), an abode of sorrow, sufferings and unhappiness only.

You are enslaved by the sense objects only if you think that there is some pleasure, some happiness in them. But once you discover their true nature, you are free. When once you are convinced that there is no happiness here, you are no longer deluded, you are no longer made fool of by the sense objects, you are wise. Through all these attractions, you can remain untouched and unaffected by them. You will say, "Yes, I know your nature. You can no longer fool me." You become established in Anasakti, total detachment. Even if you are surrounded by hundreds of attractive objects of pleasures, you are not perturbed. You know their real nature and so cannot be deluded. You go through your life as a master of the situation and not as a slave to every attractive sense object of name and form. You are the in-charge of your life.

If you have realised these truths, you become totally detached. Now you

are steadily, serenely advancing to the Goal, absolutely unaffected by the sense objects. The basis of your detachment is discrimination and wisdom. You know that there is nothing in them; now they cannot enslave you.

A mother was frightening a little boy by covering the bush with a black cloth and was saying, "Don't go there. A devil is hiding there." The father thought that she is unnecessarily frightening the child, this is a bad psychology. The son will afterwards be always afraid. So one day he took the child near the bush and removed the cloth and said, "Look, there is no devil here." The child told his mother, "Now you can never make me afraid of that black cloth. I know there is nothing in it. I know its real nature."

Like that once you know the real nature of the world through constant discrimination, it will never be able to dupe you, delude you. You will no more be afraid of it. Now you can proceed straight towards the target like an arrow shot from the bow.

All the philosophers tell us that our tenure here is temporary, we are not residents of this earth plane, and we are just the travellers. Our life is a journey with a definite destination. The important point is that you should always remember the Destination, the Goal.

HOW TO CONDUCT JAPA SADHANA

(Sri Swami Krishnananda)

(Spoken on January 2, 1983)

(Continued from the previous issue)

Sometimes you will find that sticking to one place is not practicable in the case of people who have occupations of different types, while in most cases it is not a difficult thing. But at least you may sit at the same time because there is a cyclic effect produced in nature in every event that takes place. You feel hungry at a particular time every day, not throughout the day. If it is a habit of the stomach to receive food at a particular time, it will be always creating a sensation of hunger at that time. If you do not give it food at that time, after two hours it will not create that effect. Similarly, habits are formed. The habit of the mind to sit for prayer or *japa* or meditation will also be a contributory factor. If you do *japa* at different times, this effect will not be produced, in the same way as it is not good to eat at different times on different days. So if possible, continue your *japa* in the same place every day, at the same time, being seated in the same posture. If not at the same place, at least sit at the same time. This suggestion is especially for *sadhakas* who are full-time seekers or those who devote at least the major portion of their time for this purpose.

It is also interesting to note that a prescription for the direction you have to

face is mentioned in the mantra *shastras*. There are many things like this, apart from the direction, the particular posture, etc. Facing the east and facing the north are supposed to be good. Facing the south is not recommended, but for special areas such as the bank of the holy River Ganga, this particular restriction may be waived. You may face the south if the Ganga is in front of you because the Ganga will counteract the effect of the southern direction. But otherwise, the southern direction is not prescribed. Facing the sun is good, which means to say, facing the east. Facing the north is good because it is believed that an electromagnetic force is communicated from the northern pole, which is confirmed by astronomers, geographers, geologists, etc., and this also may be taken advantage of.

But the most important aspect of carrying on *japa sadhana* is the purpose for which it is done. The intention or the motive is very important. It is desirable, as far as possible, to free our intention from any mood of self-centredness. Mantras are like double-edged swords. They can be used for cutting either way, for positive purposes or negative purposes. They are energies, and energy

can be utilised for any purpose, as we know. So a holy, unselfish mood of invoking God's grace or expecting the vision of the deity of the mantra would be the most desirable attitude. That *sankalpa* can be done, and no *sankalpa* should be done for material gains or empirical ends because we do not ask for proper things, as we do not know what is good for us. Our desires are not reliable guides, because what we desire now as something worth the while may not be a desirable thing and not something worthwhile after some time. It may be a hindrance to us, an impediment. It is not wisdom on the part of the seeker to ask for any ulterior end from the deity of the mantra, God Himself, because God is greater than any other objective in life. The *devata* is superior to anything the *devata* can give, so why should we ask anything from it? The *devata* is complete in itself. This is something we have to reconcile ourselves with. Many of you will find it hard to free yourselves from incentives of some particular emphasis or other in the form of a longing, desire, etc.

The mantras assume a tremendous force and power of action when they are recited in a disciplined manner as mentioned, at a particular place and a particular time, with a particular number of recitations combined to the cumulative total of so many hundred thousands as the letters in the mantra, which process is known as *purashcharana* in Indian parlance. A *purashcharana* is one round of disciplined *japa*. It is one complete cycle of spiritual sacrifice in the form of mantra *sadhana* by way of

reciting it so many hundred thousand times, or lakhs, as there are letters in the mantra. This is called a *purashcharana*.

Due to the *tamas*, or the dross that is in the mind of the human being these days, a single *purashcharana* may not produce a visible effect, though it cannot go without producing some effect. Even scratching a rock with a little needle makes a scratch, though it is not visible. You have done practically nothing by scratching a rock with a pin, yet you have scratched it, and you cannot ignore that aspect. One *purashcharana* or a few minutes of chanting every day may not produce immediate, visible results; nevertheless, it does produce some effect. You may have to conduct several *purashcharanas* to rid yourself of past deeds which have produced this body and all the circumstances of life you are passing through.

You cannot feel the visible result of *sadhana* in actual experience unless *sattva* dawns in you. *Rajas* and *tamas* should be obviated. If *rajas* and *tamas* have an upper hand and *sattva* is submerged, you will not feel the effect of the mantra *sadhana* at all, though it does produce some hidden effect, as I mentioned.

Inasmuch as these days our minds are not strong enough and our wills are poor, it is difficult to understand the mystery of things by philosophical analysis, spiritual study or Vedanta *sadhana* in the form of cosmic contemplations of the Upanishads, etc. You will be more realistic in your approach and do something substantial

and worthwhile if you do not attempt to climb to the skies. Nothing can promise you such visible and immediate benefit as properly conducted discipline in *japa sadhana*.

But here you have also to note that you have to devote sufficient time to the *japa*. You should not do it in a hurry as a sort of mechanised routine. When anything becomes a routine, it loses its soul and becomes a sort of machine. *Japa sadhana* should not become the movement of a machine. It should be the soul in action, which is possible only if your feelings are combined at the time of the mantra *japa*. Even during mantra *japa*, as it happens in abstract meditation, the mind will wander. It will not concentrate. You will be rolling the beads and find that you have come to the end of the *mala* without knowing that it has gone so. The fingers have moved but the mind has thought nothing. This can often happen. This is dullness, torpidity, sleepiness of the mind which is like a truant boy refusing to go to school, a naughty child refusing to obey orders, instructions. When you do *japa*, the mind will sleep. It will say, "I will not do this. It is not meant for me. If you force me, I will sleep, that is all." Then what do you do at that time? Chant the mantra loudly. Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj used to sometimes suggest some unusual method to people who have a *choti* or a *kudumi*. If you sit leaning against a wall, you are likely to doze off during the *japa*. He said to drive a nail on the wall above your head, tie the *kudumi* or *choti* with a rope or a thread to the nail, and when

your head droops down it will pull you; then you will wake up.

Splash your face with cold water when you feel drowsy and sleepy. Stand up, walk a few minutes hither and thither, and then be seated again, chanting the mantra loudly so that your ears may hear it, at least for a few minutes. When you hear your own sound, the mind comes back. Then once again begin the same process that you started with.

The mantra is chanted in three ways: loudly, inaudibly or mentally. Mental *japa* is said to be the most powerful method that you can employ here. You do not recite it verbally, but mentally conceive the utterance. It is the most powerful because here the mind is directly engaged. The mind cannot sleep because if it sleeps there is no *japa*, so it has to be awake. As the mind, which is the principal motive force here, is directly in action, mental *japa* is said to be preeminent and the most potent in its result.

Next comes inaudible chanting. Only your lips will be moving. You may hear it a little bit, but others cannot hear it or know what you are reciting. That is inaudible lisping of the mantra through the lips. When chanting the mantra out loud, as we sometimes chant mantras here, everybody can hear it. Loud chanting of the mantra may be necessary when the mind is turbulent and unyielding, and will not listen at all. Then chant loudly because, naturally, you have to hear it. How can you plug your ears? And when you go on listening

to the mantra again and again by the loud chanting, the mind comes around after a few minutes. Then you can reduce the volume of the *japa* and recite it inaudibly. If you are advanced enough, you can do it mentally. *Vaikhari japa* is loud chanting of the mantra, *upamshu* is chanting inaudibly by just moving the lips, and *manasik* is mental *japa*.

When mantras are chanted they produce an electrical shock-like sensation in your body, just as when you take an allopathic mixture you will find a sensation creeping through your nerves, especially if the mixture is strong enough. I mentioned that the letters of the mantra are like ingredients in a chemical mixture, but the ingredients do not act independently. They have to be mixed in a particular proportion, and then only can they become a medicine.

The *rishi* is the physician who has prepared this mixture. He has understood what type of illness of the mind requires what type of medicine, and he has manufactured this particular admixture called the mantra by the selection of a particular syllable or letter or phrase, as the case may be, and has placed it in the context or the proximity of another in such a way that, when they are joined together, they produce a chain reaction like the firecrackers children light during Dipavali. If you set fire to one, the whole thing is caught and it makes a terrible noise because of the interconnection of these little pieces which are strung together in the firecracker string. Likewise, these mantras are strings of letters acting like firecrackers if they are ignited by proper

recitation. Thus the mantra is an admixture which, when it is consumed, produces this electric energy force. But a proper recitation of it is important; otherwise, it will not produce the effect. And also the *rishi*'s grace is there, as I mentioned.

The proper composition of the mantra is called the *chhandas*, the metre, which is the art of combining things. The *chhandas* has its own effect, the *rishi* has his own effect, and the *devata*, of course, is there above all things. So the *rishi*, the *chhandas* and the *devata* of the mantra are remembered at the commencement of the chanting of the mantra. We pray to the great ones, the powers, to invoke their blessing, and also we have to keep before our mental eye the particular form of the deity after obeisance is paid to the *rishi*, and the chanting should be according to the *chhandas* or the metrical composition.

These are some of the interesting features of *japa sadhana*, and you will find that if you are successful in streamlining your personality for this purpose it will be like touching a live wire. You will feel the sensation of it.

It is not for nothing that Bhagavan Sri Krishna tells us in the Bhagavadgita *yajnanam japayajno'smi* (Gita 10.25): Of all the sacrifices that one can conceive, *japa* of the holy mantra should be considered as most potent and most divine. It is veritably meditation itself.

(Concluded)

NAVA-VIDHA-BHAKTI

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

Devotion to God is developed in nine different ways. It is supreme attachment to God through a Bhava predominant in the devotee. Intense love is the common factor in all the nine modes. Exclusive love for God is expressed through various methods.

Good conduct which is in accordance with perfect moral law is an auxiliary to pure Bhakti and it follows the true Bhakta wherever he goes. One cannot develop true devotion to God if he is crooked in his heart, if he has got objects of love in this world, if he is tempted by charming worldly things, if he wishes to take care of his wife, children and relatives, if he wishes to feed his body well, if he wishes to earn a great name in the world, if he wants to establish a permanent fame on earth, if he does not like to part with the alluring contents of the world. Perfect detachment from all objects is a preliminary to real devotion. Vairagya is the product of real love for God. One who has love for the world cannot have love for God. Where there is Kama, there cannot be Rama and where there is Rama there cannot be Kama. Love for the world and love for God are diametrically opposite things. One has to be renounced for the attainment of the other. This renunciation can be acquired through the nine forms of Bhakti.

In the Srimad-Bhagavata and the Vishnu Purana it is told that the nine forms of Bhakti are:

1. *Sravana* (hearing of God's Lilas and stories),
2. *Kirtana* (singing of His glories),
3. *Smarana* (remembrance of His name and presence),
4. *Padasevana* (service of His feet),
5. *Archana* (worship of God),
6. *Vandana* (prostration to Lord),
7. *Dasya* (cultivating the Bhava of a servant with God),
8. *Sakhya* (cultivation of the friend-Bhava) and
9. *Atmanivedana* (complete surrender of the self).

A devotee can practice any method of Bhakti which suits him best. Through that he will attain Divine illumination.

Sravana is hearing of Lord's Lilas. Sravana includes hearing of God's virtues, glories, sports and stories connected with His divine Name and Form. The devotee gets absorbed in the hearing of Divine stories and his mind merges in the thought of divinity; it cannot think of undivine things. The mind loses, as it were, its charm for the world. The devotee remembers God only even in dream.

One cannot attain Sravana-Bhakti without the company of saints or wise

men. Mere reading for oneself is not of much use. Doubts will crop up. They cannot be solved by oneself easily. An experienced man is necessary to instruct the devotee in the right path.

King Parikshit attained Liberation through Sravana. He heard the glories of God from Suka Maharishi. His heart was purified. He attained the Abode of Lord Vishnu in Vaikuntha. He became liberated and enjoyed the Supreme Bliss.

Kirtana is singing of Lord's glories. The devotee is thrilled with Divine Emotion. He loses himself in the love of God. He gets horripilation in the body due to extreme love for God. He weeps in the middle when thinking of the glory of God. His voice becomes choked, and he flies into a state of Divine Bhava. The devotee is ever engaged in Japa of the Lord's Name and in describing His glories to one and all. Wherever he goes he begins to sing and praise God. He requests all to join his Kirtana. He sings and dances in ecstasy. He makes others also dance.

Smarana is remembrance of the Lord at all times. This is unbroken memory of the Name and Form of the Lord. The mind does not think of any object of the world, but is ever engrossed in thinking of the glorious Lord alone. The mind meditates on what is heard about the glories of God and His virtues, Names, etc., and forgets even the body and contents itself in the remembrance of God, just as Dhruva or Prahlada did. Even Japa is only remembrance of God and comes under this category of Bhakti. Remembrance also includes hearing of stories pertaining to God at all times, talking of God, teaching to others what pertains to God, meditation on the

attributes of God, etc. God is to be remembered at all times without break, so long as one has got his consciousness intact.

Padasevana is serving the Lord's Feet. No mortal being has got the fortune to practice this method of Bhakti, for the Lord is not visible to the physical eyes. But it is possible to serve the image of God in idols and better still, taking the whole humanity as God. This is Padasevana. Padasevana is service of the sick. Padasevana is service of the whole humanity at large. The whole universe is only Virat-Swarupa. Service of the world is service of the Lord.

Archana is worship of the Lord. Worship can be done either through an image or a picture or even a mental form. The image should be one appealing to the mind of the worshipper.

Worship can be done either with external materials or merely through an internal Bhava or strong feeling. The latter one is an advanced form of worship which only men of purified intellect can do. The purpose of worship is to please the Lord, to purify the heart through surrender of the ego and love of God.

Vandana is prayer and prostration. Humble prostration touching the earth with the eight limbs of the body (Sashtanga-Namaskara), with faith and reverence, before a form of God, or prostration to all beings knowing them to be the forms of the One God, and getting absorbed in the Divine Love of the Lord is termed prostration to God or Vandana.

The ego or Ahamkara is effaced out completely through devout prayer and prostration to God. Divine grace

descends upon the devotee and man becomes God.

Dasya Bhakti is the love of God through servant-sentiment. To serve God and carry out His wishes, realizing His virtues, nature, mystery and glory, considering oneself as a slave of God, the Supreme Master, is Dasya Bhakti.

Serving and worshipping the Murtis in temples, sweeping the temple premises, meditating on God and mentally serving Him like a slave, serving the saints and the sages, serving the devotees of God, serving poor and sick people who are forms of God, is also included in Dasya-Bhakti.

To follow the words of the scriptures, to act according to the injunctions of the Vedas, considering them to be direct words of God, is Dasya Bhakti. Association with and service of those who have knowledge of God is Dasya Bhakti. The purpose behind Dasya Bhakti is to be ever with God in order to offer service to Him and win His Divine Grace and attain thereby immortality.

Sakhya-Bhava is the cultivation of the friend-sentiment with God. The inmates of the family of Nandagopa cultivated this Bhakti. Arjuna cultivated this kind of Bhakti towards Lord Krishna.

To be always with the Lord, to treat Him as one's own dear relative or a friend belonging to one's own family, to be in His company at all times, to love Him as one's own self, is Sakhya-Bhava of Bhakti-Marga. How do friends, real friends, love in this world? What an amount of love they possess between one

another ? Such a love is developed towards God instead of towards man; physical love turned into spiritual love. There is a transformation of the mundane into the Eternal.

Atma-Nivedana is self-surrender. The devotee offers everything to God, including his body, mind and soul. He keeps nothing for himself. He loses even his own self. He has no personal and independent existence. He has given up his self for God. He has become part and parcel of God. God takes care of him and God treats him as Himself. Grief and sorrow, pleasure and pain, the devotee treats as gifts sent by God and does not attach himself to them. He considers himself as a puppet of God and an instrument in the hands of God.

This self-surrender is Absolute Love for God exclusively. There is nothing but God-consciousness in the devotee. Even against his own wishes, the devotee shall become one with God and lose his individuality. This is the law of being. The highest truth is Absoluteness and the soul rises above through different states of consciousness until it attains Absolute Perfection when it becomes identical with God. This is the culmination of all aspiration and love.

The nine modes of Bhakti are the ways in which a devotee attains the Supreme Ideal of life. A devotee can take up any of these paths and reach the highest state. The path of Bhakti is the easiest of all and is not very much against the nature of human inclinations. It slowly and gradually takes the individual to the Supreme without frustrating his human instincts. It is not direct assertion of God, but a progressive realization of Him. * * *

SWAMIJI EXPECTS EFFICIENCY*

(Sri Swami Gurusharanananda)

24th February 1955

Swamiji was checking the addresses written on parcels of books being sent to his devotees. Swamiji enquired of an inmate whether the house number in a particular address had been correctly written.

Then Swamiji turned to the visitors and said, "If the address is slightly incomplete, the parcel will be returned undelivered. The Postal Department should be more efficient. They can easily find out the address if they make a little effort, yet envelopes addressed to the editor of a popular newspaper in Madras were returned undelivered for want of

complete address. Even if 'Sivananda, India' is put, the letter should reach me".

Then one of the visitors said, "In Swamiji's case, such letters will be delivered correctly."

"No, I am speaking generally", observed Swamiji.

The above remarks of Swamiji give us a hint of the standard of efficiency Swamiji expects of others.

Most apt was Swami Chidanandaji's compliment to Swamiji, when he said a few months back, "To work under Swamiji is gloriously difficult".

* * *

DEATH PANGS

There is no pain at the time of death. Ignorant people have created much horror and terror regarding death. In the Garuda Purana and the Atma Purana, it is described that the pangs of death are tantamount to the pain caused by the stings of 72,000 scorpions. This is mentioned only to induce fear in the hearers and readers, and force them to work for Moksha. In spiritualism, there is the unanimous report from the enlightened spirits that there is not even a bit of pain during death. They clearly describe their experiences at death and state that they are relieved of a great burden by the dropping of this physical body, and that they enjoy perfect composure at the time of separation from the Physical body. Maya creates vain fear in the onlookers by inducing convulsive twitchings in the body. That is her nature and habit. Do not be afraid of death pangs. You are immortal, Amara.

—**Swami Sivananda**

*From Sivananda Day-to-Day

TRUE BELIEF

(Sri Swami Atmaswarupananda)

Sometimes when devotees would sit in front of Ramana Maharshi he would say to them “You are all realized.” This is not different than the message that all the great saints are trying to give to us: That thou art. But, of course, the devotees would argue with Ramana Maharshi: “You are realized Bhagavan, not us.” He would reply, “That’s your problem. You don’t believe it.”

Not only do we not believe it, but we don’t really understand what belief means. There is also a very subtle difference between what could be called objective belief and subjective belief. Objective belief is very helpful, but it is subjective belief that makes the real difference.

What is the nature of objective belief? It comes at three fundamental levels. The first is that we believe the scriptures and the gurus intellectually when they declare to us, That thou art. Then we can have spiritual experiences that affect us at our feeling level. We just feel something—space, love, freedom, joy—something that confirms to us and deepens our intellectual understanding. Finally we can have direct experience where the triad of knower, knowing and known simply disappear, and that convinces us of the truth of the scriptures, of the truth of oneness.

But then, whether it is intellectual, emotional or direct experience, these experiences are actually all objective to us. We are there knowing them, and somehow they usually don’t have the power to change us in a radical way. Something is still missing. What is missing? It is subjective conviction. We have seen the truth objectively, which is very helpful, but somehow in our heart of hearts we don’t really believe it. It is not what dominates our thinking. Our fundamental identity, if we are really honest, is still with the body and mind.

Subjective experience is a gift from God. For no particular reason whatsoever, usually after years of study, years of meditation, years of struggle, suddenly someone will say something or even without any obvious trigger, we believe the truth. We believe what the scriptures and gurus are saying—that Brahman alone is without a second and that we are That. It changes our sense of subjectivity, which is where we really function from.

It is this sort of belief that Ramana Maharshi was talking about. Objective convictions at the intellectual, emotional and direct level are extremely valuable. But what we are after is that gift of gifts—a subjective conviction of the truth. We are that One alone without a second. Nothing else exists.



SAMARTHA RAMDAS

Beloved Divine Children!

Om Namo Narayanaya!

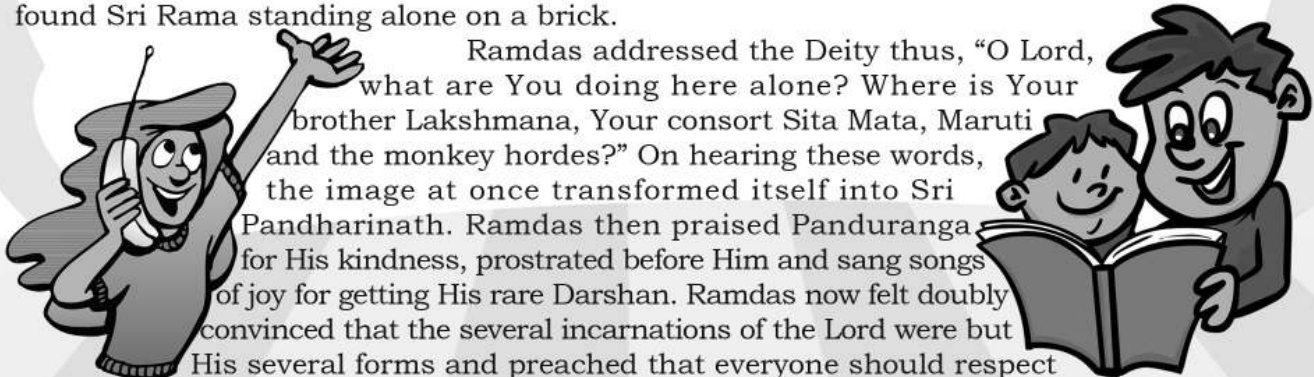


Ramdas was one of the greatest saints of the world. He was the inspirer of Shivaji. He was born of Suryaji Panth and Renuka Bai in Jamb, Maharashtra in 1608 A.D. He was a great devotee of Hanuman and Lord Rama. He had Darshan of Lord Rama even when he was a boy and got initiation from Him.

When Ramdas was twelve years of age, all arrangements were made for his marriage. But, he disappeared within the twinkling of an eye. For twelve years, Ramdas stayed at Nasik on the banks of the Godavari. He used to recite the sacred Gayatri Mantra till about noon with his body half-immersed in water. He recited the Rama Mantra—‘Sri Ram Jaya Ram Jaya Jaya Ram’ thirteen crores of times at Tafali, near Nasik, on the banks of the Godavari and had Darshan of Lord Rama. Ramdas was an Advaitin and a Bhakta in one. He had this very noble quality that he never hated any religion or nation. His main object was to spread the Hindu religion throughout India.

Ramdas had not visited Pandharpur. One day, Lord Panduranga Vitthal, in the form of a Brahmin, with a batch of three hundred pilgrims, appeared before Ramdas and asked him whether he had any objection to see Lord Krishna. Ramdas replied in the negative. Panduranga then took Ramdas to Pandharpur, and when the Bhaktas approached the temple, the Brahmin disappeared. Ramdas entered the temple, and to his great surprise, found Sri Rama standing alone on a brick.

Ramdas addressed the Deity thus, “O Lord, what are You doing here alone? Where is Your brother Lakshmana, Your consort Sita Mata, Maruti and the monkey hordes?” On hearing these words, the image at once transformed itself into Sri Pandharinath. Ramdas then praised Panduranga for His kindness, prostrated before Him and sang songs of joy for getting His rare Darshan. Ramdas now felt doubly convinced that the several incarnations of the Lord were but His several forms and preached that everyone should respect and worship the One who took care of one and all in the world.



It is said that Sri Rama ordered Ramdas to go to the banks of the Krishna and help the cause of Shivaji, the incarnation of Siva and founder of the Kingdom of Maharashtra. Ramdas came there and went about preaching from Mahabaleshwar to Kolhapur. He established eleven principal seats of Maruti which emphasised the importance of physical development. He installed the shrines of Sri Ramachandra at Champavati and introduced Sri Rama Navami Mahotsava and the procession of Sri Rama's chariot. It was at the place called Singanvadi that Shivaji became the disciple of Ramdas.

Ramdas asked Shivaji to rule the kingdom in his (Ramdas') name, to take the Gerua Chaddar for his banner and defend its honour with his life, and to think that the kingdom did not belong to himself but treat it as a trust to be ruled justly and well before God. Shivaji placed the sandals of his Guru on the throne and acted as regent of the kingdom under the orders and guidance of his Guru.

Ramdas spent several years in visiting holy places of pilgrimage. His mother had lost her eyesight on account of extreme sorrow arising out of his separation. When Ramdas went to see his mother, she was exceedingly pleased to meet her son after an absence of many years. Ramdas touched the eyes of his mother. She got back her lost eyesight through the Yogic power of her son.

Ramdas' ways were very peculiar. He appeared to the outside world as a mad man. He had a small bowl. He used to have, by his side, a large number of stones with which he pelted every object he saw. To men really interested in his teachings, he gave the Mantra 'Sri Ram Jaya Ram Jaya Ram'.

In his last days, Ramdas devoted his time partly to literary activities and partly to the systematic training of his disciples and building up Mutts. The literary works of Ramdas such as Dasabodh, Manache Shlok (verses addressed to the mind), Karunashtakas (hymns to God) and Ramayana are very popular.

It was as a tribute to Ramdas' extraordinary patience and determination in rehabilitating the Hindu religion in India that people named him Samarth Ramdas, a name which he richly deserved. This great Guru of Maharashtra, Ramdas repeated the Rama Mantra till his last breath. He breathed his last in 1682 at Sajjangad, near Satara, a fortress which was given to him by Shivaji for his residence. At the time of his departure from the world, a dazzling light emanated from his body and Ramdas was absorbed in the image of Lord Rama.

The last instructions of Ramdas to his disciples were, "Do not think much of your bodily wants. Have Satsang with devotees. Keep the image of Lord Rama in your heart. Repeat the name of Lord Rama always. Annihilate lust, greed, anger, hatred and egoism. See Lord Rama in all creatures. Love all. Feel His presence everywhere. Live for Him alone. Serve Him in all beings. Make total and unreserved surrender unto Him. You will always live in Him alone. You will attain immortality and eternal bliss."

—Swami Sivananda

Match the columns

1. The inspirer of Shivaji	a. Darshan of Lord Rama
2. Importance of physical development	b. Banner of Shivaji
3. Sri Rama Navami Mahotsava	c. Samarth Ramdas
4. Manache Shlok	d. Sajjangad
5. Lord Panduranga Vitthal	e. Champavati
6. Tafali	f. Pandharpur
7. Ramdas breathed his last	g. Seats of Maruti
8. Gerua Chaddar	h. The literary work of Ramdas



HEAR THE INNER VOICE

Do not be guided and influenced by public opinion. March boldly and **cheerfully** in the path of **Truth**, consulting your **conscience** and hearing the inner small, sweet voice of the soul.

Keep company with one Sattvic man. Spend every second profitably. **Serve** sick people. **Share** what you have with the poor people. Unfold the **Divinity** hidden in the chambers of your heart.

Repeat your Guru **Mantra** or the Mantra of the Ishta Devata mentally. Associate the idea of **purity, infinity, eternity, immortality, Vyapaka, Paripoorna, Satchidananda**, Akhanda, Advaita, Chidakasha, etc., with **OM** repetition. Do mental Puja also.

—SWAMI SIVANANDA



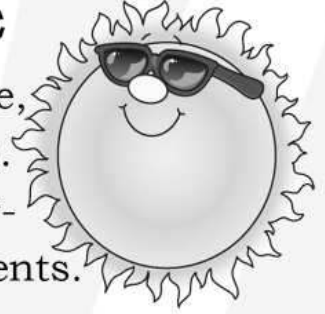
Search the words given in bold letters above in the forest of letters:

N	A	C	T	E	O	D	T	T	S	B	A	Y
E	T	I	E	N	S	H	A	R	E	S	M	A
S	O	M	C	D	O	E	P	U	R	I	T	Y
C	N	M	O	H	P	C	O	T	V	N	E	A
M	L	O	N	O	A	H	V	H	E	F	J	E
I	T	R	S	C	R	I	Y	E	P	I	P	U
S	A	T	C	H	I	D	A	N	A	N	D	A
F	K	A	I	E	P	A	P	O	D	I	D	E
E	H	L	E	E	O	K	A	T	V	T	I	M
K	A	I	N	R	O	A	K	M	A	Y	V	E
O	N	T	C	F	R	S	A	A	I	E	I	D
P	D	Y	E	U	N	H	T	N	T	O	N	O
S	A	O	D	L	A	A	A	T	A	N	I	S
Z	D	M	K	L	E	T	E	R	N	I	T	Y
N	I	E	U	Y	N	O	G	A	K	S	Y	O



BECOME AN EMBODIMENT OF GOOD NATURE

Think good of all. Do always good actions. Serve, love, give. Make others happy. Live to serve others. Then you will reap happiness. You will get favourable circumstances or opportunities and environments.



If you hurt others, if you do scandal-mongering, mischief-mongering, backbiting, talebearing, if you exploit others, if you acquire the property of others by foul means, if you do any action that can give pain to others, you will reap pain. You will get unfavourable circumstances or opportunities and environments.

This is the law of thought and nature. Just as you can build your good or bad character by sublime or base thinking, so also you can shape your favourable or unfavourable circumstances by doing good or bad actions.

A man of discrimination is always careful, vigilant and circumspect. He always watches carefully his thoughts. He introspects.

He knows what is going on in his mental factory, what Vritti or Guna is prevailing at a particular time. He never allows any evil thought to enter the gates of his mental factory. He at once nips them in the bud.

—SWAMI SIVANANDA

Answers to Match the columns:

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| (1) Samarth Ramdas | (2) Seats of Maruti |
| (3) Champavati | (4) The literary work of Ramdas |
| (5) Pandharpur | (6) Darshan of Lord Rama |
| (7) Sajjangad | (8) Banner of Shivaji |



SRI RAMANAVAMI CELEBRATIONS AT THE HEADQUARTERS ASHRAM



The sacred day of the advent of Lord Sri Rama on this earth plane was celebrated with great devotion and spiritual gaiety at the Headquarters Ashram on 25th March 2018. As a prelude to the celebration, the Mula Parayana of Sri Valmiki Ramayana and Sri Ramcharitamanas was done at Sri Divya Nama Mandir and Sri Vishwanatha Mandir from 15th to 23rd March and 21st to 23rd March

पवित्रं चरित्रं विचित्रं त्वदीयं, नरा ये स्मरन्त्यन्वहं रामचन्द्र।
भवन्तं भवान्तं भरन्तं भजन्तो, लभन्ते कृतान्तं न पश्यन्त्यतोऽन्ते॥

O Sri Ramachandra! Those beings who worship Thee who art the destroyer of the miseries of Samsara and the Support of the Universe, and who constantly remember Thy holy and wonderful deeds attain Thee and consequently, during the last moments of their lives, they do not have the fearsome sight of Yama and his attendants.



respectively. The devotees and inmates of the Ashram recited Sri Valmiki Ramayana and members of the Divine Life Society, Surendranagar Branch, Gujarat offered their loving Seva of singing Sri Ramcharitamanas.

As in yesteryears, the chanting of Divine Mantra “Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram” was done daily for two hours from 20th to 23th March by the Sadhakas and devotees of the Ashram in the holy premises of Sri Vishwanatha





temple. On 24th March, the Akhand chanting of sacred Mantra was conducted from 7 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. filling the entire ambience with the divine vibrations.

The auspicious day of Sri Ramanavami day commenced with prayers and meditation followed by Prabhat-pheri. A special Yajna was performed for world peace. From 9 a.m. to 12 noon, a grand worship was offered to Lord Sri Rama enshrined in the beautifully decorated Sri Vishwanatha temple with the chanting of Vedic Mantras and singing of melodious and soul-

elevating Bhajans and Kirtans wherein a large number of devotees joyously participated. After the worship, the Avatar Sarg describing the Lord's advent was read from Sri Valmiki Ramayana and Sri Ramcharitmanasa by H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj and H.H. Sri Swami Nirliptanandaji Maharaj respectively. The programme concluded with a grand Arati and distribution of sacred Prasad at Annapurna Dining Hall.

During the night Satsanga, the beautiful Darshan of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj through a DVD show inundated the hearts of one and all with immense joy. The Satsanga concluded with the release of three books, Arati and distribution of Prasad.

May the blessings of Lord Sri Rama and Sadgurudev be upon us all!



44TH ALL TELUGU DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY
CONFERENCE



The 44th All Telugu Divine Life Society Conference was held at Port Trust Kalyana Mandapam in Vishakapatnam from 24th to 26th January 2018. It was an annual occasion of coming together of all the DLS Branches of

Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Nearly 2000 devotees from Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Odisha participated in the three-day Spiritual Conference.



On 24th January, H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj inaugurated the Conference with Dhvajarohanam (hoisting the DLS flag) and lighting of the lamp jointly with a representative from the Port Trust, Dr. C. Vijayalakshmi,



Chairman of Queens' NRI Hospital and other dignitaries. Sri Swamiji Maharaj presided over the Conference and also blessed the gathering with his talks on all the three days of the Conference.

Every morning, the programme commenced with Hatha Yoga Classes conducted by Sri Bhargavaji. It was followed by a soul elevating Nagar

Sankirtan under the leadership of Sri Sreenu Siddhanthiji and Sri Chella Ramakrishanji.





Thereafter, Smt. Geetaji, Sri Sai Babuji and group chanted Sri Vishnu Sahasranama and Shanti



Mantras. During the day, the eminent saints and scholars from different places addressed the gathering. Among them were Sri Swami Vinamrananda Mataji of Santi Ashram, Sri Swami Sheelananda Mataji, Sri Swami Jyothirmayanada Mataji, Sri Swami Prasannananda Giriji, Sri Swami Vedatamananda Mataji, Sri M.T.



Alwarji, Sri TPN Acharyaluji, Sri Ramakrishnanandaji and Sri Prakashanandaji.

The evenings featured cultural programmes by children and other various eminent artists. On the first day, children from Rajni Kala Kshetram, Parvatipuram performed wonderful classical dance. Following that Sri Kaliprasadji gave a soothing flute recital. On the second day, children from Sivananda School, Karavadi performed dance which was followed by Veena concert by Sri Krishnamma and party.

The entire conference was a grand success due to meticulous arrangements and tireless efforts of the dedicated team from Queens' NRI Hospital under the leadership of Sri T. Chandramoulaji and the members of all the DLS Branches of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana specially Dr Nageswara Rao, Sri Chilla Ramakrishna, Smt. Satya Mataji, Sri Lakshman Rao, Sri Anjaneyaluji, Sri Narasimhamurthy and Sri Bhargava.

May the grace of the Lord Almighty and Sadgurudev be upon all!

**SADHANA SHIVIR AND FOUNDATION DAY CELEBRATION BY
THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY, CHANDIGARH BRANCH**



The DLS Chandigarh Branch celebrated its Foundation Day on 8th March 2018 by organising a special session for youth titled ‘My take on Science and Spirituality/Self Realization’ wherein the youngsters participated with great enthusiasm. The session concluded with the blessing messages of Sri Swami Advaitanandaji Maharaj, Sri Swami Akhilanandaji Maharaj and Sri Swami Dharmanishthanandaji Maharaj.

From 9th to 11th March, a Sadhana Shivar on the theme ‘God Realisation – Why and How?’ was organised. The inaugural session was held on the 9th March with opening prayers and lighting of lamp to invoke the divine blessings for the success of the Shivar. Sri F. Lal Kansal, President of Chandigarh Branch, in his welcome address, beautifully explained the need and relevance of the theme of the Shivar and also outlined the Branch activities. Sri Swami Advaitanandaji Maharaj, being the Chief Guest at the Shivar delivered the inaugural address followed by the discourses of Sri Swami Akhilanandaji Maharaj and Sri Swami Dharmanishthanandaji Maharaj.

During the Shivar, six sessions on six different subjects viz. ‘Karma to Karma Yoga—a paradigm shift and Role of Destiny and Self effort’, ‘Bhakti Yoga—Ananya Prem and Samarpan’, ‘Meditative Path to Blessedness’, ‘Kaliyug Kewal Naam Adhara’, ‘From Darkness to Light—Jnana Yoga’ and ‘Sivananda Yoga i.e. Serve, Love, Meditate, Realize’ were organised. Sri Swami Advaitanandaji Maharaj, Sri Swami Akhilanandaji Maharaj, Sri Swami Dharmanishthanandaji Maharaj, Sri Swami Satyeshanandaji Maharaj, Secretary, Sri Ramkrishna Mission Ashram, Chandigarh, and other monks and scholars addressed the gathering in these sessions and answered the questions of the Sadhakas as well. Prabhat-pheri, Pranayam Class, Paduka Puja, Bhajan Sandhya on 10th March and Guided Meditation Session on 11th March were also part of this successfully organised Shivar.

The Shivar concluded with the release of two books, blessing messages by all the Swamijis and a hearty vote of thanks by Dr. Ramneek Sharma.

May the divine grace of Lord Almighty and Sri Gurudev be upon all!

INAUGURAL FUNCTION OF THE 88TH YOGA-VEDANTA COURSE

The eighty-eighth oblation in the sacred Jnana Yajna of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was offered in the form of 88th Basic Yoga-Vedanta Course. Forty-one seekers from 17 states of India got the blessed opportunity to participate in this sacred Jnana Yajna which commenced on 1st March 2018 at YVFA Hall.

The inaugural function started with the Puja at the holy temples of Mother Durga and Dattatreya Bhagavan. After the invocatory prayers, H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj inaugurated the Course with the lighting of the lamp. Sri Swamiji Maharaj in his blessing message congratulating the students on their good fortune of coming to the sacred land of saints and sages inspired them to study sincerely and do Japa of the Divine Name as much as possible. 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!

WHAT IS RAJA YOGA

Raja Yoga is the king of all Yogas. It concerns directly with mind. In this Yoga there is no struggling with either the vital force or the physical body. There are no Hatha Yogic Kriyas. The Yogi sits at ease, watches his mind and silences the bubbling thoughts. He stills the mind and restrains the thought-waves and enters into the thoughtless state or Asamprajnata Samadhi. Hence the name Raja Yoga. Though Raja Yoga is a dualistic philosophy and treats of Prakriti and Purusha, it helps the student in Advaitic Realisation of oneness eventually. Though there is the mention of Purusha, ultimately the Purusha becomes identical with the Highest Self, or Brahman of Upanishads.

Raja Yoga is the royal road to freedom from misery. It treats of the four great principles—misery, its cause, freedom from misery, and the means. The practice of the methods prescribed in Raja Yoga leads to the cessation of all miseries and the attainment of eternal bliss.

Raja Yoga is also called Ashtanga Yoga or Yoga of eight limbs. The eight limbs are Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi.

—Swami Sivananda

SEVA THROUGH SIVANANDA HOME

'Sivananda Home is a Centre 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)

A rare and uncommon co-incidence, when in the same week, two patients were admitted who are above 100 years. The male patient, a Sadhu had been staying outside an Ashram in the neighbourhood, but lost almost completely his vision, and could hardly walk anymore due to an old and not properly healed fracture of the hip a couple of years ago. His living condition became more and more difficult, being harassed and stones thrown at him, which made local people instrumental in bringing him to the Home for admission. The Baba seems to be indifferent though, his heart and mind connected to the Source of all creation, and greeting each and every person who approaches him, with the Name of the Lord.

The other centenarian was brought from the outside area of a slum in Rishikesh, where she used to have her room. But no longer she was able to look after herself and having lost all her family members, she had no other option than to beg for her food and sleep on the roadside. Now happy to meet the other elderly sisters, she enjoys chatting with them and every morsel of food is a real delicacy for her. Her physical health is amazing for her age, but her brain is becoming weak, so she said.

More new patients were brought in this month, a middle-aged gentleman gasping for breath and with uncontrolled loose motions was spotted by a Good Samaritan and admitted in the Home. His condition was of a semi-conscious state and his vitals barely measurable. Though oxygen was administered and also iv medication, his condition was too critical and he passed away a few days later. That his soul may rest in eternal Bliss and Peace, is our humble prayer. Om Shanti Shanti Shantih.

For another patient, a young boy of 28, skin disease brought him to Sri Gurudev's shelter. The entire skin of his body from top to bottom, was full of blisters, dry or bleeding, and he was hardly able to walk, to talk or to move. The mind was depressed, dejected and rejected. People hesitating to come near, and though psoriasis is not contagious, the sight of this patient itself would make people recede and move back, and the feeling of being untouchable has burnt deep scars in his heart, as having lost his status as a human being.....

"The prayer that prevails is not the work of lips and fingertips. It is the cry of a broken heart and the travail of a stricken soul."

(Samuel)

"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)

ANNOUNCEMENT

DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY, JALANDHAR BRANCH

SADHANA SHIVIR – 5th to 6th May 2018

By the grace of Most Worshipful Gurudev H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, the Divine Life Society Jalandhar Branch will be holding a Sadhana Shivar (Spiritual Conference) at the Om Divya Prem Mandir, Badri Colony, Phase-II, Jalandhar from 5th to 6th of May, 2018. On the 7th May 2018, the Annual Day and 98th Birthday Celebrations of H.H. Sri Swami Premanandaji Maharaj will be celebrated. Devotees from all the Branches of the Divine Life Society are cordially requested to participate in the programme.

For further information, please contact:—

Sri Virendar Pratap

Mob. 98889 87192

Sri Raj Kumar Sharma

Mob. 93572 23939



7TH ALL ODISHA YOUTH AND STUDENT PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT CAMP,

at The Divine Life Society Gaham Branch,
Sivananda Sevagrama, Angul, Odisha.

Sunday 27th to Thursday 31st May 2018

By the Grace of the Almighty and Worshipful Gurudev, The Divine Life Society, Gaham Branch, Odisha, proposes to organize its 7th All-Odisha Youth and Student Personality Development Camp from 27th to 31st May 2018 at Sivananda Sevagrama, Gaham, Talcher, Angul, Odisha.

Saints from the Headquarters Ashram and other eminent scholars will grace the occasion. Youth and students are requested to participate in the Camp, which aims at inculcating values in life. Enrollment, food and accommodation are free.

Age Limit:

16 to 25 years

Qualification:

10th Standard Pass out and above.

Last date of registration:

15th May 2018

Contact: 1. Sri Dhananjay Sen,

Mob. +91 73811 41006

2. Sri Akshaya Kumar Dash

Mob. +91 94370 43225



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT FOR D.L.S. BRANCHES IN INDIA

TWO WEEKS RESIDENTIAL COURSE FOR DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY BRANCH REPRESENTATIVES

Applications are hereby invited for the 4th two weeks residential **Course for Divine Life Society Branch Representatives** which will be held from **4-7-2018 to 18-7-2018** by the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy of the Divine Life Society (Headquarters) in the Sivanandashram Campus, Shivanandanagar—249 192, Rishikesh, Uttarakhand.

The details are as follows:

1. The Course is open to Divine Life Society Members (Men) only, sponsored by any of the Divine Life Society Branches, in India. Training will be imparted to the applicants who are selected by the Registrar, Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy, The Divine Life Society (Headquarters), Shivanandanagar.
2. Age Group: 20 to 60 years.
3. Qualification:
 - a. The candidate shall be a Member of The Divine Life Society Headquarters and shall be sponsored by any one of The Divine Life Society Branches in India. Preferably a graduate with keen spiritual aspiration and interest in doing Seva in The Divine Life Society Branch.
 - b. Must be able to converse in English and any one of the Regional languages fluently.
 - c. Should have sound health.
 - d. Those who had done the Branch Representative Course earlier should not apply again.
4. Scope and syllabus of the Course:
Asana, Pranayama & Meditation, Karma Yoga, Morning and Evening Satsanga Prayers, Vedic Chanting, Selective study of the Bhagavad Gita, Ethics and Morals, Practical hints on Sadhana, Basic tenets of the Philosophy of Swami Sivananda.
5. There will be no fee for training, boarding and lodging. Pure vegetarian food (Breakfast and two meals a day only) will be provided. Smoking, drinking and use of intoxicants are strictly prohibited.
6. The students who are admitted for the Course and complete the training shall give an undertaking that they will pursue and practise the teachings in their life and will do Seva in one of the Divine Life Society Branch.
7. Application Forms duly filled up by the candidate and sponsored and recommended by a Divine Life Society Branch should reach the Registrar Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy on or before **15-6-2018**. The aim of the course is to equip the candidate with adequate knowledge and practical training to conduct Yoga Sibiras in the Branches and other places as required, and also to lead and conduct Branch Satsanga.
8. Application Forms of the candidates received through the Divine Life Society Branches will alone be considered.

For the Application Form and Prospectus the Branches may write to:

Shivanandanagar,
January, 2018

THE REGISTRAR,
The Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy,
The Divine Life Society,
P.O. SHIVANANDANAGAR—249 192
Distt: Tehri-Garhwal, Uttarakhand Himalayas, INDIA
Phone : 0135—2433541

Note:— (i) The selected student alone is expected to come. He is not permitted to bring along any other family member or relative with him. (ii) The above syllabus (vide 4) is subject to slight alterations without previous notice, in case such a need arises.

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

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

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

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

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

IMPORTANT GUIDELINES FOR “REMITTANCE”

Kindly send all remittances by Indian Postal Orders, Bank Drafts or Cheques in favour of **“The Divine Life Society” Shivanandanagar, Uttarakhand**. The Bank Draft/Banker’s Cheque shall be payable at Rishikesh.

In case of remittances through Electronic Money Order, Please send us a letter indicating purpose of remittance and EMO number and date.

Remittance directly into our Bank Account without our consent are not accepted by the Society due to Management and accounting reasons.

REPORTS FROM THE D.L.S. BRANCHES

INLAND BRANCHES

Ambala (Haryana): Punyatithi Aradhana day of H.H. Sri Swami Premanandaji Maharaj on 5th February was celebrated by the Branch with Bhajan, Kirtan and chanting of “Hare Rama Hare Krishna” Mahamantra. Besides this, weekly Satsang was continued on Sundays and Tuesdays with Japa, Meditation, Bhajan, Kirtan, Swadhyaya and recitation of Hanuman Chalisa etc. Mahasivaratri was celebrated on 14th with chanting of “Om Namah Sivaya”. Free Jala Seva and Homeopathy Dispensary continued to serve the people.

Bangalore (Karnataka): The Branch had weekly Satsang on Thursdays with Paduka Puja, Swadhyaya, recitation of Guru Gita and Bhagavad Gita etc. Mahasivaratri was celebrated on 13th February with Abhisheka, Guru Paduka Puja, Bhajans and chanting of “Om Namah Sivaya”. There was Akhanda Kirtan of Mahamrityunjaya Mantra on 3rd Sunday of every month. Training classes in Bhajans, recitation of Bhagavad Gita and Upanishad were conducted on 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month, and special Satsang was arranged on 25th with Bhajans.

Bargarh (Odisha): The Branch conducted daily Swadhyaya, Pranayama and Meditation, Rudrabhishek on Mondays, Guru Paduka Puja on Thursdays, weekly Satsang every Saturday, and recitation of Srimad Bhagavata and Bhagavad Gita and discussion on Sundays. On 14th February, Mahasivaratri was celebrated

with Rudrabhishek, Mahamrityunjaya Japa, Bhajan and Kirtan, etc. The Oriya Magazine “Mahat Vani” was published for free distribution, and Homeopathic treatment of poor patients was carried on regularly.

Barbil (Odisha): Weekly Satsang on Thursdays and residential Satsang on Mondays were carried on regularly. 432 patients had free Homeopathic treatment through Sivananda Charitable Homeo Dispensary. Sadhana day on 24th and Republic day on 26th January were observed by the Branch.

Baripada (Odisha): Annual Day of the Branch was celebrated on 2nd January with Paduka Puja and chanting of “Om Namo Bhagavate Sivanandaya” and “Om Namo Bhagavate Chidanandaya”. Special Satsang was arranged at Old Age Home and Anna Prasad and Sweets were distributed. Makara Sankranti was celebrated, and monthly Sadhana day was observed on 7th by the Branch.

Berhampur (Odisha): Weekly Satsang on Sundays, mobile Satsangs on Saturdays, and Paduka Puja on Thursdays and 8th and 24th of every month continued. Sadhana day was observed on 3rd January with Paduka Puja, Bhajan, Kirtan and talks etc. There was Sundarakanda Parayan on Sankranti day, and chanting of Hanuman Chalisa on 22nd.

Bhanjanagar (Odisha): In the months of January and February, the Branch carried on daily Paduka Puja and weekly Satsang on Sundays, and Ekadasis were observed with recitation

of Vishnu Sahasranam and Bhagavad Gita. Spiritual discourses on Sadhana Panchakam and Bhaja Govindam were arranged from 18th to 24th January, and Annual day of the Branch was celebrated on 25th with Paduka Puja, Havan and discourse. There were Sundarakanda Parayan and recitation of Hanuman Chalisa on Sankranti day. On 10th February, monthly Sadhana day was observed with Paduka Puja and discourses. This was concluded with Prasad distribution.

Bhubaneswar (Odisha): During the months of January and February, daily Paduka Puja, weekly Satsang on Thursdays, Yoga class and Bhajan Sandhya on Tuesdays, and Ramataraka Mantra chanting and Bhagavat Parayan on 24th of every month are the regular programmes of the Branch. Besides this, mobile Satsangs continued. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj of DLS, HQs, Rishikesh visited the Branch on 31st December and Swamiji delivered a discourse on Srimad Bhagavat, and a special Satsang was conducted on January 1, New Years' day. Punyatithi Aradhana day of H.H. Sri Swami Devanandaji Maharaj was observed on 7th. Ashtaprahar Nama Yajna was conducted from 8th to 11th February, and Sadhana day was held on 25th.

Chandapur (Odisha): Weekly Satsang on Saturdays, Guru Paduka Puja on Thursdays and mobile Satsangs on 8th and 24th of every month were observed by the Branch. Mahasivaratri was celebrated on 14th February with chanting of "Om Namah Sivaya".

Recitation of Hanuman Chalisa was conducted at the residence of a devotee.

Chandigarh: The Branch had Yoga class and weekly Satsang on Sundays with Narayan Seva. Free medical treatment and free monthly publications continued. The Branch celebrated special occasions like; January 1, New Year's Day, Foundation Day and Makara Sankranti, and evening Satsangs on Monday, Wednesday and Friday with study of Kenopanishad and Mandukya Upanishad. There was Akhanda Maha Mantra Kirtan on 8th January.

Gopinathpur (Odisha): The Branch had daily morning Prayers and evening Satsang. On 7th January, Punyatithi Aradhana day of H.H. Sri Swami Devanandaji Maharaj was observed with Prayers, Paduka Puja, Bhajan and Kirtan. On this occasion, glimpses of Swamiji's life was telecast on JTV.

Gurdaspur (Punjab): Weekly Satsang continued on Saturdays with Prayers, chanting of Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra and study of Srimad Bhagavad Gita. An Eye and Sugar check-up camp was organised on 25th with the kind co-operation and help of Om Prakash Eye Institute, and 90 patients were examined, and medicines distributed for needy patients.

Jamshedpur (Jharkhand): The Branch conducted its weekly Satsang on Fridays, and also organised free drawing and Yoga classes for poor children of the Antyodaya Bastee every Sunday. Narayan Seva was done on 4th February, and Maha Sivaratri was celebrated on

14th with Abhisheka, chanting of “Om Namah Sivaya”, Mahamrityunjaya Mantra and Bhajans etc.

Jeypore (Odisha): The Branch continued daily Puja and weekly Satsang on Sundays and Thursdays. Special occasions like New Year’s day on January 1st, Punyatithi Aradhana day of Swami Devanandaji Maharaj on 7th, Sivananda day on 8th with Puja and Havan, and Makara Sankranti on 14th with chanting of Vishnu Sahasranam were celebrated by the Branch. There was a special Satsang on 11th with Paduka Puja. Free Homeopathic treatment continued.

Kabisuryanagar (Odisha): Daily Narayan Seva and weekly Satsang on Thursdays and Sundays were continued regularly. Sundarakanda and Tattwa Bodha class was conducted by the Branch from 6th to 10th February. Makara Sankranti was celebrated on 14th with Paduka Puja and in the evening chanting of “Om Namah Sivaya” and Puja.

Kakinada (A.P.): The Branch had Bhajans on Mondays, Meditation and Pravachan on Upadesa Sara on Wednesday, Bhajan, Parayan and Pravachan on Fridays and Saturdays of the month. Kishora Bharati programme for students and Narayana Seva for needy people were on Sundays. The Branch anniversary was celebrated on 19th January. On this occasion H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj of D.L.S. HQ. Rishikesh visited the Branch. Besides this, recitation of Vishnu Sahasranama was done on 27th.

Kanpur (U.P.): The Branch had daily chanting of Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra and Durga Saptashati. Nirvana Diwas of H.H. Sri Swami Premanandaji Maharaj was observed on 5th February with Bhajan, Sankirtan and Paduka Puja. Monthly Satsang was held on 25th at the residence of a devotee.

Khatiguda (Odisha): The Branch continued its daily Puja and weekly Satsang on Thursdays. Annual day of the Branch was celebrated on 4th February with Nagar Kirtan, Paduka Puja, Bhajan and discourses. It was concluded with Narayan Seva and prize distribution to the students in a spiritual knowledge test. Recitation of Vishnu Sahasranam was held on Ekadasis. Maha Sivaratri was celebrated on 14th with Rudrabhishek, Paduka Puja and chanting of Panchakshari Mantra.

Khurdha Road (Odisha): Punyatithi Aradhana day of H.H. Sri Swami Devanandaji Maharaj was observed on 7th January with Paduka Puja, Bhajan, Kirtan and concluded with Narayan Seva. Besides this, mobile Satsangs were held on 12th and 27th. Sadhana day was arranged on 29th with Paduka Puja, recitation of Bhagavad Gita, Bhajan, Kirtan and talks on Guru Bhakti and Sadhana. On 30th Divya Jeevan Arogya Kendra conducted distribution of steel plates and food for Narayanas.

Khurja (U.P.): The Branch had a Yoga class for gents in the morning and for ladies in the evening and Dhyana Yoga on Sundays. Matri Satsang was held on Ekadasi day at Balkeshwar

Temple. The Branch distributed free literature and also Homeo Medicines for the needy patients at Sri Swami Devananda Homeo Dharmarth Aushadhalaya. Sankirtan and Satsang were arranged on 31st December with Paduka Puja.

Lucknow (U.P.): From 13th to 15th February, Sri Swami Poornabodhanandaji of D.L.S. HQ. Rishikesh, conducted Satsang with Prayers, Bhajans, Swadhyaya and distribution of Jnana Prasad etc, and on 15th Satsang was held at senior citizens' Home.

Nandininagar (Chattisgarh): The Branch had daily morning Prayers and evening Satsang with recitation of Vishnu Sahasranam and mobile Satsang on Thursdays. Besides this, there was Matri Satsang on Saturdays with recitation of Sundarakanda and Hanuman chalisa. There was Mahamantra Kirtan on 3rd January.

Raipur (Odisha): Satsang on Sundays and recitation of Vishnu Sahasranam on Ekadasi day were held by the Branch. Maha Sivaratri was celebrated on 13th with Puja, Archana and chanting of Sivanam.

Sirpur Kaghaznagar (Telangana): The Branch continued Puja and Bhajan on Mondays, Guru Paduka Puja and Satsang on Thursdays, and mobile Satsang on Sundays.

Steel Township, Rourkela (Odisha): Mobile Satsangs, Free Yoga and Music classes on Mondays, Guru Paduka Puja on Thursdays and Swadhyaya on Saturdays were

continued by the Branch. Three Sadhana days were observed with Guru Paduka Puja, Pravachan, Gita Path, and recitation of Hanuman Chalisa and Vishnu Sahasranam etc. Special celebrations like Branch Foundation day on 24th, annual day of youth centre on 25th and Republic day on 26th January were celebrated by the Branch.

South Balanda (Odisha): The Branch continued daily Puja, weekly Satsang on Fridays, and Guru Paduka Puja on 8th and 24th of every month. Special Satsangs were arranged on Ekadasi and Sankranti day. There was also an Akhanda Mahamantra Sankirtan on 3rd February for World Peace and Universal Brotherhood. Maha Sivaratri was celebrated on 14th February with chanting of "Om Namah Sivaya".

Sunabeda (Odisha): In the month of January, weekly Satsang was held on Thursdays and Sundays with Paduka Puja, Bhajan, Kirtan and Swadhyaya, and Matri Satsangs on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Ekadasis were observed with recitation of Vishnu Sahasranam and Archana on Sankranti day.

Vadodara (Gujarat): Weekly Satsang and Birthday of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 8th were continued regularly. Besides this, free Homeopathic and Ayurvedic clinics continued to serve the people. Foundation day and Anniversary of Sivananda Bhavan was celebrated on 13th January with Paduka Puja and Satsang arranged for the visit Sri Swami Premanandaji of Uttarakashi.



AVAILABLE BOOKS ON YOGA, PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

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ANNOUNCEMENT

TWIN PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS OF THE AKHANDA MAHAMANTRA SANKIRTANA AND CONSECRATION OF SRI VISHWANATHA MANDIR AT HEADQUARTERS ASHRAM

For the welfare of the world and for the peace of all humanity, Worshipful Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj commenced the Akhanda Mahamantra Sankirtana Yajna on 3rd December, 1943 in the Bhajan Hall, Sivananda Ashram, Headquarters of The Divine Life Society.

On the 31st of December, 1943 Sri Gurudev performed the Pratishtha (consecration) of Lord Sri Vishwanatha in Sri Vishwanatha Mandir in the Ashram.

Since the time of the above two holy inaugurations, the Akhanda Mahamantra Sankirtana of the Divine Name is going on day and night continuously in the Bhajan Hall and regular Abhisheka, Archana, prayer and worship are being conducted thrice a day in Sri Vishwanatha Mandir.

3rd of December and 31st of December, 2018 happen to be the occasions of the PLATINUM JUBILEE of these auspicious inaugurations, respectively. The Headquarters Ashram has decided to have a '75 days' Akhanda Mahamantra Sankirtan in groups from 20th September to 3rd December and Akhanda Panchakshari Mantra Sankirtan from 4th December to 31st December to celebrate these sacred occasions in a befitting manner.

The Branches may send the devotees who can actively participate in chanting and singing the Divine Name during these Akhanda Kirtans. They are requested to write to us with details (number of persons coming, name, age, date of arrival, duration of stay, etc.,) well in advance so that necessary arrangements may be made for the successful conduct of the programmes.

The Divine Life Society

APRIL 2018

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THE CORRODING EFFECTS OF WORRY AND ANGER

Worry does great harm to the astral body and mind. Energy is wasted by worry. It causes inflammation and drains the vitality of man. Nothing is gained by the worry-habit. If you are vigilant and keep the mind fully occupied, this worrying-habit will disappear. During intense anger, the whole mind is suffused with black-hue of malice and ill-will, which expresses itself in coils of thunderous blackness, from which fiery arrows of anger dart forth, seeking to injure the one for whom the anger is felt. There is no evil like the emotion of anger: from anger springs delusion, from delusion confusion of memory, from confusion of memory loss of reason! When reason is gone, man is destroyed. In difficult situations, under pain and pleasure, keep the mind rooted in God; you will enjoy undying peace and poise of mind.

Swami Sivananda

To