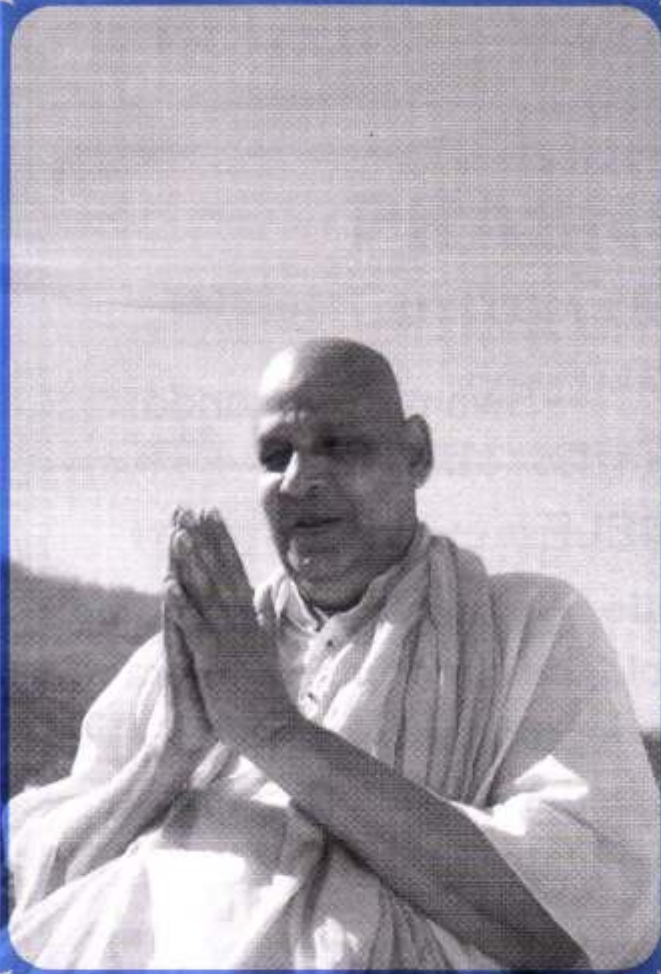


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The **DIVINE LIFE**



**This New Year,
may you all make a real
beginning in Yoga practices
and realise in your daily
lives, the endless Powers, the
endless Peace, the endless
Happiness, the endless
Perfection it confers on
you!**

Swami Sivananda

JANUARY 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

KNOW THYSELF

Be simple, be humble, be gentle. Be straightforward, be honest, be sincere. Be truthful, be bold, be cheerful. Be tolerant, be generous, be virtuous. Be serene, be self-controlled, be self-delighted. Love all, embrace all, be kind to all. Discriminate and be dispassionate. Reflect and meditate. Know Thy Self and be free. This is Vedanta in daily life.

Swami Sivananda



THE DIVINE LIFE

Vol. LXXVI

JANUARY 2018

No. 10

PRASNOPANISHAD

DVITIYA PRASNA (QUESTION II)

BHARGAVA AND PIPPALADA

तस्मै स होवाच। आकाशो ह वा एष देवो वायुरग्निरापः
पृथिवी वाङ्मनश्चक्षुः श्रोत्रं च। ते प्रकाश्याभिवदन्ति
वयमेतद्बाणमवष्टभ्य विधारयामः ॥२॥

2. He replied: Those Devas verily are the ether, wind, fire, water, earth, speech, mind, eye and ear. They, manifesting their glory (disputed among each other), say, 'We hold together and support this body'.

शिवानन्दस्तोत्रपुष्पांजलिः

SIVANANDA-STOTRA-PUSHPANJALI

(Sri Swami Jnanananda Saraswati, Sivanandanagar)

(Continued from the previous issue)

विशालावबोधं विशिष्टानुभावं
प्रशान्तारिषट्कं प्रशस्तापदानम्
कृशानूपमोदीर्णतेजोभिदीप्तं
शिवानन्दयोगीन्द्रमेवाश्रयेऽहम् ॥८७॥

87. I crave for the protection of the great sage Sivananda who has vast knowledge, who is endowed with superfine greatness, who has annihilated all the desires in him, who has praiseworthy attainments to his credit and who has great splendor like the blazing fire.

गंगानदीतटनिवासिनमाप्तकामं
तुंगानुभावमनवद्यगुणाभिरामम्
संगावरुद्धमनसं विनतोऽस्मि चेतो-
रंगावलोकितशिवं शिवदेशिकं तम् ॥८८॥

88. I worship the great preceptor Sivananda, who has his residence on the bank of the Ganga, whose desires are fulfilled who is of reputed fame and sinless character, who is unattached, and who is established in the contemplation of the Lord Siva.

(To be continued)

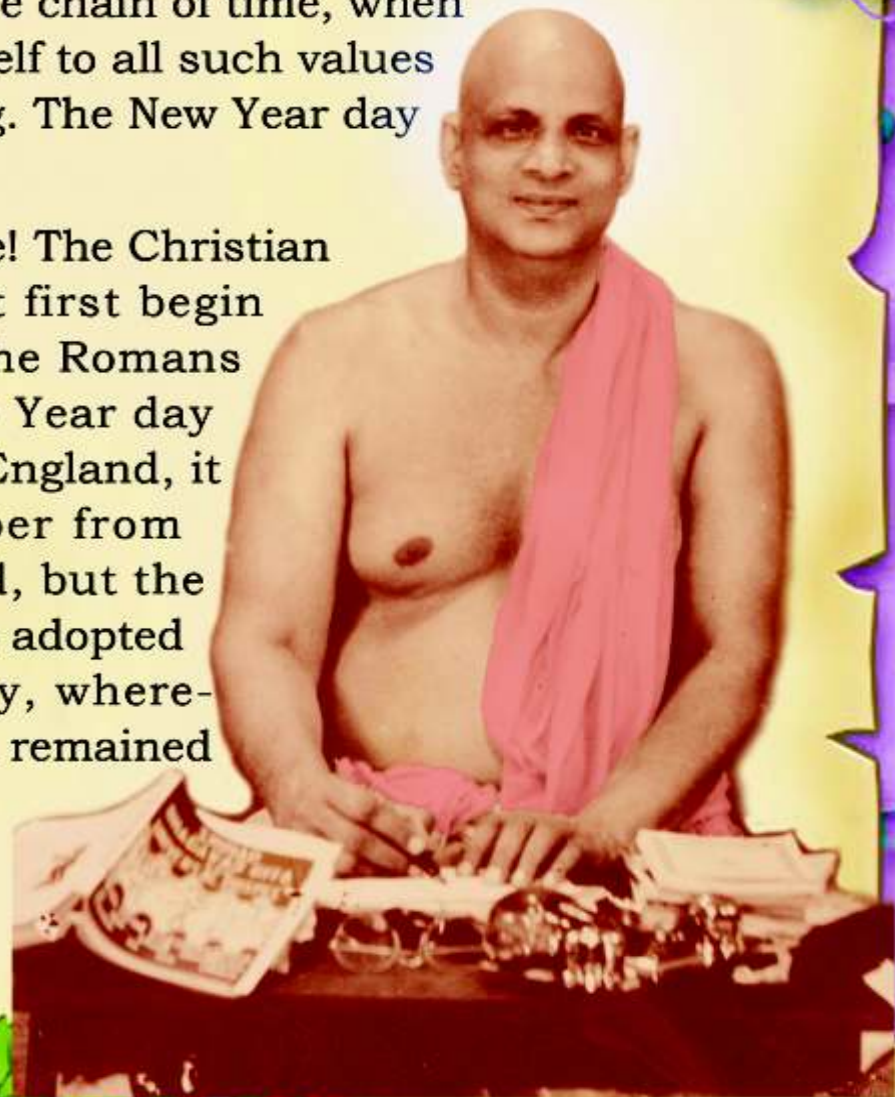
Every Day a Better Personality

Sri Swami Sivananda

The dawn of New Year has arrived; the new bud of elusive hope has blossomed again. You have woken up in the cool morning of the virgin year, but find yourself in the same world, with the same people, with the same like and dislike, the same aptitudes, the same inhibitions within you. Why, then, should the New Year day be a special event?

Life on earth necessitates successive links of solemn occasions to punctuate the chain of time, when one must rededicate oneself to all such values that make life worth living. The New Year day is such an occasion.

How fashions change! The Christian calendar year did not at first begin on 1st January. The Romans celebrated the New Year day on 25th March. In England, it was 25th December from 6th century onward, but the Roman practice was adopted by 11th century, whereafter 25th March remained



the British New Year day until 1751. In France, both these days and the Easter were the New Year days, at different times, until 16th century. Finally, in 1752, 1st January was internationally recognised as the first day of the Christian calendar year. Every country has one or more New Year days, and in India we have half a dozen of them. Anyhow, to all sensible people, the first day of the year should be a day of reckoning and dedication.

Look deep into the past, now stretched supine never to rise again. Examine the lessons that you have learned, and resolve upon a wise programme of the future, on the basis of the experiences gained. Repeat not the follies of the past.

In the midst of change and contrast, of candour and deceit, of truce and hostility, of waxing and waning of life, find peace, love and happiness in the solitude of your heart, the mind and the senses withdrawn within.

Question the apparent, consider the worth of your past aspirations, and then decide upon your future course of action. Have a definite ideal and a wisely thought out plan for its fulfilment.

Let reason guide your impulses; let wisdom protect your reason; let dedication be your strength. Let conviction, consummated will, perseverance and trust in the grace of God, move the wheel of your destiny.

Noble be your intentions, candid be your dealings, transparent be your motives, forgiving be your heart, and catholic be your outlook.

New Year Message

7

Cleanse the grime of past obsessions. All is for the best. Be sure, success is real, failure only a stepping-stone. Virtue is real, vice its renunciation. Love is real, hate a misguided impulse. Happiness is real, sorrow an illusion. Life is real, death a change for the best. Turn the gaze from the unreal to the real. Work out your salvation by the dint of your endeavour, as speedily as you can.

What excitement, what impetuous dithyramb, what regalement can suffuse you, O simpleton, when there is so much to reckon, so much to ponder over, so much to enquire, so much to amend, and so much to retrace?

Waste not the fleeting moments. All things fade out into the void, sooner or later. Even the finest art, most eloquent classic and the wisest political genius pass away into oblivion on the tumbril of time, and after a few centuries even the ghosts of their once-glittering past are hardly recognised.

Be not heavy-laden at heart, gentle soul! Languish not in a fetid spell of evanescence. Find new joy, new worthiness, new light, new purpose in life. Blunder not into deception by seeking the oasis in a mirage, but draw inspiration, strength and courage from those that are really true and self-contained. Be your natural self—pure, holy and simple. Be interested in people. Learn as much as you can.

It is impossible to be happy without some kind of activity. Hence you must create interest in your work. Activity has to be agreeable and inspiring, without being unduly exacting, if it is to benefit you.

It is not enough if you are able to get along with ease in normal circumstances. The strength of your character is decided only under adverse conditions. You should, therefore, be ever intent on building a better personality every day, on strengthening the positive traits ever anew.

Behold the foresight of the engineer! A bridge is designed not only to bear the normal traffic impact but to withstand sudden and unexpected heavy loads at times of emergency. Even so, your character should be an assurity in good conduct, correct decorum and unruffled grace under most awkward and trying situations.

If you lack character, no amount of fine abilities will be of real use to you. If you wish others to trust and respect you, you must be honest, constant, reliable, straightforward and selfless.

Have faith in essential goodness in your own self. Cultivate self-confidence, grit and initiative. Hate nothing but hatred itself. Fear nothing but fear itself. Never leave a pursuit unattained. Adapt and adjust. Eliminate that which induces dislike in others, that which brings you unhappiness.

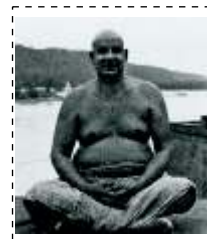
May the infinite grace of the Almighty be upon all. May there be prosperity and happiness in every home. May there be more of goodwill and harmony among nations. May the world be progressive in all worthy ways.

Om Shivamastu! Om Tat Sat!



DEVOTION TO THE LORD

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)



Do you really want God? Do you really thirst for his Darshan? Have you got real spiritual hunger? These are essential questions which you should every day of your life put yourself to. He who thirsts for the Darshan of the Lord only will develop love unto Him. To him, He will reveal Himself. God is a question of supply and demand. If there is a sincere demand for God, the supply will come at once. Pray faithfully like Prahlada. Repeat His Name like sage Valmiki, Saint Tukaram and Bhakta Tulasidas. Do Kirtan like Gauranga Mahaprabhu. Weep in solitude like Mira for the separation from God. You will have Darshan of the Lord this very second. Ever examine yourself. Introspect and develop your love for the Lord. Pray to Him. Weep and cry for Him. Repeat His Name and sing His Name. He will surely bless you with His grace.

The grace of God is ever on the true devotee. He has only to feel His presence in himself. He who detecting His hand behind everything that happens remains calm in the face of the worst failures and is peaceful, is really successful in the end. He retains

the presence of mind and does not get upset. The man who gets perturbed does not gain his object as he has lost his presence of mind and also ruins his health.

The Lord has always a love for the true devotee. Life is worth living because of His infinite love for us. Our sincere endeavours should all be directed to a simple unfoldment of our inner being and to open out the inner chambers of our hearts, for the reception of the Lord. The Lord is ever sweet. He knocks at the door. Lo! Wilt thou not open thy door for thy beloved to enter? Ah! You search for the key. It is with you, held between your lips—the sweet Name of the Lord. Repeat ‘Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya’. Now the door has opened.

Nurture in your bosom the plant of universal love and a deep desire to make the lives of your brethren worth living and enjoyable, nay, fruitful in every sense of the term. Love is very powerful. True universal love is God, indeed. Through all the Hindu scriptures runs the note of love born out of a conviction that the same

Atman appears in the form of the Universe and all the beings in it.

Pure love is God. Pure love is boundless like the Akasha. Pure love is limitless like the sea. Shuddha Prem is infinite like the ether. It embraces all. It expands *ad infinitum*. It has neither boundaries nor frontiers. It spreads out like the branches of the Banyan tree. It crosses all boundaries and frontiers and envelops the entire universe. Therefore, cultivate pure love by destroying egoism, Vasanas and cravings through reflection, selfless service, Japa, Kirtan, Satsanga, constant remembrance of the Lord and meditation, and rest peacefully forever in the God of Supreme Love.

Give the people around you the solace of Godliness and teach them to rely on God. This is best done by one's own silent action rather than the best preaching. And this is the greatest Yajna or sacrifice which a householder can do. In your silent unassuming actions, let others come to read the Upanishads and the Gita. Serve Him thus and His Divine Life. Your progress in the spiritual field is best assured. O Blessed Atman, this is the greatest Sadhana in the spiritual line.

Do take up even now some selfless service. Selfless service, charity and generosity develop the heart and cleanse the mind of its lower habits.

Therefore, they are very helpful to an aspirant in cultivating love to Him and in his Sadhana. Go on persevering in developing the 'Narayana Bhava' and you will soon attain peace of mind and eternal happiness by the grace of God. Develop humility and a spirit of studentship. Always enquire into the nature of Truth and the Inner Reality which resides in the innermost caves of your heart. Ever be contented with what the Lord gives you; never complain. Never worry yourself with what you do not get. Stick ever to the path of Dharma. Stick to the Truth. Be always pure in thought, word and deed. Expand your heart by the realisation that He dwells in all. Take Sattvic food and do Asanas, Pranayama and Japa daily and regularly. Your devotion to the Lord will become intense.

O Pilgrim on the Path to God here, take this staff—the Lord's sweet Name. You will never slip on the road. Now walk erect because you have the Omnipotent as your help. Wear the shoes of Vairagya with the nails of Viveka. Even the most slippery ascents, you will climb with absolute self-confidence. You will easily reach the summit in the twinkling of the eye. Obstacles will melt before you like the ice in sunshine.





PURIFICATION PAVES* THE PATH TO YOGA

(Sri Swami Chidananda)

Salutations and my loving greetings to you one and all seekers the world over. I send you all my very best wishes for a happy New Year, bright and joyful and may all the twelve months be months filled with prosperity, progress, success and much auspiciousness, blessedness and peace. May the grace of Guru Maharaj Swami Sivanandaji bestow upon you peace, bliss and illumination.

Purity is the prerequisite to perfection. No spiritual progress is possible without purity. Purity is the bed-rock upon which an aspirant builds his or her spiritual life. Purified mind alone can take one Godward. Only a man of purity can strive in the path of Yoga steadily. Purification brings a thorough transformation of the individual and he transcends lower nature into Divine Nature.

The Supreme Self who is immaculate, Niranjana, pure and devoid of blemish can be experienced only through one's consciousness that is of crystalline purity, because the Atman cannot be known through the

mind or intellect as He is. He is beyond sense-perception. He can neither be known through the mind, nor the intellect, because knowing through the intellect and the mind involves some processes and He is not the product of any process. He is not the result coming out of any process, and so the perception of the Atman cannot be had and the only instruments which we have are mind and intellect. Intellect is part of the mind. The medium of knowing God is in a different level and that level of our being is our own Svarupa, Spiritual Eye, and they also call it Divine Eye. As long as our true identity is covered with Mala (impurities), as long as the inner eye or the eye of wisdom is not opened up, the divine perception is not opened up, or is not activated, God cannot be realised. And, therefore we ultimately think and arrive at the great conclusion that God is not a perceived being. God is not someone to be known, He cannot be understood, and the Scriptures declare that He can be only experienced by the purified mind. He is in essence to be experienced, not

*Taken from D.L. 1972

to be seen or known or perceived, and for this experience, they say, one should attain purity of mind by right worship. This is the only method.

Do worship to draw closer and closer to God, nearer and nearer to God. Worship is referred to as Upasana or the process of drawing nearer to God. So if you want to attain Perfection and draw nearer to God, do right worship and then experience Him. In the ultimate stage, the actual experiencing is only when you become in nature like Him. You can have the ultimate experience through the acme of worship. Jnana and Samadhi are the highest forms of worship. The highest worship you can offer to God is direct communion with Him, in a state of deep absorption, total state of absorption in meditation.

There are different types of worship, long gradations of different types starting from the external nature, the worship through symbols, etc. The lowest form of worship or Tamasic worship is also a part of worship of God. Starting from the external, ceremonial and symbolic forms of worship, you go on ascending to various grades of spiritual worship until the highest worship within your consciousness in deep state of absorption in meditation is attained, which is Samadhi. Meditation is the highest form of worship and this

supreme worship ultimately leads to Samadhi.

In the state of Jnana and Samadhi, the consciousness becomes divinised, totally spiritualised, totally divested of all earthly elements. In that state of pristine purity, you enter into communion with God and thus when you have experienced Him and become established in Him, in that state, they say you actually become like Him. Going into His nature and starting to worship Him, you ultimately attain a state absolutely like Himself. *Brahmavid Brahmaiva Bhavati*—the knower of Brahman becomes Brahman—is the ultimate declaration of the Upanishads.

All processes of Yoga in their different varieties culminate and unify in this ultimate state of worship which is direct communion through meditation. Actually you will find that meditation is a point where all Yogas are unified. Though they start differently, proceed differently, progress differently and develop differently, ultimately they unify themselves in the state of meditation. Meditation leads to Samadhi.

If you make a study of the spiritual history of lives of various saints and of the great mystics of the East and West, you will find that all prophets like Buddha, Christ and others, have meditated and attained Perfection. You

will find that meditation is a common factor in the spiritual practice of all spiritual seekers all over the world.

All the great scriptures point to lust, anger and greed as veritable foes of a seeker. Anger is related to passion. Anger plays untold havoc upon the body, nervous system, the mind and the very spiritual fabric of the higher self. It is a modification of passion itself. Passion becomes transformed into anger. These are the great obstacles to meditation. These impurities have to be eliminated from the mind. The scriptures tell us how to do it. One need not turn to any other quarter to find out how to get over the enemies. These are the products of lower Gunas, viz., Rajas and Tamas. By making the entire life Sattvic, by filling ourselves with Sattva, we can annihilate these enemies.

Therefore, the only way to eradicate them from our nature is to adopt for ourselves a Sattvic way of living, in all aspects. One can get rid of anger and passion by such a noble living. An aspirant should make every attempt to free himself from the clutches of these lower Vikaras(vices). Nothing that is worthwhile is to be achieved without

undergoing a corresponding amount of pain and suffering. No enduring ideal can be attained without toil and sweat. Any young seeker will have to go through similar and various other ordeals sooner or later. He should face these trials with the same uniform fortitude that our holy Master Swami Sivanandaji displayed during his Sadhana period. The path to Perfection demands rigorous Tapas and heroic endurance at one time or other. This has been the common experience of all such earnest souls who, fired by the ideal of Self-realisation, turn their back upon the world of vanity and folly, because the truth remains that the link between man and God is forged in the furnace of trial and adversity.

A grim endurance of all vicissitudes and a dogged resolution to persevere to the end are essential if one has to attain Perfection. On this glorious commencement of the New Year 1972, I pray to the Divine that He may bestow upon you all wonderful health, all-round success in life and highest spiritual blessedness. This is my prayer too at the feet of the holy Master Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj.

Sadhana is a lifelong process. Every day, every hour, every minute is an onward march. Obstacles are innumerable in this great voyage. But so long as you hold God as thy guide there is nothing to worry about. You are sure to reach the other shore.

—Swami Sivananda

QUINTESSENCE OF BHARATIYATA— PAROPAKARA AND SAKSHATKARA



(Sri Swami Chidananda)

Radiant Immortal Atman!

Beloved and blessed children of the Divine, my own Self in the form of my brethren of worshipful Bharatavarsha.

Our great souls beheld in Bharatavarsha not merely a geographical part of earth or a dwelling place of a certain race of people, but they beheld a manifestation of divine power – Bharata Shakti. They beheld in Bharata Mata a worshipful Goddess, the manifestation of the cosmic power vibrant with life—a centre of Daivi Sampada. Kaviyogi Shuddhananda Bharathi has written a great epic ‘Bharata Shakti Mahakavyam’. Swami Rama Tirtha also saw India as Great Mother, not merely a nation or a geographical unit.

In his poetic way Shri Rama Tirtha said: “Take my words, take my words, Bharatavarsha! I behold Mother India reinstated upon her throne, a reigning queen of all that is Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram.”

In my own humble way I have always seen India not only as Bharatavarsha but Bharatiyata—

“Indianness”, the soul of India. There is a gene in each country and a way of life that is the woven warp and woof of the culture, the vision and the approach to life. What are the Bharatiya’s vision, objective and purpose of life? Why should we live? We are fortunate, that as sons and daughters of this country, we don’t have to work all this out from ABC. The great ones already solved the mystery of life and unraveled its secrets. They beheld the truth, the meaning, the objective, the goal and the purpose for which human beings are on earth, and they have declared it in clarion tones from their own personal experience. We are the fortunate recipients of these truths, being heirs to these great gems.

What is the quintessence of Bharatiyata? Who stands for it? In this I have a vision of the wonderful life of Swami Vivekananda. In two words he has summed up the quintessence of Bharatiyata—what a human being should live for:

Atmano mokshartham jagat hitaya cha

For the Liberation of one’s soul and for the good of the world.

The Dharma that is proclaimed by ancient sages and seers is Manava Dharma, the human Dharma or duty. They declared it for all human beings, and as we are also human beings and are uniquely blessed having taken birth in Bharatavarsha, it is all the more our duty to make our life according to '*Atmano mokshartham jagat-hitaya cha*'. These great truths are contained in two ancient prayers that have come down from the dawn of our civilization:

Lokasamasta sukhino bhavantu

May all beings be happy.

Asato ma sad gamaya

Tamaso ma jyotir gamaya

Mrityor ma amritam gamaya

From unrealities lead us to the Real,
From darkness lead us to the Light,
From death lead us to Everlasting Life!

These prayers bring out or embody the concept which Swami Vivekananda gave with "*Atmano mokshartham jagat hitaya cha*"—to attain liberation through illumination and to work for the good of world.

Liberation is not before illumination; illumination automatically brings about liberation. We look at illumination and liberation in a different way. We look at liberation not only as liberation from pain, suffering and rebirth, and but also from the limitations in which we find ourselves now—identification with this cage of flesh and bones, identification with this little imperfect mind that is full of selfishness

and identification with one petty finite intellect which is prone to so much error.

How can you rely upon this little intellect, which is so fragile and vulnerable that any little thing can upset it and cause heavy sorrow? The intellect is a limited instrument, and it has been given to us so that we may utilise it and function in this phenomenal earth plane. To become identified with it and completely lose awareness of our true identity is the greatest error. Therefore, it is said that we have to liberate ourselves from this deplorable predicament and regain our independent and all perfect nature. Every human being is Nitya Shuddha, Nitya Buddha, Nitya Mukta Atma Tattwa, fully filled with divinity. True liberation is growing from imperfection to perfection, from littleness to fullness and becoming established in that state of Paripurnata – divinity, which we all are. That is the great goal of human life.

During the process of attaining illumination and regaining perfection, what should be our relationship with life around us? Since we have to work out this ascent during this earthly life, it cannot be ignored. The framework of all our relationships is the ideal of Greatness, not pettiness, not smallness. We have to ask ourselves: "While I live, through my body, mind and the other faculties God has given me, how much can I give to all? What can I do in order to be a source of benefit to others, a source of joy and happiness to others? What can I give?"

Never even for a moment, even in the dream, never let the idea 'what can I get?' arise in your mind. Be a Maha Paropakari, be a Mahan Atman. That is the ideal life.

The two ancient prayers mentioned earlier should be ingrained in your heart—every heart beat should only repeat these twin prayers. May all living beings find happiness with every breath of my body, with every moment of my life. And with every step that I take, let me move towards light, let me move towards immortality; let me move towards that great Reality which is my true source, my eternal abode, my origin, my ultimate goal. These great prayers embody in themselves twin ideals which constitute the quintessence of the spirit and genius of India. Quintessence of Bharatiyata are the concepts of Charity to others or Paropakara and Realisation or Sakshatkara. To live for these two ideals is the ideal of Bharatavarsha, and that is the highest and greatest human endeavour.

The saying '*Paropakarartham idam shareeram*' or 'This body is for doing charity' sums up the vision of Bharatavarsha regarding the ideal of humanity. What is a human individual supposed to be? According to our vision, he is meant to be Paropakari. Having attained a human body, he has to live in a rare and unique way—

different from all the creatures living with horizontal spinal columns parallel to the earth. Their gaze is fixed on the earth, they only think of themselves and are only capable for tending themselves from morning till evening. Unique man, with an erect and vertical spinal column is capable of looking up, going even beyond himself and thinking of others, thinking of Sakshatkara, thinking of Para Brahma and Paropakara.

That is the greatest concept ever given. It is the concept of a person who has reached the pinnacle of perfection and has become a superman. He is not a great Alexander or Genghis Khan or a conqueror who dominates others. The highest concept of a superman is '*sarva bhoota hite ratah*'—Engaged in the welfare of all beings'. Having attained divine perfection, he has no thoughts other than those of the welfare and good of all beings. This great ideal is reiterated in the legends of India. In Puranic times, when Prahlada was asked by Narasimha Avatar of Lord Narayana to ask for a boon, he said, "I don't want anything. I have no desire." But Bhagawan insists and corners him, and finally Prahlada said, "If at all you want me to ask, I ask that in this world, in this universe, wherever any creature is in distress, pain or suffering, let them all be

relieved of that suffering! *Kamaye duhkah taptanam praninam arti nashanam*". That is the only thing Prahlada asked. What a great Bhava! What a great ideal!

Vivekananda also asked himself how he could relieve the sufferings of the masses. He said, "As long as one poor man in India starves or suffers for the want of a morsel of food, I hold every other Indian as a traitor who at the cost of others has been eating and living well." He identified himself with the lowest of the low and felt for them.

The parting words of Bhagavan Buddha when he was about to enter Nirvana were the same. To his Bhikkus he said: "Now O Bhikkus, Tathagata is about to enter Nirvana and this is my last injunction to you. First of all, never neglect your own highest welfare, because the greatest ideal is Sakshatkara, to know yourself and to attain the perfection which you are. It is your highest welfare. Be a light to yourself and be a lamp to the others. By living your life and by example show the way to others. And O Bhikkus, go and traverse the highways and byways of this land for the welfare of the many

and for the happiness of the many— *bahujana hitaya bahujana sukhaya cha.*"

This is our heritage. Let therefore your heart be filled with these great ideals and dedicate your lives to them. This is the only life worth living. In whose heart these two great ideals, Paropakara and Sakshatkara do not thrive and do not compel him, there is no life. It is only existence.

Nayam atma balahinena labhya. The spiritual path is not for the weak of heart. A Subhashita that I studied in my childhood says that ordinary people don't undertake great tasks. They are always thinking of the obstacles. The middling types of people are enthusiastic at the start, but give up when they encounter any serious obstacle. Once having begun a task, people of the highest quality never give up, even if they are assailed again and again by obstacles. They will see to it that they attain what they want. This principle must be adopted by everyone. If you have enthusiasm for anything that you do, you will succeed. Enthusiasm is like electric power, it will make everything succeed.

Hari Om Tat Sat!



*Speak not the Unspeakable. Measure not the Immeasurable in words.
Become silent. Enter the Silence.*

—Swami Sivananda



MEDITATION ACCORDING TO THE UPANISHADS

(Sri Swami Krishnananda)

Spoken on January 14th, 1973

(Continued from the previous issue)

The struggle continues, but with imagined objects. There is very little difference between the waking and dreaming conditions as far as the efforts and struggle of consciousness are concerned, and pain and pleasure are concerned. Irrespective of the fact that there is a difference between physical and psychic objects as they appear in waking and dream, as far as the experiencer himself is concerned there is very little difference. The sorrows and joys of our waking life can come to us also in dream, and consciousness may not find itself in a different situation.

But the purpose of consciousness is to cease, to put an end to all tension with the objects, in which effort it has not succeeded in the waking condition, and it is not going to succeed in the dreaming condition either. Merely because we only contemplate objects in the mind instead of actually confronting them physically, it does not mean that the mind has ceased from its efforts. What gives pain, inconvenience and discomfort is struggle of every kind. Consciousness falls back into a condition of inactivity

in sleep where, though it is not in a state of harmony with its objects, at least it is unconscious of the disharmony that is there.

See the difference between samadhi and sleep. While in samadhi we have a consciousness of harmony, in sleep there is an unconsciousness of disharmony. Quite different and opposite they are, though they look alike. The difference is as between the joy of a wise man and the joy of a fool. Both are happy people. An idiot is happy and a genius also is happy, but the difference is very obvious. The negative condition into which we enter in sleep is a defeatist position of consciousness where it has struggled but failed in its attempt. So the Upanishad tells us all these three states are phenomenal. They are states to be traversed through, transcended, and the real nature of consciousness cannot be recognised or seen either in waking, dream or sleep. Sleep is, actually speaking, the mischief-maker. The real ringleader we will find in the deep sleep state. The potentiality for suffering is there in a covered form even in the state of deep sleep, like a

tree existing in a seed, and it will sprout up into activities, into actual pleasure and pain experiences, when we have the dream and the waking conditions.

So the three states—waking, dream and sleep—are only temporal efforts at the bringing about of a cessation of disharmony between consciousness and objects, now struggling, now turning back, and then completely forgetting the trouble itself by exhaustion. It is like a warrior going to the battlefield, fighting, getting tired and dreaming of the battle in his home, having returned from the battlefield unable to conquer the enemy, and then unable to even bear this suffering, going to sleep as if everything is okay, but waking again only to realise the glaring fact that the battle is going on and he has yet to face it. The whole of the samsara chakra, the cycle of births and deaths, pains and joys of life, is a series, a circular movement, as it were, of the efforts of consciousness to free itself completely from the clutches of objective confrontation. So we are no better whether we are in waking, dream or sleep. We are equally fools in all three states.

The freedom of the soul is in its fourth state of consciousness, called *turiya*. This fourth state of consciousness is not really a fourth mathematically or arithmetically. It is fourth in the sense that it is not any one of the three mentioned already. It is universal consciousness, and therefore we cannot call it the fourth. But because it is not any of these three,

we categorise it as the fourth one, *turiya*, for our own convenience. In the waking condition we are externally conscious, in the dream condition we are internally conscious, in the sleeping condition we are absolutely unconscious, and in the *turiya* we are super-conscious. External consciousness, internal consciousness, unconsciousness and super-consciousness are the states through which we have to pass.

Super-consciousness, sometimes called the supramental state, the *turiya*, is inclusive of all that is in the three other states of consciousness. Whatever was there of worth and meaning in the condition of waking, dream or sleep is to be found in the *turiya* also, only freed from the tension of it. The *turiya* is the goal of life. It is described as *nantah-prajnam, na bahis prajnam, nobhayatah-prajnam, na prajnanaghanam, na prajnam, naprajnam; adrstam, avyavaharayam, agrahyam, alaksanam, acintyam, avyapadeshyam, ekatma-pratyaya-saram, prapanchopasamam, santam, sivam, advaitam, caturtham manyante, sa atma, sa vijneyah*. (Ma.U. 7). This is how the Mandukya describes the fourth state of consciousness. In that state we are not aware of anything outside, as we are seeing now in front of us so many things existing; nor do we see things inside as in dream. In that condition we are not externally aware of anything, nor internally aware of anything, nor are we unconscious. Then what are we? We are conscious. Conscious of what? Not of external

things, not of internal things—nobody can say what it is. *Prapancopasamam*: The world ceases to exist there. It is dissolved like a sugar ball in water. The whole universe gets dissolved into it. *Prapancopasamam, santam, sivam, advaitam, caturtham manyante, sa atma*—that is our Self; that is our essential nature. Our essential nature is not a struggle with the objects, the persons and things in the world, nor is our essential nature a condition of sleep and reverie. Our essential condition is of universality of consciousness.

This analysis of the three states individually experienced by every person every day is also supposed to have a cosmic counterpart, which is not very clearly set forth in the Mandukya Upanishad, but this deduction is made from the Upanishad that there should be a cosmic counterpart of these three states of individuals—namely, the waking, dream and sleep states. While we are individually body conscious in the waking state, the cosmic counterpart, known as the Virat, is supposed to be universally, physically conscious. Or, to explain it in another way, there is a simultaneous consciousness of all physical existences in the cosmos. This is supposed to be the cosmic counterpart of the individual, physical condition.

Virat, or Vaishvanara, is the cosmic physical consciousness, of which the Vishva, or the individual waking condition, is regarded as a part, a segment or a section. Similarly,

consciousness in the dreaming condition, known as *taijasa*, is supposed to have a cosmic counterpart, known as Hiranyagarbha. The individual causal condition we call sleep has a cosmic counterpart, known as Ishvara. Ishvara, Hiranyagarbha and Virat are the names given to the universal counterpart of the individual states of consciousness—sleep, dream and waking respectively, known as *prajna*, *taijasa* and *visva*. But this distinction is made that while the individual conditions are powerless and ignorant, the cosmic conditions are omnipotent and omniscient.

We may wonder how, when the parts are ignorant, the total becomes omniscient. It is not merely a total of ignorances. When the total is made, the characteristics of the particulars change automatically because the particulars, or the individuals, are isolated from one another on account of the existence of *tamas* and *rajas*. Inasmuch as *tamas* and *rajas* cannot be said to exist in totalities, these are completely removed, lifted up in the cosmic condition where *shuddha sattva pradhana shakti* is supposed to predominate, and so Ishvara, Hiranyagarbha and Virat are regarded as omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, as opposed to the individual conditions of location in a particular place: ignorance and unhappiness.

The Vaishvanara aspect of this analysis receives a detailed and elaborate treatment in the Fifth Chapter of the Chhandogya

Upanishad, known as the Vaishvanara Vidya, wherein the glory of the Supreme Being is described, meditation upon which is supposed to burn up all sins. In an analogy of this Upanishad, as fire burns cotton into ashes leaving no residue whatsoever, meditation on Vaishvanara burns up all *samskaras*, all impressions of the mind, all sins and defects, and makes one Self-realised. From the description of the Vaishvanara given to us in the Chhandogya Upanishad we can also infer the conditions of Hiranyagarbha and Ishvara, which are not specifically mentioned there but are implied.

So the method of meditation in the Upanishad is primarily a juxtaposition of the objective and subjective sides in order that the two may be brought together into unison in the Universal state, and the Universal may be meditated upon. In order to understand what actually or exactly is the meaning or the implication of the Mandukya Upanishad, you have to read, if you have time enough, the Karikas of Gaudapadacharya on the Mandukya Upanishad; or, if you have no time to read such a lengthy treatise, at least read a very short exposition of it in 62 verses given by Sureshvaracharya, known as Pranava Vartika, also called Panchikarana Vartika. How the individual is to be set in tune with the cosmic is described there. Sureshvaracharya tells us that to abolish the perception of difference, we may regard the individual waking

as one with the cosmic waking. This is what he says.

Thus, the Upanishads give us a purely philosophical, analytical, mystical, spiritual method of contemplation by a denial of diversity through a contemplation of the totality of things. The Mandukya, the Taittiriya and the Aitareya Upanishads are specifically useful for this type of meditation. An elaborate commentary on this is to be found in the Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads, as I mentioned, one giving us what is known as the *saprapancha* view of things and the other giving us the *nishprapancha* view of things. The Chhandogya Upanishad gives us the *saprapancha* view of Reality, which means to say, Reality as interpreted in its relation to the cosmos. This is called the *saprapancha* view. *Saprapancha* means with *prapancha*, with the cosmos. The Supreme Being in its relation to the cosmos is described in the Chhandogya Upanishad, in its various chapters. But in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad we have the *nishprapancha* view of Reality, where it is described as it is in itself without any kind of relation to the cosmos, or to anything whatsoever. So these two form complimentary teachings to us: the Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka, which are wonderful expositions of the secret already given in a pithy form in the Mandukya Upanishad.

(To be continued)

WHO ARE WE?

(Sri Swami Atmaswarupananda)

The scriptures declare that mind is the cause of both bondage and liberation in the human being. Bondage means dissatisfaction. Liberation means happiness. All human beings want to be happy; therefore, the supreme goal of life is *moksha* or liberation. But in what way is mind the cause of our bondage, and in what way is it the cause of our liberation?

It simply depends upon our identification. Minds are common to not only human beings, but to the higher animals, who can also think and reason to a considerable extent. What is unique about the human being is that we can ask the question, Who am I? We can identify with whatever we want to identify with.

As children we were told that we are a body belonging to a certain family who follow a certain tradition, who belong to certain caste and country. That is who we are. This is the way you should act. This is how to be happy. All these things we were told. Thus, our basic identity with an individual body and mind was gradually formed.

However, if we examine it in a more subtle way, we will find that we also have what could be called two generic identities: one we are aware of moment by moment; the other, to our sorrow, we ignore, although it is just as obvious if we pay attention to it.

The first one is our sense of being the centre of the universe. We are the subject and everything else, including God, is our object. A subject naturally feels itself to be superior to an object. Unfortunately, all other human beings feel the same, and neither do they acknowledge our subjectivity nor do we acknowledge theirs. Therefore, fights and quarrels are inevitable.

On the other hand, we have the other identity that is just as clear to us, but we pay absolutely no attention to it. And that is that we are convinced that we have never changed since the day we were born. We are exactly the same person, and we can't imagine changing in any way until the day we die. So one identity, the centre of the universe, is totally identified with the body and mind and suffers its pleasures and its pains. The other identity never reacts, neither loves nor hates, neither praises nor condemns. It is just ever aware, ever present, never leaves us, never changes.

It is aware of our thoughts right now. It is aware of our dreams. It is aware of our deep sleep. It is the true fabric of our being. The centre of the universe, on the other hand, changes continuously. The good news is that it can change from being tamasic to being rajasic and ultimately sattvic.

The more *sattvic* it becomes the more it becomes like our inmost identity. It becomes more aware, less judgmental, more universal. It begins finally to emulate the identity in us that never changes. The identity in us that never changes is our feeling of existence, I Am. The more *sattvic* we become, the more we sense our pure I Am, the more we feel universal.

So, therefore, our spiritual life is essentially a life of training the centre of the universe to be more like our inner identity. Ultimately, neither identities are true in the absolute sense, because we know both identities. The one that knows is ever unknowable and transcends both. It is the Universal, and it is there that we are meant to rest and function from.





TYAGARAJA SWAMI

Beloved Divine Children!

Om Namō Narayanaya!

Tyagaraja Swami was a Telugu Brahmin born to Rama Brahmam. He was the father of South Indian music. He composed twenty-four thousand Kirtans or songs in praise of Lord Rama. Most of his songs are in Telugu and a few are in Sanskrit. They are highly inspiring and soul-elevating.

Tyagaraja used to sing in the temple of Ambal at Thiruvaiyaru. He had direct Darshan of Lord Rama on several occasions. The idols that he worshipped were thrown into the river. Tyagaraja received directions in his dream from Lord Rama and located the exact spot in the river where the idols lay buried underneath the sand, after one year.

The then Raja of Pudukkottai once placed an unlit lamp amongst the songsters and challenged them to light it with a song only, without using a match or any other means. Tyagaraja Swami meditated upon Narada for a while, sang the Raga Jyotisvarupini, and the lamp lighted of itself. Divine Rishi Narada gave him the book named 'Swararnavam' for propagating high class music.

Tyagaraja never cared for wealth or position in society. Once, King Saraboji, the Raja of Thanjavur, sent a messenger to Tyagaraja who said,

"Kindly compose a song in praise of the Raja and he will give you ten acres of land and a big bag of gold." Tyagaraja replied, "Why should I use my music for flattering Rajas who lead a vicious life? Fie upon that cursed gold which goads people to indulge in vices and run after sensual enjoyments." He sang a song whose meaning is:

"Which gives greater happiness—gold or worship of Lord Rama? Which is more delicious—milk, butter



and curd or the essence of the nectar of meditation and Bhajana of Rama? Which is more conducive to health—a dip in the Ganga of serenity of mind or in the muddy well of corruption? Which of the two is better—praise of a rich man who is puffed up with vanity or a song in praise of the all-merciful, omnipotent Lord?" The messenger did not speak a word and left the place silently.

The then Maharaja of Travancore also sent a messenger to fetch Tyagaraja who tempted him by saying that the Maharaja would give him much wealth and a good position. Tyagaraja replied, "I regard wealth as an obstacle to man's progress. It brings all sorts of miseries. Only fools run after money." He sang a song and explained the meaning to the messenger, "That state of mind which places implicit faith in Rama is the real position in life. Can those persons be regarded as having attained the real position, who can repeat all the Scriptures like a parrot, but do not live in the spirit of their teachings. Can those people be considered to have attained the real position, who possess a mountain of wealth, a number of wives and children, and who enjoy the friendship of Maharajas? No, no. Only that man who has implicit faith in Rama, who meditates on the Lord, and who has obtained His grace has attained the real position." The messenger went away quietly.

The wealth of the three worlds is mere straw for a man who enjoys the wealth and bliss of God-realisation. The state of such exalted souls is beyond description.

What a magnanimous soul was Tyagaraja! Tyagaraja Swami's Samadhi is at Thiruvaiyaru on the banks of the Cauvery. All the songsters of South India celebrate his anniversary with great eclat every year in the month of January. Glory to Tyagaraja Swami whose songs instill devotion, joy and happiness in the heart of the hearers.

Swami Sivananda

Fill in the blanks:

1. Tyagaraja Swami was the father of _____.
2. He composed Kirtans or songs in praise of _____.
3. He used to sing in the temple of _____.
4. He sang the _____ and the lamp lighted of itself.
5. Rishi Narada gave him the book named _____.
6. He never cared for _____ in society.
7. That state of mind which places implicit faith in Rama is the _____.
8. The wealth of the three worlds is _____ for a man of God-realisation.
9. The state of exalted souls is beyond _____.
10. Tyagaraja Swami's Samadhi is at _____ on the banks of the Cauvery.

SING THE LORD'S GLORY



Worship the Lord at all times with all your heart and with all your **mind**. **Sing** His **glory**. **Remember** His **Name** always. All miseries will come to an end. Your heart will be purified. The Lord will soon reveal Himself to you. You will feel His **Presence**.

Pray fervently to the Lord for the descent of the **Divine Light**. Crave for His **Mercy**. Weep for His separation on account of **Viraha**. **Yearn** for **communion** with Him. **Melt** the mind in the Agni of Divine **Love**. Burn the body in the fire of **devotion**. Drink the **honey** of Prem. Get yourself intoxicated with the wine of Divine Love. Attain **immortality** and **eternal Bliss**.

SWAMI SIVANANDA



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

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





SIMILAR THOUGHTS ATTRACT EACH OTHER

In the thought-world also, the great law “Like attracts like”, operates. People of similar thoughts are attracted towards each other. That is the reason why the maxims run as follows: “Birds of the same feather flock together,” “A man is known by the company he keeps.”

A doctor is drawn towards a doctor. A poet has attraction for another poet. A songster loves another songster. A philosopher likes another philosopher. A vagabond likes a vagabond. The mind has got a 'drawing power'.

You are continually attracting towards you, from both the seen and the unseen sides of life-forces, thoughts, influences and conditions most akin to those of your own thoughts and lines.

In the realm of thought, people of similar thoughts are attracted to one another. This universal law is continually operating whether we are conscious of it or not.

Carry any kind of thought you please about with you and so long as you retain it, no matter how you roam over the land or sea, you will unceasingly attract to yourself, knowingly or inadvertently, exactly and only what corresponds to your own dominant quality of thought. Thoughts are your private property and you can regulate them to suit your taste entirely by steadily recognising your ability to do so.

You have entirely in your own hands to determine the order of thought you entertain and consequently the order of influence you attract and you are not mere willowy creatures of circumstances, unless indeed you choose to be.

SWAMI SIVANANDA

Answers to Fill in the blanks:

(1) South Indian music (2) Lord Rama (3) Ambal at Thiruvaiyaru
(4) Raga Jyotisvarupini (5) Swararnavam (6) wealth or position (7) real position in life (8) mere straw (9) description (10) Thiruvaiyaru

CHRISTMAS EVE CELEBRATIONS AND THE CHRISTMAS-NEW YEAR RETREAT AT THE HEADQUARTERS ASHRAM



The sacred day of Holy Christmas was celebrated with great devotion and spiritual rejoicing at the Headquarters Ashram on 24th December 2017. The Ashramites, devotees and guests devoutly participated in the joyous function which began with Jaya Ganesh Kirtan at 7.30 p.m. in the Swami Sivananda Auditorium Satsang Hall. The nativity scene, illustrating the birth of the new child, was installed in a temple in the centre of the Satsang Hall and a beautifully decorated Christmas tree was also placed.

The devotees presented melodious devotional songs in English, Romanian, Hindi, Malayalam and Tamil. Thereafter, the traditional Bible readings interspersed with sacred music began. Silent Night was sung beautifully after the first Bible reading from the prologue to the Gospel of John, "In the beginning was the Word." After the reading, Mary's Vision, a soul-stirring solo rendition of

the famous song Halleluiah was sung, which had many in tears. The Birth of Jesus was followed by a canon called Be Still, honouring the birth of the Beginningless One. The evening concluded with the song 'Joy to the World' following the story of the Wise Men, silent meditation, the recitation of the 108 Names of Jesus, closing prayers and the distribution of sacred Prasad.

The 22nd Annual Christmas-New Year Retreat for devotees from abroad was held at the Ashram from 25th December 2017 to 1st January 2018. Over sixty devotees from seventeen countries and a number of guests attended the inspiring sessions. Mid-morning talks were given by senior Swamijis of the Ashram in the Swami Sivananda Auditorium Satsang Hall. The



speakers shared their wisdom and insight on this year's theme 'The Path Beyond Sorrow'. The participants enthusiastically attended the daily guided meditation led by senior Swamijis every evening. Morning meditation and evening Satsang in the sacred Samadhi Hall were also the part of the retreat programme. During the night Satsang, the retreat participants, full of love and devotion, shared the experiences of their meeting with Sadgurudev Sri Swami



Sivanandaji Maharaj, Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj and Worshipful Sri Swami Venkateshanandaji Maharaj relating them to the theme of the retreat. All the participants felt immensely benefitted and spiritually rejuvenated by being part of the retreat.

May the benedictions of Lord Jesus and Sadgurudev be upon all!



74TH PRATISHTHA MAHOTSAVA OF SRI VISWANATHA MANDIR



The sacred day of the 74th anniversary of the Pratishtha (consecration) of Sri Viswanatha temple was celebrated with great devotion at the Headquarters Ashram on 31st December 2017.

Preceding the day of the celebration, the chanting of the sacred Panchakshari Mantra was conducted in the temple for three hours in the afternoon from 27th to 29th December 2017. On 30th December, the Akhand Kirtan of the sacred Mantra commenced at 7 a.m. with the lighting of the lamp by H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj and H.H. Sri Swami Adwaitanandaji Maharaj and continued till 6 p.m.

On the auspicious day of 31st December, Prabhat Pheri was organised followed by a Havan for the peace and welfare of the world. During the special Satsang in the forenoon, a grand worship with Abhisheka and Archana to the



chanting of Vedic Mantras was offered to Lord Sri Vishwanatha enshrined in the beautifully decorated *sanctum-sanctorum* of Sri

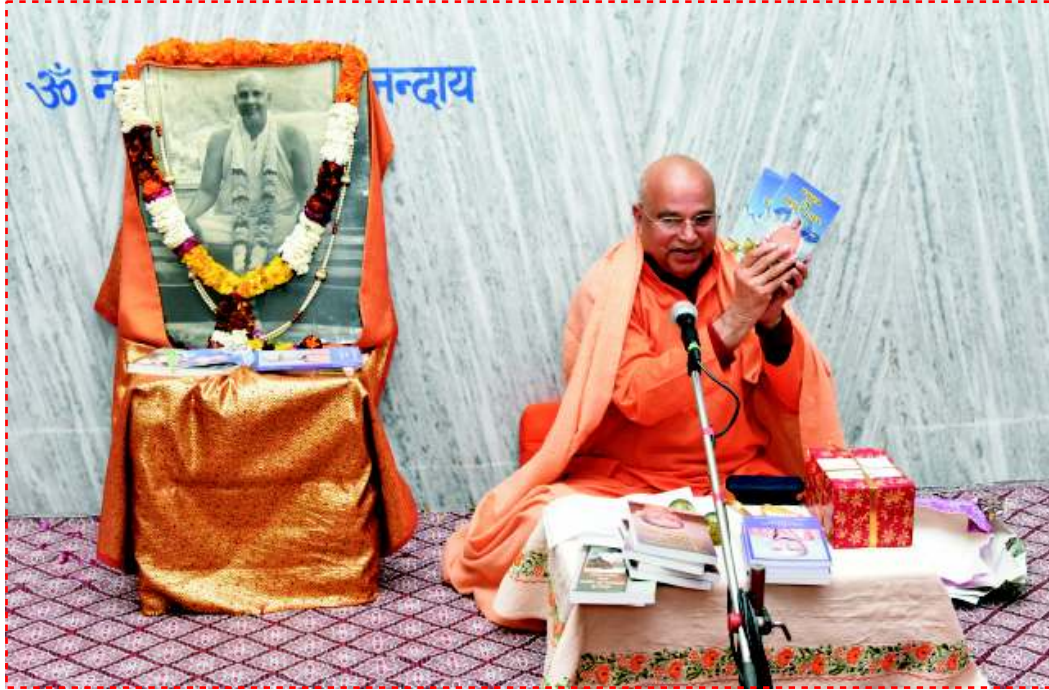
Vishwanatha temple. All the Sannyasis, Brahmacharis and guests of the Ashram joyously participated in the worship and in the devout singing of Bhajans and Kirtans. The celebration concluded with elaborate Arati and distribution of sacred Prasad.



May the abundant blessings of Lord Sri Viswanatha and Sadgurudev be upon all.!

* * *

NEW YEAR CELEBRATION AT THE HEADQUARTERS ASHRAM



God has given you this New Year for your spiritual betterment and attaining the Sreyas or highest bliss of the Eternal. Be regular in your Japa, meditation and study of Gita and realise the Self within this happy New Year.

Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj



The New Year Eve was celebrated with great festivity and spiritual élat at the Headquarters Ashram on 31st December 2017. The celebration commenced at 7.30 p.m. with Jaya Ganesh prayer and Stotra-chanting. Thereafter, Sadgurudev's devotees from different parts of the world lovingly offered the flowers of devotional songs and Stotra chanting at His lotus feet. It was followed by soul-stirring Bhajan-Kirtan by the Sannyasis and Brahmacharis of the Ashram. The Darshan of Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj and listening to his soul-stirring New Year Message through a DVD inspired one and all to strive sincerely to lead the divine life.

Thereafter, H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj and H.H. Sri Swami Adwaitanandaji Maharaj delivered brief

messages and conveyed their warmest wishes for the New Year. With deep feelings of prayerfulness and meditation till 12 midnight, the devotees bid adieu to the year 2017 and welcomed the New Year 2018. To commemorate the sacred occasion, six books were also released. The celebration concluded with Arati and distribution of special Prasad.



May Lord Almighty and Sadgurudev bless us all to realise the Self within this happy New Year. * * *



BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATION OF PARAM PUJYA SRI SWAMI MADHAVANANDAJI MAHARAJ AT THE HEADQUARTERS ASHRAM



To mark the sacred occasion of Birth Centenary of Param Pujya Sri Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj, the Headquarters Ashram conducted a Jnana Yajna from 10th to 18th December 2017 wherein Revered Sri J.K. Bhattji of Vadodara, Gujarat delivered a series of lectures on 'Uddhava Gita'. Prof. Bhattji, through his scholarly discourses on 'Uddhava Gita', enlightened the devotees on various different aspects of



Srimad Bhagavata Mahapurana.

The programme of the auspicious day of 15th December 2017, the 100th Birth Anniversary of Worshipful Sri Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj commenced with special Puja at Sri Vishwanath Mandir and Havan at Ashram Yajnashtala. In the

forenoon, all the Sannyasis, Brahmacharis, devotees and guests of the Ashram devoutly participated in the grand Paduka Puja at the sacred Samadhi Shrine. During the night Satsang, a Telugu book on Param Pujya Swamiji Maharaj was released. The Satsang concluded with Arati and distribution of special Prasad.

May the abundant grace of the Lord Almighty, Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Param Pujya Sri Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj be upon all! ♦ ♦ ♦

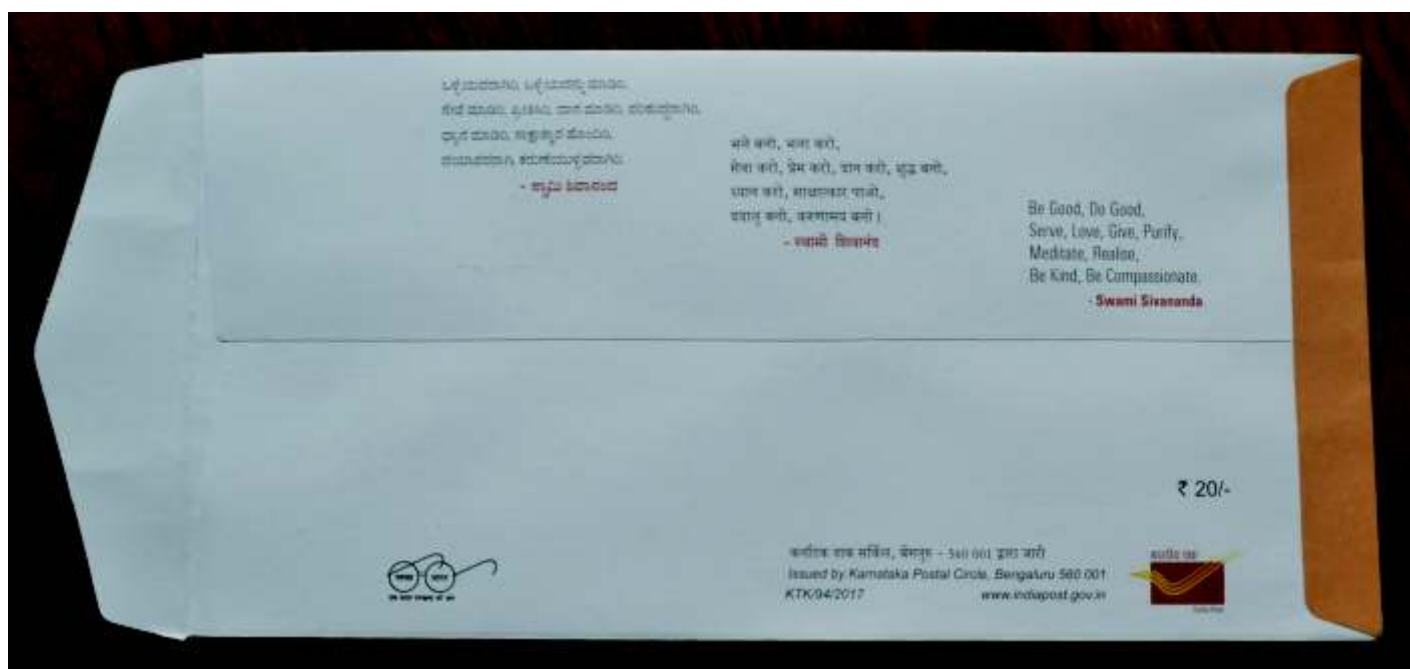


**BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATION OF
PARAM PUJYA SRI SWAMI MADHAVANANDAJI
MAHARAJ AT BANGALORE**



The Bangalore Divine Life Society Branch jointly with Madhava Divya Dham, Taverekere Bangalore, devoutly celebrated the Birth Centenary of Param Pujya Sri Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj on 15th December 2017. Devotees from different parts of India gathered at Madhava Divya Dham to attend this sacred celebration.

The Celebration commenced with Prabhat Pheri and Paduka Puja followed by Bhajan-kirtan. Thereafter, a special Postal Cover on Param Pujya Sri Swami





Madhavanandaji Maharaj was released by Honorable Col. Arvind Varma, the Post Master General HQ, Bangalore. Col. Varma, Sri Shivaram, Chief Post Master, Sri Shivaprasad, President DLS Bangalore Branch and Sri Ganesh Prasad, Secretary DLS Bangalore Branch spoke on the occasion. Sri Shivaprasadji also read out the message of H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, President DLS Headquarters. Sri Bharat Chandra Nath presented vote of thanks expressing special gratitude towards H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj for having initiated the proposal for Special Cover and towards Smt. Ramani Jayaram for her dedicated efforts in organising the programmes for Birth Centenary Celebration of Param Pujya Sri Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj. The Celebration concluded with Mahamangalarati and distribution of Jnana Prasad and Prasad.

May the blessings of the Lord Almighty, Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Param Pujya Sri Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj be upon all!



EDUCATIONAL AID DURING THE YEAR 2017—2018

‘SERVE, LOVE, GIVE’—In pursuance of these noble teachings of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, the Headquarters Ashram has constantly been rendering its loving services to the poor and weaker sections of the society through its social welfare activities. Providing educational aid to the poor and needy children every year is one of these activities.

As per yesteryears, the Headquarters Ashram offered educational aid to the students from the weaker sections of society residing in Rishikesh and nearby villages. 4431 boys and 5963 girls studying in 704 schools and colleges of 542 villages were benefitted with the educational aid of ₹ 2,75,04,500/ (Two Crore Seventy Five Lakh Four Thousand Five Hundred Only). Out of the total 10394 beneficiary students, 2377 students were from Primary Level, 3241 from Upper Primary Level, 4199 from Secondary and Senior Secondary Level, 514 from Graduation Level and 63 students from Post Graduation Level.

May the abundant blessings of Lord Almighty and Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj be upon all!

DEVOTION: A RITUAL, A DISCIPLINE, A MEDITATION

By fasting and observing vigil throughout the day and night on special religious occasions like Sivaratri, the aspirant, the devotee, gives himself up to the Grace of the Lord and has his body, speech and mind offered to Him. There is nothing of man left in him: he has surrendered his personality to Siva in the form of devout service. This divine worship is a ritual for the body, a discipline for speech and a meditation for the mind. With this as unfailing aids, the soul traverses beyond itself and seeks to gain ingress to the haven of peace and bliss.

The child thinks of the mother and mother alone. A passionate husband thinks of his wife and wife alone. A greedy man thinks of his money and money alone. Even so, the devotee should entertain in his heart the picture of his Ishtam and Ishtam alone. Then he can have Darshan of God easily.

Devotion transmutes man into Divinity. It intoxicates the devotee with divine love. It gives him eternal satisfaction. It makes him perfect. It weans the mind from sensual objects. It makes him rejoice in God. —**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)

Unrecognizable, the torso, face, scalp eyes, ears and mouth—completely burned. This Sadhu had fallen into the fire while he was preparing his food. After being admitted by a good Samaritan for one-week admission in the Government Hospital, he was brought to Sivananda Home, where he looked like a mummy—completely packed up in dressing. Initially he was only able to drink liquids, then gradually the pain became less, and he slowly started to open his mouth and swallowed semi-liquid and even vast food. The whole day he would quietly lie down under his bedding, hardly moving, and the eyes closed. The wounds were infected, but with ongoing dressing and medication the infection subsided gradually, and a transformation could be seen—life came back, a revival out of the mummy-status.

A transformation too occurred, when an elderly patient became

bedridden, and sunk into a coma state, day by day, step by step towards the passing into another realm. The cremation followed and his ashes were offered to Holy Mother Ganga, near holy Gurudev Kutir, with prayers for his soul to rest in Peace. As a lone pilgrim he was brought into the Home, where Gurudev took him into His shelter, under His protection and guided and accompanied him on his last journey Home.

Om Shanti Shanti Shantih.

Sivananda Home itself is undergoing a transformation this month, where amidst dust and dirt, repairing of the buildings and overall painting is done, each and every room and ward arising out of the dust in full color bright shining.

“Lead me from the unreal to the Real, Lead me from darkness to light, Lead me from death to immortality.” OM OM OM.

“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, WEST BENGAL – SADHANA SHIBIR

The Annual Sadhana Shibir of The Divine Life Society, West Bengal, will be held from 17th to 21st February 2018 at Manav Seva Trust Complex, Hamiragachhi, Railway Station-Malia, on Howrah—Tarekeshwar Railway line (54 km from Kolkata by road). Delegates are requested to report at the Sadhana Shibir venue between 3:00 PM and 4:00 PM on February 17th, 2018. Enrolment Form will be given to the delegates at the time of registration.

Participation fee will be Rs. 300/- per person for delegates from West Bengal and Rs. 250/- per person for delegates from other states inclusive of food and dormitory accommodation.

The last date of enrollment is 31st January 2018. The Enrollment form has to be sent to Sri Bijoy Swain, 4C Meher Ali Mondal Street, Mominpur, KOLKATA—700027, West Bengal. Participation Fee/accommodation charges are to be made in favour of “The Divine Life Society, West Bengal”, payable at Kolkata.

For Enrollment and information please contact:

Sri Bijoy Kr. Swain 0 93393 92845

Sri Nitul Parekh 0 98300 40730

Sri Prafulla Mahapatra 0 94383 03624

All Devotees are requested to participate.

—The Divine Life Society

THE GREAT ILLUSION

A doctor thinks that the Advocate is very happy. The Advocate thinks that a businessman is more happy. The Judge thinks that the Professor is more happy. This is an illusion. This is a trick of the mind. Verily, no one is really happy in this world. Real happiness can only be had in one's own Atman. Therefore attain Self-realisation and be happy.

—Swami Sivananda



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

YOGA-VEDANTA FOREST ACADEMY (THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY),
P.O. SHIVANANDANAGAR, PIN: 249 192, Distt. Tehri-Garhwal, Uttarakhand, (INDIA)

ADMISSION NOTICE

Applications are hereby invited for undergoing the **89th** residential Basic YOGA-VEDANTA COURSE of two months' duration, i.e., from **4-5-2018 to 30-6-2018**. This Course will be held in the Academy premises at the Headquarters of the Divine Life Society, Shivanandanagar, Rishikesh.

The details are as follows:

1. It is open to Indian citizens (Men) only. The classes are for admitted applicants who have been duly registered as students for the Course.
2. Age Group: Between 20 and 65 years.
3. Qualifications:
 - (a) Preferably Graduate with keen spiritual aspiration and deep interest in the practice of Yoga-Vedanta.
 - (b) Must be able to converse in English fluently as the medium of instruction is English.
 - (c) Should have sound health.
4. Duration of the Course:- Two months' residential Course on Yoga, Vedanta and Cultural Values.
5. Scope and syllabus of the Course:
 - (a) An outline study of History of Indian and Western Philosophy, Studies in Upanishads, Studies in Religious Consciousness, study of the Bhagavad Gita, Patanjali's Yoga System, Narada Bhakti Sutras and The Philosophy of Swami Sivananda.
 - (b) Practical:—Asana, Pranayama, Meditation and Karma Yoga, Lectures, Group discussions, Questions and Answers, and final examination will form part of the Course.
6. There will be no charges for training, boarding and lodging. Pure vegetarian food (Breakfast and two meals a day only) will be provided. Smoking, drinking and use of intoxicants are strictly prohibited.
7. 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.
8. Application Form duly filled-in should reach the undersigned by **20-03-2018**. The aim of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy is not merely an academic equipment of students, but to prepare the students for a successful life in the world and to facilitate the living of a wholesome life with an integrated personality. The Course conducted in this Academy is more of the nature of an all-round discipline than merely providing students with scriptural learning or textual information.

For the Application Form and Prospectus please write to:

**Also Application Form and Prospectus
can be downloaded from website**

www.sivanandaonline.org

Or contact the e-mail:

yvacademy@gmail.com

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 (Academy)

SHIVANANDANAGAR,
October, 2017

- 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 5) is subject to slight alterations without previous notice, in case such a need arises.



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

Aska (Odisha): Besides the regular weekly Satsang on Thursdays and Sundays, the Branch organised a special Satsang on 17th and a Sadhana Day on 15th October, with more than 300 participants, who were exposed to varieties of activities.

Bangalore (Karnataka): Besides every Thursday Satsang with study, recitations, Archana, Swadhyaya of Gurudev's teachings, Japa etc., Akhanada Mahamantra Kirtan was conducted on 19th November, between 9:30 AM to 12 noon followed by Guru Gita chanting and Mangalarati. 4th Sunday programme on 26th November unfolded with recitations of Bhagavad Gita, Isavasya Upanishad, practice of Bhajan, and Satsang.

Bargarh (Odisha): During November, the Branch continued with Rudrabhisheka of Lord Sri Viswanath on every Sunday morning, Sadguru Paduka Puja on Thursdays, Satsang on Saturday evenings, Bhagavad Gita recitation and discussion on Sunday evenings, and daily activities of worship of Sadgurudev and Lord Viswanath, both morning and evening along with Swadhyaya, Yoga, Pranayama and Meditation. 200 copies of 'Mahat

Vani' an Oriya booklet, were distributed free. One week special Satsang, on Jagatguru Sankaracharya's "Sadachara Anusandhanam" from 29th October to 4th November was also arranged. Sivananda Charitable Homeopathy Dispensary rendered service to 200 patients.

Bellary (Karnataka): Daily Puja and Sunday's Satsang were continued. The Branch celebrated Sri Swami Varasiddhi Vinayaka Pratishtha Day on 11th, Paduka Puja of Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj on 15th and 16th Punyatithi Aradhana of HH Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj on 28th October.

Bolangir (Odisha): Besides daily Yoga class, Paduka Puja, Satsang and weekly Satsang on Thursdays and Saturdays, a Bhakta Charita Katha Saptaha from 2nd to 8th November by Sri Swami Ramarajyam for an audience of 100 devotees was organized. Matru Mandali observed Ekadasi Day with Bhajan, Kirtan and Vishnu Sahasranama Parayan. Chidananda Health Centre treated 276 patients under allopathy, 57 under Homeopathy and 86 under Ayurveda with free medicines. On 28th November, with Sri Swami

Sivachidanandaji Maharaj at Centurian University Campus, a students' programme was arranged in the afternoon with more than 150 participants.

Chandapur, Ganjam (Odisha): Besides regular Saturday Satsang, Thursday Guru Paduka Puja and mobile Satsang on 8th and 24th November, a special Satsang was arranged at the request of a devotee in a village. The Parayana of 'Harivamsa Purana' and 'Ramcharita Manas' commenced in October and concluded on Sadhana Day, the 4th November, with a special Satsang. Gita Jayanti was celebrated on 29th November, with 'Gita Swadhyaya' of 18 chapters, Puja, Arati and discourse.

Chandigarh: During October the Branch conducted regular activities including weekly Satsang every Sunday followed by Bhandara for about 250 poor people and free medical treatment to 70 indigent patients, one hour Yoga class five days a week, 12 hour Akhanda Maha Mantra Kirtan once a month, financial assistance of about Rs.9000 per month to a kidney patient; publication and free distribution of a monthly news-letter to about 400 families. In addition, the rejuvenators' festival of Diwali was

celebrated with the usual fervor on 19th by holding a special Satsang in the Ashram premises that was decorated with lights.

Chatrapur, Ganjam, (Odisha): Besides regular weekly and daily Satsang, four special Satsangs were organized on 2nd, 12th, 15th and 21st October. Monthly Paduka Puja on 8th and 24th was done. To celebrate Kartik month, Ram Charit Manas Parayan was commenced on 6th October, with a large number of devotees daily in the morning hours that concluded on 4th November. At Swadhyaya Kendra, on 28th October, 22 devotees performed a Parayan of Sundar Kanda.

Jamshedpur (Jharkhand): During November, the Branch arranged Satsang every Friday evening and celebrated Kartik Purnima on 4th, with Vishnu Sahasranama Yajna participated by all the devotees. For the children of Antoday Bastee, free drawing classes were organized every Sunday afternoon.

Jeypore, Koraput (Odisha): During October, 2017, the Branch continued with regular twice a day worship, Satsang on Sundays and Thursdays. Sivananda Day on 8th was observed with Havan and Puja. The 16th Punnyatithi of HH Sri Swami

Krishnanandaji Maharaj was celebrated on 28th, with an inspiring speech by Sri Swami Parama Priyanandaji Maharaj on the glorious life and personality of Swamiji Maharaj. Holy Kartik month was observed by daily Parayan of Srimad Bhagavatam by Sri Trinath Mahapatra and others.

Kanpur, (Uttar Pradesh): The Branch members received Sri Swami Devabhaktanandaji at Green Park, Kanpur, on 6th November and organized a guest lecture of Sri Swamiji at Dr. Virendra Swaroop Institute of Computer Studies on the subject, 'Practical Application of Bhagavad Gita in Daily Life', participated by 250 devotees. In the evening Swamiji gave a Satsang with 150 devotees at Old Age Home, Kidwai Nagar. Daily chanting of Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra and Durga Saptasati was carried out at Branch Office.

Kabisurya Nagar, Ganjam (Odisha): The Branch conducted daily Narayan Seva and weekly Satsang on Thursdays and Sundays. Evening Satsang throughout the holy month of Kartik from 6th October to 4th November, and Shodasi Mahotsav of Brahmaleen Swami Ramananda Saraswati from 7th to 9th November with Brahmana Seva, Vaishnava

Seva, Sadhu Seva and Narayan Seva, were the special events.

Khurda Branch (Odisha): Gita Jayanti was observed on 24th October, 2017, by collective recitation of the whole Bhagavad Gita by 30 members at the residence of a devotee, Smt Gitanjali Routray. On 29th October the Branch celebrated 16th Punyatithi Aradhana of HH Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj and Sadhana Day, with Guru Paduka Puja, Bhajan, Kirtan, talk on Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj, Arati and Prasad sevan. Daily Satsang continued as usual.

Khallikote (Odisha): The Branch celebrated Swadhyaya Kendra Pratishtha and had puja, Gita parayanam, Paduka Puja, Pravachan and Narayana Seva on 29th and 30th November, 2017. Free booklets were distributed. Besides, weekly Satsang on Sundays and Thursdays continued.

Khurja (Uttar Pradesh): Daily Yoga class for gents in the morning, Dhyana Yoga for gents every Sunday morning and Yoga class for ladies in the evening at Swami Devanand Satsang Bhavan; ladies Sankirtan at the Balkeshwar Temple on Ekadasi Days were the regular activities. Free distribution of Jnana Prasad and medicines for patients at Sri Swami

Devanand Homeo Dharmarth Aushadhalaya continued.

Kodala, Ganjam (Odisha): In the month of November the Branch conducted Satsang every Thursday with Prabhat Pheri and Paduka Puja, followed by Narayan Seva, besides mobile Satsang on 8th and 24th. Gita Jayanti was observed on 29th and Rasa Purnima with a special Satsang.

Ladies Branch, Lanjipalli, (Odisha): Regular programmes like Swadhyaya, Gita chanting on Ekadasi Day, recitation of Hanuman Chalisa and Sundara Kanda on Sankranti Day were conducted. Special Satsang and distribution of fruits and biscuits to about 1200 patients of M.K.C.G. Medical College Hospital, Berhampur on 8th and Narayan Seva for poor and needy on 24th September were arranged. Smt. Kamal Kumari Panigrahy of Sunabeda performed Ram Charita Manas Parayan and Pravachan on Sri Krishna Charitamruta on 12th October. Akhanda Nama Sankirtan for 72 hours was organised. On Kartika Purnima, Sattvik food was distributed to 1500 local people and winter clothings to about 375 poor and needy.

Lucknow, (Uttar Pradesh): Swami Devabhaktanandaji from the Headquarters Ashram visited the

Branch from 29th October to 5th November, and conducted Yoga Shivr at Ekta Park, Sector C, Indiranagar, in the early morning hours for a week; Satsang and discussion on 'Bhaja Govindam' at the residences of devotees and on 2nd November, Satsang with Bhajan Sandhya at the Community Centre of HAL Complex, Indiranagar, participated by more than 100 devotees. Besides, special Satsangs were also arranged for the children of the School for the Blind on 30th October, for the Commissioner and Officers of Income Tax Dept. at Gomti Nagar on 1st November and for the inmates of the Old Age Home (Samarpan) at Adil Nagar on 3rd November. Satsang and Puja at Kunteshwar Mahadev and Lodeshwar Mahadev temples in Barabanki, Paduka Puja at the residence of Dr Sunita Saxena and Samapan Satsang at 20, Lekhraj Homes on 5th November, together with prize distribution programme to children of the Bal Vahini for their Drawing/Debate competition, were the other events.

Pasulunda, Cuttack (Odisha): During October and November, the Branch arranged Satsang and Paduka Puja at different residences of Sadhaks. Akhanda Maha Mantra

Sankirtan and Rudrabhisheka at Chandrasekhar Temple, celebration of Birth anniversary of Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj and a free medical camp on 9th November, were the other activities.

Polasara, Ganjam (Odisha): The Branch organised a Geeta Jnana Yajna from 9th to 15th November, presided over by Sri Swami Ramananda Puriji Maharaj with discourses on all days. Besides, daily evening Satsang and Guru Paduka Puja on 8th and 24th, '108 Arati' to observe Kartik month was also arranged.

Raipur (Chhatisgarh): During November the Branch observed Ekadasi days with Vishnu Sahasranama Parayan and weekly Satsang on every Sunday.

Razole (Andhra Pradesh): The Branch celebrated Gita Jayanti on 29th November, by reciting Gita Ashtottaram, Sri Krishna Ashtottaram and some chapters of Bhagavad Gita followed by Arati and Prasad distribution.

Swami Sivananda Cultural Association, Lajpatnagar (New Delhi): The Branch had celebration of Punyatithi Aradhana of HH Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on

19th August, 2017, at Swami Sivananda Satsang Bhavan, Amar Colony, by performing Paduka Puja of worshipful Gurudev and Swamiji Maharaj, Bhajan Kirtan and Arati followed by Bhandara for school children and devotees. Birthday of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was celebrated on 8th September, 2017, with worship of holy sandals and a special performance by students of Swami Sivananda Vidya Bhavan depicting the life of Swamiji Maharaj from childhood to Sannyas Diksha, that captivated and inspired the audience. On 24th September, special Paduka Puja and Satsang with Bhajans enriched Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj's Birthday celebration. Worship of the Divine Mother during Navaratri Puja with traditional chantings, Yajna, Japa and Bhandara on the final day was successfully performed. A special 'Gopi Geet' Katha, was organized from 5th to 11th October by Shastropasak Acharya Chandra Bhushan Mishraji, who beautifully presented 'Gopi Geet' with the support of scriptures and puranas.

South Balanda (Odisha): The Branch continued with the regular activities of worship, Friday Satsang and Paduka Puja on Sivananda and

Chidananda Days. Special Satsang on 14th and 30th November by ladies, another special Satsang on Sankranti Day on 16th November and 'Akhandha Maha Mantra Sankirtan' for 3 hours on 25th, were the other events. Besides, Srimad Bhagavata Saptaha Parayana and Pravachan Maha Yajna was organized from 29th October to 4th November, officiated by Pujya Swami Swarupananda Saraswati of Brindavan.

Sunabeda Ladies Branch, Koraput (Odisha): During September to November, the Branch performed the regular activities of Sankirtan, study of Bhagavata and Bhagavad Gita, Japa of Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra, Satsang on every Sunday along with Sivananda Study Circle and children's Satsang, Tuesday noon Narayan Seva, afternoon Satsang on Wednesdays and Saturdays, Guru Paduka Puja with Gita and Vishnu Sahasranama Archana on Ekadasi days, 2hours Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra Japa Anushtan on 8th and 24th of every month, Sadhana Day every month and Sundara Kanda Parayan in the evening on Sankranti Days. A special Satsang for school children was arranged by Sri Swami Rama Rajyamji on 13th November. Sacred

Kartika Purnima was also celebrated with worship of Guru Paduka and Nama Sankirtan for 12 hours on 4th November.

Yoga Centre, Hong Kong (China): The regular activities of the Branch were conducted from April to July 2017 as usual, comprising collective Maha Mantra chanting, Satsang with chantings of Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra and Hanuman Chalisa followed by a talk on Yoga Sutras and Yogasana classes with Pranayama and Meditation. *Special activities:* Guru Purnima was observed in July with Paduka Puja, Special Satsang by Sri Hari Cheng at the Cheung Sha Wan Yoga Centre once every month on various topics. The Branch celebrated 17th anniversary of the Honh Kong Branch on 6th May together with 3-sessions of Yogasana classes at North Point and Cheung Sha Wan Yoga Centre simultaneously and in the afternoon the Branch arranged a talk on "Vision and Mission of the Divine Life Society" by Sri Hari Cheng. The Branch provided volunteer Yoga teachers to serve the elderly in Yoga classes organized by the Hong Kong Family Welfare Society, as and when needed.

AVAILABLE BOOKS ON YOGA, PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

By H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj

All About Hinduism	₹ 205/-
Adhyatma Yoga	80/-
Ananda Gita	45/-
Ananda Lahari	35/-
Analects of Swami Sivananda	55/-
Autobiography of Swami Sivananda	95/-
Bazaar Drugs	50/-
Beauties of Ramayana	120/-
Bhagavad Gita (One Act Play)	35/-
Bhagavadgita Explained	50/-
Bhagavadgita (Text & Commentary)	90/-
Bhagavadgita (Text, Word-to-Word Meaning, Translation and Commentary) (H.B.)	400/-
" " (P.B.)	390/-
Bhagavad Gita (Translation only)	55/-
Bhakti and Sankirtan	95/-
Bliss Divine	415/-
Blood Pressure—Its Cause and Cure	50/-
Brahmacharya Drama	40/-
Brahma Sutras	375/-
Brahma Vidya Vilas	75/-
Brihadaranyaka Upanishad	325/-
*Come Along, Let's Play	80/-
Concentration and Meditation	225/-
Conquest of Mind	210/-
Daily Meditations	95/-
Daily Readings	95/-
Dhyana Yoga	125/-
Dialogues from the Upanishads	70/-
Divine life for Children	80/-
Divine Life (A Drama)	25/-
Easy Path to God-Realisation	75/-
Easy Steps to Yoga	95/-
Elixir Divine	25/-
Essays in Philosophy	55/-
Essence of Bhakti Yoga	110/-
Essence of Gita in Poems	35/-
Essence of Principal Upanishads	65/-
Essence of Ramayana	110/-
Essence of Vedanta	105/-
Ethics of Bhagavad Gita	125/-
Ethical Teachings	105/-
Every Man's Yoga	160/-
First Lessons in Vedanta	75/-
Fourteen Lessons on Raja Yoga	55/-
Gems of Prayers	50/-
Glorious Vision (A Pictorial Guide)	650/-
God Exists	50/-
God-Realisation	60/-
Gurudev Sivananda (Pictorial)	250/-
Guru Bhakti Yoga	50/-
Guru Tattwa	50/-
Hatha Yoga	90/-
Health and Diet	105/-
Health and Happiness	100/-
Heart of Sivananda	80/-
Health and Hygiene	190/-
Himalaya Jyoti	40/-
Hindu Gods and Goddesses	85/-
Hindu Fasts and Festivals	85/-
Home Nursing	75/-
Home Remedies	125/-

How to Become Rich	30/-
How to Cultivate Virtues and Eradicate Vices	165/-
How to Get Sound Sleep	50/-
How to Live Hundred Years	70/-
Illuminating Teachings of Swami Sivananda	75/-
Inspiring Stories	170/-
In the Hours of Communion	65/-
Isavasya Upanishad	30/-
Japa Yoga	120/-
Jivanmukta Gita	75/-
Jnana Yoga	120/-
Karmas and Diseases	20/-
Kathopanishad	75/-
Kenopanishad	40/-
Kingly Science and Kingly Secret	165/-
Know Thyself	40/-
Life and Teachings of Lord Jesus	80/-
Light, Power and Wisdom	55/-
Lives of Saints	375/-
Lord Krishna, His Lilas and Teachings	135/-
Lord Siva and His Worship	100/-
Maha Yoga	20/-
May I Answer That	125/-
Mind—Its Mysteries and Control	235/-
Meditation Know How	150/-
Meditation on Om	55/-
Moral and Spiritual Regeneration	75/-
Mother Ganga	70/-
Moksha Gita	55/-
Mandukya Upanishad	35/-
Music As Yoga	60/-
Narada Bhakti Sutras	70/-
Nectar Drops	40/-
Parables of Sivananda	55/-
Passion and Anger	15/-
Pearls of Wisdom	55/-
Philosophy and Significance of Idol Worship	20/-
Philosophical Stories	45/-
Philosophy and Yoga in Poems	25/-
Philosophy of Life	35/-
Philosophy of Dreams	35/-
Pocket Prayer Book	35/-
Pocket Spiritual Gems	35/-
Practical lessons in Yoga	120/-
Practice of Ayurveda	180/-
Practice of Bhakti Yoga	130/-
Practice of Brahmacharya	85/-
Practice of Nature Cure	145/-
Practice of Vedanta	100/-
Practice of Yoga	215/-
Precepts for Practice	55/-
Radha's Prem	30/-
Raja Yoga	140/-
Revelation	130/-
Religious Education	65/-
Sadhana	450/-
Sadhana Chatushtaya	35/-
Saint Alavandar or The King's Quest of God	30/-
Sarvagita Sara	100/-
Satsanga and Swadhyaya	45/-
Self-Knowledge	155/-
Science of Reality	60/-
Self-Realisation	50/-
Sivananda : Raja Yoga (Vol-4)	175/-

Sivananda : Bhakti Yoga (Vol-5)	175/-
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TWENTY IMPORTANT SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTIONS

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1. **BRAHMA-MUHURTA:** Get up at 4 a.m. daily. This is Brahmamuhurta which is extremely favourable for meditation on God.
2. **ASANA:** Sit on Padma, Siddha or Sukha Asana for Japa and meditation for half an hour, facing the east or the north. Increase the period gradually to three hours. Do Sirshasana and Sarvangasana for keeping up Brahmacharya and health. Take light physical exercises as walking, etc., regularly. Do twenty Pranayamas.
3. **JAPA:** Repeat any Mantra as pure Om or Om Namō Narayanaya, Om Namah Sivaya, Om Namō Bhagavate Vasudevaya, Om Saravanabhavaya Namah, Sita Ram, Sri Ram, Hari Om, or Gayatri, according to your taste or inclination, from 108 to 21,600 times daily.
4. **DIETETIC DISCIPLINE:** Take Sattvic food, Suddha Ahara. Give up chillies, tamarind, garlic, onion, sour articles, oil, mustard, asafoetida. Observe moderation in diet (Mitahara). Do not overload the stomach. Give up those things which the mind likes best for a fortnight in a year. Eat simple food. Milk and fruits help concentration. Take food as medicine to keep the life going. Eating for enjoyment is sin. Give up salt and sugar for a month. You must be able to live on rice, Dhal and bread without any Chutni. Do not ask for extra salt for Dhal and sugar for tea, coffee or milk.
5. **MEDITATION-ROOM:** Have a separate meditation-room under lock and key.
6. **CHARITY:** Do charity regularly, every month, or even daily according to your means, say six Paise per rupee.
7. **SVADHYAYA:** Study systematically the Gita, the Ramayana, the Bhagavata, Sri Vishnu-Sahasranama, Lalita-Sahasranama, Aditya Hridaya, the Upanishads or the Yoga Vasishtha, the Bible, the Zend Avesta, the Koran, the Tripitakas, the Granth Sahib, etc., from half an hour to one hour daily and have Suddha Vichara.
8. **BRAHMACHARYA:** Preserve the vital force (Veerya) very, very carefully. Veerya is God in motion or manifestation—Vibhuti. Veerya is all power. Veerya is all money. Veerya is the essence of life, thought and intelligence.
9. **PRAYER SLOKAS:** Get by heart some prayer-Slokas, Stotras and repeat them as soon as you sit in the Asana before starting Japa or meditation. This will elevate the mind quickly.
10. **SATSANGA:** Have Satsanga. Give up bad company, smoking, meat and alcoholic liquors entirely. Do not develop any evil habits.
11. **FAST ON EKADASI:** Fast on Ekadasi or live on milk and fruits only.
12. **JAPA MALA:** Have a Japa Mala (rosary) round your neck or in your pocket or underneath your pillow at night.
13. **MOUNA:** Observe Mouna (vow of silence) for a couple of hours daily.
14. **SPEAK THE TRUTH:** Speak the truth at all cost. Speak a little. Speak sweetly.
15. **PLAIN LIVING:** Reduce your wants. If you have four shirts, reduce the number to three or two. Lead a happy, contented life. Avoid unnecessary worry. Have plain living and high thinking.
16. **NEVER HURT ANYBODY:** Never hurt anybody (Ahimsa Paramo Dharmah). Control anger by love, Kshama (forgiveness) and Daya (compassion).
17. **DO NOT DEPEND UPON SERVANTS:** Do not depend upon servants. Self-reliance is the highest of all virtues.
18. **SELF-ANALYSIS:** Think of the mistakes you have committed during the course of the day, just before retiring to bed (self-analysis). Keep daily diary and self-correction register. Do not brood over past mistakes.
19. **FULFIL DUTIES:** Remember that death is awaiting you at every moment. Never fail to fulfil your duties. Have pure conduct (Sadachara).
20. **SURRENDER TO GOD:** Think of God as soon as you wake up and just before you go to sleep. Surrender yourself completely to God (Sharanagati).

Om Santih Santih Santih!

This is the essence of all spiritual Sadhanas. This will lead you to Moksha. All these Niyamas or spiritual canons must be rigidly observed. You must not give leniency to the mind.

JANUARY 2018

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SOME PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTIONS

Friends! Is there not a higher mission in life besides eating, sleeping and talking? Is there not any higher form of (Eternal) Bliss than these transitory and illusory pleasures? Is there not a more dignified life than the sensual life? How uncertain is life here! How insecure is our existence on this earth-plane with various kinds of fear! How painful is this mundane life? Should we not attempt diligently now to reach a place where there is eternal sunshine, absolute security, perfect peace? Should we not love the Lord, pursue Truth and live the Divine Life?

Swami Sivananda

To