

God is fragrance in the flower. He is the blush, the beauty of the rose. He is the strength in the iron. He is the force in the wind. He is the heat in the fire. He is the beholder in the eye. He is the innocence in the glance of the child. He is the wisdom in the heart of the wise.

—*Swami Chidananda*

## THE DOCTRINE OF REINCARNATION

*(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)*

**T**he doctrine of reincarnation or transmigration of souls is a fundamental tenet of Hinduism. You will not cease to exist after death. Before this birth you have passed through countless lives. Lord Krishna says in the Gita, "O Arjuna, both you and I have had many births before this; only I know them all, while you do not. Birth is inevitably followed by death and death by rebirth. As a man, casting off worn-out garments, takes new ones, so the dweller in the body, casting off worn-out bodies, enters into others that are new."

The Sanskrit term 'Samsara' is derived from the Sanskrit root 'Sri' which means passing. The prefix 'Sam' means intensely. The individual soul passes repeatedly through this world and other subtle higher worlds. This repeated passing of souls (Samsriti) is what is really meant by the term 'Samsara'. This Samsara exists in order that the individual soul may learn to realise himself.

The word 'reincarnation' literally means embodiment again, coming again into a physical body. The individual soul takes again a fleshy covering. The word 'transmigration' means passing from one place to another—passing into a new body.

Upanishads also declare, "Just as a caterpillar which has come to the top of a blade of grass, draws itself over to a new blade, so also does the soul draw itself over to a new body after it has put aside its old body." (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, IV-11). "Just as

a goldsmith, having taken a piece of gold, makes another form, new and more beautiful, so also verily the Atman, having cast off this body and having put away Avidya or ignorance, makes another new and more beautiful form." (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad). "Like corn, does a mortal ripen; like corn, does he spring to life again." (Kathopanishad).

The doctrine of rebirth is a corollary to the Law of Karma. The differences of disposition that are found between one individual and another must be due to their respective past actions. Past action implies past birth. Further, all your Karmas cannot certainly bear fruit in this life. Therefore, there must be another birth for enjoying the remaining actions. Each soul has a series of births and deaths. Births and deaths will continue till you attain Knowledge of the Imperishable.

Good Karma leads to incarnation into higher spheres, bad Karmas into lower. By virtue is obtained ascent to higher planes; by vice, descent to the lower. From wisdom results beatitude; and bondage from the reverse. So long as Karmas, whether good or bad, are not exhausted, men do not attain Moksha or the final emancipation even in hundreds of Kalpas or cycles. Both good and bad Karmas bind tight the Jiva in their chains. One is a chain of gold, the other is that of iron. Moksha cannot be attained by man, so long as Knowledge of the Eternal is not attained.

The soul migrates with the astral body or Sukshma Sarira or Linga Deha. This astral body is made up of nineteen Tattvas or principles, viz., five organs of action, five organs of knowledge, five Pranas, mind, intellect, Chitta (subconsciousness) and Ahamkara or egoism. This subtle body carries with it all sorts of Samskaras or impressions and Vasanas or tendencies of the individual soul. The subtle body moves towards heaven. When the fruits of good Karmas have been exhausted, it gathers for itself a new physical body and reincarnates on this earth-plane.

Those whose conduct has been good attain good births; and those whose conduct has been evil are thrown into sinful wombs or lower births.

When a man who has practised meditation and worship dies, he first goes to light; then from light to day, from day to the bright half of the moon, from the bright half of the moon to the six months when the sun goes to the north, from that to the year, from the year to the sun, from the sun to the moon, from the moon to the lightning. When he comes to the sphere of lightning, he meets a person who is not human. That person leads him to the Karya Brahman or Hiranyagarbha. This is the way of the Devas (gods) or Devayana.

He who has done works of public utility and alms, first goes to the smoke when he dies, from smoke to night, from night to the dark half of the moon, from the dark half of the moon to the six months when the sun goes to the south and from that he goes to the region of the forefathers, from the world of the forefathers to the ether, from the ether to the moon. He lives there so long as his good works will allow. When the effect of the good works has been exhausted, he comes back

to this earth by the same route. He first becomes ether, and then air, and then smoke and then mist, then cloud and then falls upon the earth as raindrops. Then he gets into food which is eaten up by man and finally becomes his child.

He passes through the various existences of the mineral kingdom and of the plant and of the animal realms—the Udbhijja (born of seed), the Svedaja (born of sweat), Andaja (born of eggs), before coming into Jarayuja (viviparous or placental origin).

Man contains within himself infinite possibilities. The magazine of power and wisdom is within him. He has to unfold the divinity within. This is the object of life.

The chains that tie you to this wheel of Samsara or Bhava Chakra or round of births and deaths are your desires. So long as you desire objects of this world, you must come back to this world in order to possess and enjoy them. But when all your desires for the mundane objects cease, then the chains are broken, and you are free. You need not take any more births. You attain Moksha or the final emancipation.

You wander in this Samsara as you think that you are different from the Lord. If you unite yourself with Him through meditation and Yoga you will obtain immortality and eternal bliss. Cut the bonds of Karma through knowledge of the Eternal and enjoy the Supreme peace of Atman, thy innermost Self and Inner Ruler. You will be freed from the round of births and deaths. Freed from sin, freed from passion, you will become a Jivanmukta or liberated sage. You will see the Self in the self and see the Self as all.

*(Continued on page 10)*

## THE GLORY OF DIVINE MOTHER

*(Sri Swami Chidananda)*

**P**uranas are sacred scriptures through which the wise seers of ancient times have tried to give us the precious treasures of wisdom, inspiration and guidance. They are holy books into which great sages have packed in deep facts about human life and the secret of success herein and hereafter. Thus these Puranas, the holy repositories of abundance of spiritual knowledge, the sacred treasure-house of vast wealth of vital wisdom of life, have ever exerted a profound influence upon the progress and development of the glorious culture and civilisation of India. The Puranas are the frame work into which have been filled the knowledge of the ways and means of conquering man's lower nature, achieving integral perfection and attaining the glorious goal of a sublime Divine Consciousness. All these they have done through the medium of didactic stories, narratives of deep esoteric significance and symbolism and rich allegory. Knowing well that basically a Hindu is religious in temperament and essentially a being of faith, these sages wove the fabric of such allegory and symbolic narrative around some popular, powerful and permanent aspect of Divinity or a great and renowned Rishi. This Divine personality usually forms the central figure of each particular Purana. You have therefore the Siva Purana, the Vishnu Purana, Skanda Purana, the Varaha Purana, the Matsya Purana, the Markandeya Purana, the Narada Purana, etc. An important portion of the Markandeya Purana consists of the renowned Devi Mahatmya which glorifies Divinity in its aspect of Sakti or Devi. It is comprised of 700

verses and hence it is also known as Devi Saptasati. And here you have a brief summary containing the very essence of this great scripture of Devi Mahatmya.

Suratha, a king of the solar race, has been defeated by his enemies and forced to flee his capital. He is wandering in exile in a forest. Here he meets a Vaisya merchant named Samadhi who is in a similar predicament, having lost everything reduced to penury and abandoned by his own wife and children. Both the king and the Vaisya merchant are dejected and their thoughts are constantly going back to their family, possessions and property, due to attachment. They fall into conversation and are puzzled as to why their thoughts are again and again dragged towards and centred upon those very persons, things and places whence so much sorrow and pain have come upon them. To solve this vexing problem they approach a sage dwelling in that forest. In answer to their query, the sage tells them that their minds behave in this manner due to the mysterious power of Divine Sakti, Maha Maya. The king and the merchant,—Suratha and Samadhi,—are eager to know more about this Divine Sakti, Maha Maya, and her Lilas and glory; and in answer, the sage narrates Devi Mahatmya; and the narrative unfolds thus:

Before the dawn of creation, at the commencement of the Kalpa when Lord Maha Vishnu is reposing upon the bosom of the vast undifferentiated ocean, two terrible Asuras,—Madhu and Kaitabha,—arise out of His Cosmic Being. They are terrible. They are dangerous and having perceived Brahma

they set upon him to destroy him. Threatened by these powerful Asuras and menaced by their malevolent motive, in great fear Brahma invokes the supreme, indescribable Divine Power, the Primordial Power, Para Sakti or Adi Sakti and implores her merciful intervention.

The Divine Mother appears and awakens Lord Narayana from His Cosmic slumber. The Lord engages Madhu and Kaitabha, the two Asuras in battle and destroys them both. Thus ends the first phase of the narrative.

All the Gods and the celestials hail the Mother with cries of victory. Mahishasura, a powerful demon, has overcome all the Devas and has subjugated them. He is terrorising the three worlds. He is enraged to hear the Devas crying victory unto the Mother. He thinks that he alone is supreme. He is arrogant in the extreme. He will tolerate no other being to question his power. Therefore, he decides to make war upon the Divine Sakti whom the Devas are hailing. He confronts the Mother with drawn weapons. There ensues a terrible fight. Bitter is the struggle. The Asura fights from all the elements. He takes fearful forms. But darkness cannot stand before light. The Divine Power is the Supreme Power. Truth always triumphs. Victory is to the Supreme Reality. Devi slays the Asura. The Divine overcomes the undivine. Thus ends the second phase.

The Divine Mother whose glory shines and dazzles in the three worlds is seated in the Himalayan region in the form of Salla Putri. At this time Sumbha and Nisumbha, two powerful Asuras, hold absolute sway over all the worlds. They have subjugated all the Devas, Yakshas, Gandharvas, Kinnaras and the like. They have rested and got into their possession all the best of things like the celestial Airavata, Uchhaisravas, Kamadhenu, Kalpavriksha and the Chintamani. They are intoxicated with the pride of their

prowess and their conquests. Their desire is insatiable. They want to possess more and ever more. Two Dutas from the Durbar of the Powerful Asura brothers behold the Divine Mother and decide that she should come into the possession of their royal Masters. They inform the Asura Sumbha of their find. Sumbha sends at once a royal messenger to bring Devi to his court. Devi says she can come only to one who conquers her in combat. She refuses to go with the messenger. The messenger conveys the news to Sumbha. He blazes with anger and sends Dhumralochana. Dhumralochana tries to lay his hands upon Divine Sakti. Devi with a single Humkar of anger reduces him to ashes. He is consumed in the flames of Devi's wrath. Next the Asura, Raktabija, comes to fight. He is an Asura of extraordinary magical powers. Moreover, he is in possession of a boon by which whenever a drop of his blood falls on the earth immediately a new Asura springs upon therefrom. So every time the Devi wounds him and spills the blood, countless powerful Asuras spring anew and fill the field of battle. Devi invokes Kali, the terrible dark-hued deity. All-powerful Kali slays the Asura Raktabija, sucking in with her terrible outspread tongue the Asura's blood more quickly than it can flow out of his wounds. Kali sees that his blood never reaches the earth. Thus, the Asura Raktabija is destroyed by the Devi. Sumbha and Nisumbha now confront the Devi. A great battle ensues. Nisumbha is killed and ultimately Devi with her trident deals the death blow to Sumbha also. The undivine forces are thus totally annihilated. The Divine rules supreme. Vidya has overcome Avidya. Light has conquered darkness. Knowledge shines with the destruction of ignorance. Joy, bliss and immortality reign supreme. The Divine Mother shines in glorious triumph. All hail to Maha Sakti. Glory be to the Mother.

## THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

(Sri Swami Krishnananda)

[Continued from the previous issue]

### VII

Yoga is a highly technical and systematic subject, and if the methods adopted are correct, there should be no doubt, whatsoever, as to the possibility of the achievement of the end. The time that you take in reaching the goal depends upon the extent of the intensity of the practice and the emphasis that your feelings lay upon it, the extent to which you are in communion with the ideal which you are trying to contemplate.

We take into consideration, first of all, the place. Everyone knows what this actually means. One has to be located in a place which is conducive to the practice. Now, what do you mean by saying 'conducive to the practice'? There are certain necessities: geographical, climatic, social, political, physical and the like, which are associated with the selection of a place. Beautiful suggestions are given to us in such scriptures as the Svetasvatara Upanishad, for instance, as also in the Bhagavad Gita and the Yoga Vasishtha. The place should be pleasing to the inward sense of spiritual quest. You should be lifted up by the very atmosphere in which you are. That is why people go to sequestered places. The more are you away from centres which have an atmosphere of clash of personalities and egos, the more can you be in tune with Nature.

When you go for a walk, you go alone and not with another person. You will feel happier when you walk alone than when you go with another person; else, there would be

two egos walking. And one ego never wholly agrees with another ego. You may be thick friends, but notwithstanding it, you are still two persons and not one person. The very fact that you are two persons shows that there are two egos and one has to adjust oneself in an artificial manner to the presence of the other. You cannot be natural when you are in the presence of another person. You cannot utter a word which will not be pleasing to the other. You cannot have a gesture made which is not to the taste of the other, and so on. But if you are under a tree you can do anything there, because the tree has no ego like the human being. The birds, the animals, have no egos like men and they do not bother about what you do, what you say, what you think, etc. Choose a place which is free from tensions arising from the presence of egos. This is the reason why we go to monasteries, temples, convents, and such other sanctified localities. Also it is said that elevated places are more convenient than others, because of the electro-magnetic influences which high altitudes are supposed to produce. The tops of mountains are regarded as very conducive. Places which are near vast areas of water, or near the ocean, are electro-magnetically more suggestive. This is the discovery of ancient sages. There is also a discovery that cloudy weather is more conducive to meditation than clear sky because of the presence of electric forces that are generated in the sky during the movement of clouds. These are minor matters, not very im-

portant things, but they are things to be remembered, as they are helpful.

Times which are suggestive of an automatic withdrawal of the mind from external activities are to be preferred. Night time is generally, and obviously, helpful because of an automatic tendency of the mind at that time to withdraw itself into subjectivity. When we speak of time for the practice of Yoga, or meditation, what we actually mean is not merely the hour of the day, such as eight o'clock, etc., but a fixed time. There is a cyclic movement of everything in Nature. This system of cyclic movement applies not only to the external world of astronomy but also to the internal world of the psyche. If we start taking our meal at a particular hour and we continue taking it at the same hour, we will start feeling hungry at the same time and not at other times, because of a cyclic effect in Nature which generally gets associated with the way of thinking, and affects sympathetically the physiological functions.

Hence it is necessary that one should fix a specific time for contemplation, studies, etc., whatever the nature of the practice; not that one starts meditating today in the morning and tomorrow in the evening and the day after at midnight, etc. Such anomalies will create a kind of jarring effect and not yield a harmonious contribution to the practice. The time should be fixed, whatever the chosen hour be. There are some people who are anxious to get up very early in the morning. They force themselves into waking up into a consciousness of meditation imagined at a particular time which is suggested by scriptures, etc. This may not have the desired result following. No kind of force should be exerted upon the mind. It may be that early morning is good for certain reasons, but in the beginning one will not be able to adjust oneself to that hour, because one is not used to that life. It is better to take things easily as an art and not as a sort of labour or an imposi-

tion that has been inflicted upon the mind. Joy should be the touchstone of the practice and not uneasiness, pain or regret.

Yoga is a process of rejoicing. It is not a suffering. It is a movement through happiness. From one state of joy, we move to another state of joy. It is not that Yoga starts with sorrow, or that it is a kind of prison-house into which we are thrown. We have sometimes a feeling that Yoga is a torture, a suffering, to the normal life of man. Sadhana means a fear, and indicates an unnatural seriousness. This is so, often because people have created a picture of awe and sternness about Yoga, an other-worldliness about it, dissociated from the natural likings of the human being. Our desires are, no doubt, obstacles to Yoga. But they are 'our' desires; this much we must remember, and they are not somebody's. So, we have to wean ourselves from these desires gradually and not make it appear that we are peeling our own skin. Such a drastic step should not be taken, and it is not the intention of Yoga.

You have to draw up a systematised programme: what is the thing to be done first, what is the thing to come next, what is the third item to be taken up, etc. The thing that is to be done after three days should not be done today, and so on. Have a graduated programme of the practice according to your own capacity. This suggestion is general and is not intended as a particular instruction to each and every person without distinction, because interests vary. You have to maintain your own spiritual diary, to put it in the way of Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. You can have a diary of your own according to your need and capacity, the stage of your mental evolution, the studies that you have made, the aptitude of your mind, the technique that you are going to adopt, etc. Have a positive attitude towards the practice.

Just as a sick person feels happy when he is in the process of moving towards health,

Yoga, as a process of one's growing towards healthier and healthier conditions of personality from states of illness, makes for a state of happiness. When one becomes healthier, one also becomes happier. Suppose you have high temperature, and the temperature comes down gradually; as it comes down, you feel greater relief, a satisfaction which arises from within, automatically and spontaneously. So is the case with Yoga. It is your mother. She will not torture you. She takes care of you. Even one thousand mothers will not equal Yoga in tending the child with affection. As is the affection that Yoga has for you, so should be the affection that you must have for Yoga.

Why is it that Yoga has such love for you? You will be wondering what is this consideration that Yoga has for you. Yoga is not a human being. Yes; but it is more than a human being. Yoga is not a word that we utter. It is a surprising revelation to us. The great thing that is called Yoga is God Himself conceived in our minds, according to our own manner; and our love for Yoga is nothing but our love for God, love for Reality, love for the Absolute, love for 'That which is'. If that Being has no love for us, what else can care for us? Not all the humans put together can have such concern over us as this great Reality has. It wants us more than we want It. All the worlds conceivable will not equal the positive affectionate reaction that this Mystery exerts upon us at every moment of time.

Feel happy: "I am in proper position with Reality. God is seeing me." This is a fact. That God sees you is not merely a doctrine; it is a

truth and there cannot be a greater truth than this. Every atom is looking at you. The whole world is awake and is conscious as to what is happening. The world is made up of love and not enmity, hatred or dissociation; it is affection that the world is made of. It is made of love, and there is nothing else here.

Love is the essence of things. You want things, and everything wants you. Feel this, assert this. Chant *mantras*, recite *slokas*, read scriptures which awaken you to this consciousness of the presence of the divine love exuberant in everything, even in the air that you breathe, the sun that shines, the rain that falls, the atmosphere that is around you, the people that are in society. All are centres of affection, really. They appear to be otherwise sometimes on account of a misconstruing and miscalculation of fact that we make in our perceptions.

The world is, therefore, a Yoga by itself; things are in a state of Yoga even now, and they are going to be in a state of Yoga always. One is only going to realise this truth. We are getting awakened to this presence which is already there and we are not going to manufacture Yoga after some time. It is not that Yoga is not here now and it is going to take place afterwards. It is not a product artificially to be concocted with the effort of the human being. Yoga is an eternal truth. The great central Absolute is perpetually there; it was not different, it is not different, and it will not be different in the future. We have only to wake up from sleep and see what is there.

(To be continued)

### AN ANNOUNCEMENT

The Seventh Punyatithi of Brahmaleen H.H. Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj will be held at the Headquarters on 6th November, 2008, according to the Spiritual Calendar. All are requested to attend the programme. —*The Divine Life Society*

## WHEN THE GURU LEAVES THE BODY

*(Sri Swami Atmaswarupananda)*

If a disciple lives long enough, sooner or later he or she is going to have to face living life when the guru is no longer in the body. Normally, this would appear to be a great loss, but Pujya Swami Chidanandaji has said that when the guru goes, then willy-nilly the disciple has to discover who the guru really is. And he has made clear that we are meant to know the guru as a living being—not a by-gone being, but as a present living being.

Some devotees are able to feel the guru alive in their hearts. For some, he is even felt to be in the blood stream. But Pujya Swami Chidanandaji himself seemed to have more prosaic ways of remembering the guru. He said that when he was in Yoga Sadhana Kutir performing his duties as president, he felt that he was still serving Gurudev—who was continuing to live in his kutir on the banks of the Ganga. And one time, a number years after Gurudev had left the body, Pujya Swamiji said—almost as if he was just discovering it—that he had never considered the fact that he would never meet Gurudev again. Thus Pujya Swamiji seemed to keep Gurudev alive in his heart—as a living being—in almost a tangible way.

The other thing that Pujya Swamiji used to constantly say is that the guru is in his teachings. And he would say that Gurudev's Universal Prayer, Twenty Important Spiritual Instructions and Sadhana Tattva were Gurudev to him. But then, Pujya Swamiji would also frequently repeat Gurudev's saying, "Obedience is better than reverence." In other words, it is good to keep the guru in our heart and devotions, but the guru gave his teachings intending that they be followed.

"Obedience is better than reverence." Why? Because we can give volumes of reverence, and it doesn't necessarily change us. But if we put ourselves under discipline—which is what it means to be a disciple—and obey the teachings, then many of those teachings are going to go against our unregenerate nature. The guru means to change us, frequently in ways that are not too pleasant.

Thus, life without the guru being in the body would seem to be not only a challenge, but a new opportunity for us—perhaps a great blessing—but obviously it requires determined commitment on our part, a determination that what the guru has given us should not go in vain.

True Life is life in Atma. True Life is life in spiritual consciousness.  
True Life is life in awareness of your Divine identity.

The light of life is Guru's teachings. The strength of life is trust in God.  
The wealth of life is virtue. The treasure of life is devotion to Lord. The basis of life is Dharma.  
—Swami Chidananda

Yoga for Health**SVASTIKASANA***(Sri Swami Chidananda)***TECHNIQUE**

Fold the left leg and place the feet near the right thigh muscles. Similarly, bend the right leg and push it in the space between the left thigh and calf muscles. Now you find the two feet between the thighs and calves of the legs. Place the hands as in Padmasana.

*(Continued from page 3)*

A new-born child manifests marks of joy, fear and grief. This is inexplicable unless we suppose that the child perceiving certain things in this life remembers the corresponding things of the past life. The things which used to excite joy, fear and grief in the past life, continue to do so in this life. The memory of the past proves the previous birth as well as the existence of the soul.

A child, just born, drinks the breast-milk of his mother through the remembrance that he did so in the previous life, as a means of satisfying hunger. The child's desire for milk in this life is caused by the remembrance of his experience in the previous life. This

proves that the child's soul, though it has abandoned a previous body and has taken a new one, remembers the experiences of the previous body.

You do not come into the world in total forgetfulness and in utter darkness. You are born with certain memories and habits acquired in the previous birth. Desires take their origin from previous experiences. We find that none is born without desires. Every being is born with some desires which are associated with the things enjoyed by him in the past life. The desire proves the existence of his soul in the previous lives.

Link yourself with God. His Divine qualities will flow into your nature and transform it into Godliness.

—Swami Chidananda

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*Sivananda's Gospel of Divine Life*

## VEDAS—THE WISDOM-SOURCE

### DIVINE KNOWLEDGE

1. Divine knowledge can be found in the Upanishads—the eternal fountain-source of highest wisdom.

2. The Upanishads are the breath of the Eternal. They are revelations. So they inspire eternally.

3. The Upanishads constitute the life-breath of India. They are direct revelations which are transcendental and eternal.

4. The Upanishads throw a flood of light on the path of knowledge, and lead the aspirant to the highest rung on the ladder of Jnana.

5. The Vedanta of the Upanishads is a living religion. It is not mere dialectics.

6. Vedanta is a system of life itself. It represents the fundamental basis on which alone a universal religion or a “universal congress of faiths” can be built.

7. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is the oldest of the existing Upanishads. It contains numerous treasures of spiritual knowledge.

8. Vedanta is the power that sustains India even to this day.

9. Vedanta is a non-dualistic philosophy. It teaches that Brahman, the ultimate Reality behind the physical universe, is one without a second.

10. Hold aloft the torch of Upanishadic wisdom and march forward to the kingdom of immortality and eternal bliss. The Upanishadic philosophy is the only solace of life.

11. Science does the work of classifying, analysing and explaining phenomena, but Brahma Vidya or the science of the Self

teaches you to transcend phenomena and thus attain immortality.

12. The sacred Upanishads are not the products of individual minds and intellects. They are revelations.

13. The Upanishads form the concluding portion of the Vedas, and are therefore called Vedanta or the end of the Vedas.

14. The lofty Upanishads contain the essence of Vedic teachings.

15. The Upanishads are the pivot of Hindu culture.

16. Know that thou art the infinite, unchanging, all-pervading Soul or Atma.

17. The Atma is pure consciousness, self-delight and self-knowledge.

18. In essence you are the pure Soul. Desire, weakness, imperfection and pain touch thee not. Thou art not the body and the mind.

19. Appearance is indwelt by Reality or Brahman.

20. The source of everything is God or Brahman or the Absolute.

### INSTRUCTIONS AND AUTOGRAPH

“You wish to have my autograph? Come, why hesitate?”

The Master relieved Sri Kamala Tuli's embarrassed silence.

Astonished, she merely smiled and nodded, “Yes.”

“At first I thought that the thing in your hand was a money-bag, but when I noticed your embarrassment, realised it must be an autograph book. Give it to me.”

When the book was handed to the Master, he looked at it with the admiration of a child. But there were no Autographs in it!

“Swamiji, I wanted the book to be opened by you first.”

Quietly the Master wrote:

*Srimathi Kamala Tuli,*

*Serve, love, give. Do Kirtan, do Japa. Control anger through patience and forgiveness. See God everywhere. Meditate. Realise God.*

*May you shine like Mira, Radha and Sita! May Lord bless you with health, long life, peace and freedom!*

*Sivananda*

A full page of spiritual instructions in answer to a devotee's prayer for a simple autograph.

### SAVED BY THE LORD'S GRACE

“It is a miracle how they have all been saved. Even a sight of the wreckage is enough to turn one mad. The very thought of the accident is quite sufficient to kill the passengers. They were saved only through Lord Viswanath's Grace. Instead of meeting with the accident in the middle of a jungle, where there would have been little chance of being saved, they were all brought to the feet of Lord Viswanath, where they could get immediate medical treatment, tea and all comfort.”

The Master extolled greatly the Grace and power of Lord Viswanath, as the victims of a nasty bus accident just adjacent to the Ashram dispensary were being treated zealously by the inmates.

### A POLISHED CHEAT

“What are Rs. 600 before the evolution of a single individual soul? I shall not be sorry if the consignee does not pay even a pie for

the Rs. 600 worth of books we sent him. What will he do with the books? They are not eatables. He might sell them at an anna per copy at the Moore Market in Madras, or even give them free. In any case they will go around. At least one man's eyes will be opened and he will begin to do Japa. I will be satisfied. God will give us money when He thinks fit. Why should we consider this a loss?”

The Master made the above observations when the case of a bookseller, who had taken out a consignment of his books worth Rs. 600, had not even intimated his whereabouts to the Society for years. The person in question did not have a shop!

When the news was broken to him, the Master, in between winks and a winsome smile, said, “So you have been deceived by this polished cheat! It is a wonder how you entrusted such a large consignment to a stranger!”

“Swamiji, before that he had purchased books worth Rs. 20.”

“Yes, he bought books worth Rs. 20, sent you a nice letter on his big, beautiful letterhead, then ordered Rs. 600 worth of books and bolted! He is a polished cheat!”

Everyone laughed and said, “Yes, Swamiji.”

“There was a similar case in Singapore. A man opened a large shop. He had a lady typist, a spacious office, etc. He had a roaring business. He borrowed some money from the local people. One day he was found missing with all the money. He opened a similar shop in Saigon, too!”

Everyone seemed to have reconciled themselves to the view that all of them, including the Master himself, had been deceived. Reading their thoughts the Master again said, “We have not incurred any loss!”

The delight of the Self is the delight of Being. (Swami Krishnananda)

Children's Page**INSTANT DIVINE RESPONSE***(Sri Swami Ramarajyam)*

**T**his story is related to the two saints, who were great devotees of Radha and Lord Krishna. They had strong faith in God, His un-failing care for His devotees and in His certain response to their prayers.

Once, during their travels, they reached Barsana, where there is a grand temple of Shreeji (Radhaji). It was night and they were extremely tired. They decided not to go anywhere to beg alms and to stay in the temple as guests of Shreeji. They slept on the verandah of the temple. Of course, they had thought about being the guests of Shreeji in a humorous vein, but they had no doubt that if She wished, they would be received in the temple as guests.

The same night, the priest of the temple had a dream. He dreamt that Shreeji was telling him that two of her guests were sleeping in the temple and they should be fed properly. Startled by this dream, the priest woke up. It was about midnight. He began to shout, "Where are you, guests of Shreeji?"

Both the saints heard the priest's call but they did not respond as they thought that there might be some guests who were being called. There was in fact no outsider except them in the temple. So the priest took them

along. He extended to them proper hospitality and offered them food. They both fell asleep after taking food.

A little later both of them had the same dream. A twelve-year old girl appeared in their dream and said, "Did you like the food? Have you had your fill? The priest forgot to offer you 'paan' (betel leaf). I have brought it for you." And, she placed the paan near the pillow.

Soon after they had this dream, both the saints woke up. The 'paans' were really kept near their pillows. They narrated their dreams to each other and began to shed tears of joy.

Dear children, this is a true story. The question of disbelief does not arise. You have to believe not only in the truth of this story but also in the fact that your unpretentious and strong faith in God is what really impresses God, and not your wealth, splendour, beauty, power or position. If you pray to God sincerely and earnestly that He should appear before you, should let you see His divine sports and should seat you on His lap and if your prayers are wet with your tears, He shall not delay granting your prayers. He has to respond to your prayers instantly provided you pray in dead earnest.

Happiness is your essential nature like the relationship between sweetness and sugar, between brightness and light. You yourself are happiness. That is your innermost nature. You can never actually lose it because it is identical with you.

The true happiness of man lies in harmonizing his will with the will of God.  
—Swami Chidananda

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### NEWS FROM THE HEADQUARTERS

#### SEVA THROUGH SIVANANDA HOME

The Divine Life Society Headquarters through its Sivananda Home has been serving humbly the needy and the poor people, those who require medical aid, but have no resources, no human help, no shelter and nobody to attend on them and are totally at the mercy of Nature.

The Home tries to provide an abode of refuge for this most defenceless and vulnerable group of people, who even face severe problems in getting access to basic amenities such as drinking water and sanitation, what to speak of security, protection, medical aid and the natural human need for social interaction and communication! They are all exposed to weather extremities, stripped off from one's family ties and identity, homeless and nameless.

By the Grace and profound Blessings of His Holiness Brahmaleen Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, the newly constructed adjacent extension of Sivananda Home could be inaugurated on September 14th, 2008. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, General Secretary of the Headquarters enlightened the function with his presence, his heartfelt prayers, his guidance and Bhajans and additionally declared the building open. Om Sri Sadgurudevaya Namah.

The extension provides accommodation for twelve patients under medical treatment and is divided into sections for contagious and chronic sick cases, and thus augments

the facilities. Fresh admissions continued and the beds were occupied the same day. Among the new patients were people suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis, anemia, gastritis, worm infestations, and patients with infected ulcers on the legs.

One of the elderly female inmates of the nearby Leprosy Colony was treated on short-term basis for a femur injury after a fall. One Mataji was also brought in for admission, dejected and abandoned, in a physical destitute condition and in an upset state of mind, injured and harmed in her integrity as a woman, having lost contact with her identity and dignity. She was a broken heart, a rough and tough wall built around herself to protect her inner self, and old pain and hidden anger flowing from her mouth and hands. It will take time to allow her heart to melt a little bit and to regain step by step the feeling of worthiness and preciousness as a child of the Divine. May the Dear Lord shower His Grace and Healing Touch upon this ailing, injured and suffering daughter of His and bless her with the awareness of ever present Divine consciousness and PEACE.

*"His Love is immediately available to you, for He is not a remote reality, but He is the indwelling Reality, nearer to you than anything else on earth. Rejoice that within you is the peace of God as your own Self"*

(Swami Chidananda)

*"Feed the hungry. Clothe the naked. Serve the sick. This is Divine Life."* (Swami Sivananda)

## SHODASHI ARADHANA OF MOST WORSHIPFUL SRI SWAMI CHIDANANDAJI MAHARAJ

Most Worshipful Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, President of The Divine Life Society Headquarters, attained Mahasamadhi at 8.11 p.m. on the 28th of August, 2008. The Shodashi Aradhana of Pujya Swamiji was conducted with all solemnity on the 12th of September, 2008. The 16 days from Mahasamadhi day to Shodashi day were celebrated in a grand way in the Ashram with Srimad Bhagavata Jnana Yajna, Akhanda Patha of Tulsi Ramacharitmanas, Gita Yajna, Maharudra Abhisheka and Homa, Chandi Yajna, Shodashi Havan, Bhajans and Kirtans, feeding of children, sadhus, lepers, birds and animals.

The last rites were performed on the 29th August, 2008, early morning in accordance with the Wish expressed by Brahmaleen Pujya Swamiji in his Will published in the Divine Life Magazine in May 2002. The Holy Mortal Coil seated in a wooden chair, decorated with flowers and garlands, was brought from Shanti Niwas to the Ashram Headquarters around 12 midnight and placed in the Samdhi Mandir of Gurudev His Holiness Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, for three hours upto 3.00 a.m. to enable all the residents of the Ashram and devotees to offer their last respects. All this while there was continuous chanting of the Mahamantra, which was extremely dear to both Gurudev and Swamiji Maharaj.

At 3 a.m. after Camphor Arati, the mortal remains of Pujya Swamiji were taken to the Ganga in a procession amidst chanting of Mahamantra, Om Namah Sivaya, Om Namoh Bhagavate Sivanandaya and Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Ram. This Shobha Yatra went round the Ashram stopping at the Bhajan Hall, Sri Vishwanath Mandir and then taking the main road that led to the Sivananda Arch. From there it went towards Guru Niwas and Gurudev Kutir and finally culminated at the Vishwanath Ghat on the bank of Ganga around 4.30 a.m.

Here the Abhishekam of his holy earthly remains was carried out with Ganges water and milk

amidst Vedic chanting, especially the Purusha Sukta and Narayana Sukta, which Swamiji loved very much. A further ritual of offering new robes and Shringara with Bhasma, Keshar Chandan and Kumkum was performed.

As per his instructions, the sacred mantras of Om Namoh Bhagavate Sivanandaya 7 times, Mahamantra 5 times, Mahamrutyunjaya Mantra 5 times and Pranava (OM) 16 times were chanted before the final offering to Mother Ganga. Special care was taken not to chant Chidananda Maharaj Ki Jai as he had specially stopped us from doing the same.

Thereafter, his holy remains were taken in a boat decorated with flowers and offered to mother Ganga. This final journey began as the keen eyes of the devotees watched the boat slowly move into the mid-stream of the river. Mother Ganga was waiting to embrace her beloved son. Some devotees were showering flowers from the Sivananda Bridge, while his holy remains were being offered to the Ganges.

It was a fitting tribute for one, who kept himself ever pure in his thought, word and actions, all his life.

Special spiritual programmes were conducted to commemorate the 16 days' celebration that follows the Mahasamadhi of a Monk of the Shankaracharya Sampradaya. The days began with early morning chanting and prayers followed by Prabhat Pheri. There was a spiritual fervour in every activity that was conducted. A Srimad Bhagvata Jnana Yajna by H.H. Dhavalnarayan Acharya from Rajkot was conducted during the first week of September. This was followed by one-day Akhanda Parayana of the Tulsi Ramcharitmanas. Daily feeding of school children, sadhus, poor people and animals was done.

On the 11th of September, 2008, there was a special procession (Divya Yatra) that commenced from the Ashram around 2 p.m. There were many special vehicles with huge portraits of Worshipful

Gurudev and Pujya Swamiji which were decorated with flowers. The Yatra moved on with singing of the Mahamantra, 'Om Namo Bhagavate Sivanandaya,' 'Om Namo Narayanaya' and 'Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram,' etc. Local people also joined in and many were dancing in ecstasy. Enroute, special Pujas and Arati were offered at the doorsteps of all the Ashrams and institutions. At many places, there were people showering flower over the entire length of procession which had almost 2000 people as it crawled into the Rishikesh town, all the way towards Bharat Mandir and then returned back through the town to the Ashram. Special Jnana Prasad booklets along with other sweet and fruit Prasadam were distributed to the people around. The Yatra route was decorated with special arches and banners on behalf of various institutions and devotees reflecting their deep love, affection and reverence for both these great saints of the Divine Life Society.

This special spiritual celebration reached its crescendo on the 12th of September, 2008, when the main Shodashi programme took place. The day began with special Brahmanuhurta meditation and prayers between 5 and 6 a.m. followed by Prabhat Pheri.

There was a special Puja commencing at 8 a.m. performed at the Holy Samadhi Shrine in which all the senior Swamijis of the Ashram had participated. Then everyone proceeded to the newly built Sivananda Satsanga Bhavan [Auditorium], which was befittingly bedecked with flowers and special huge picture frames of Gurudev and Swamiji. The main programme began with collective worship of Gurudev's Padukas [sandals]. This was followed by the Shraddhanjali offerings to Brahmaleen Pujya Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj between 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and beyond.

*For this occasion,*

Mahamandaleshwar Sri Swami Divyananda Saraswatiji Maharaj of Kailash Ashram, Rishikesh; Mahamandaleshwar Sri Swami Asanganandaji Maharaj of Paramartha Niketan, Rishikesh; Mahamandaleshwar Sri Swami Shyamasunder Shastriji Maharaj of Garibdas

Ashram, Haridwar; Mahamandaleshwar Sri Swami Viswatmananda Puriji Maharaj of Sadhana Sadan, Haridwar; Mahamandaleshwar Sri Swami Satyamitrananda Giriji Maharaj of Bharat Mata Mandir, Haridwar; H.H. Sri Chandraswamiji Maharaj, Sadhana Kendra Ashram at Domet, Dehradun; H.H. Avadhoot Sri Laxmandasji Maharaj of Laxman Kutir near Laxman Jhula; H.H. Sri Swami Niranjanandaji Maharaj, President of Bihar School of Yoga, Munger, Bihar; H.H. Sri Swami Muktanandaji Maharaj of Anandashram, Kanhangad, Kerala, were present among other monks and speakers from various organisations including Chinmaya Mission, Sri Ananandamayee Maa Math, Ramakrishna Math, Gita Bhavan, Kali Kamliwala Kshetra, Swarga Ashram, to name a few.

Everyone elucidated the lustrous spiritual persona of Pujya Swamiji coupled with his love for everyone and the humility he possessed.

Later, 16 Mahatmas were worshipped, garlanded and offered specially prepared meals consisting of 16 items alongwith Dakshina and other gifts.

Special Bhandara was given to about 3000 Sadhus of Rishikesh, Haridwar and other neighbouring places. All the Sadhus were given Dakshina, a blanket and Kamandalu. More than ten thousand devotees were also fed on the day.

A special Ganga Puja was performed in the evening at the Vishwanath Ghat, with Arati and offering of hundreds of lamps in the holy river. In this connection, a boat Kirtan was also organised the following afternoon.

The night Satsanga saw, alongwith the regular features, special Bhajan session and the screening of a film on the life and works of Brahmaleen Swamiji. It culminated with Arati and distribution of special Prasad to all those present.

By the Grace of Lord Vishwanath, Most Worshipful Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Worshipful Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, the sixteen-day spiritual festival in honour of Worshipful Swamiji was celebrated in a grand scale.

—The Divine Life Society

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## CULTURAL TOUR OF SRI SWAMI YOGASWARUPANANDA

*(Vice-President/Trustee of The Divine Life Society Headquarters)*

Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji visited Holy Pattamadai, the sacred birthplace of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj from 15th to 17th August, 2008. Revered Swamiji presided over the Trustee Meeting of Swami Sivananda Memorial Trust on 16th August forenoon. The same day Swamiji visited the birth house of Guru Bhagawan Swami Sivananda and saw the repairs and renovation work carried out there. Then sat in Satsang Hall at Swami Sivananda street, addressed the devotees assembled there at Pattamadai from 6.30 to 7.30 pm, talked about Guru Bhakti.

On 17th morning Swamiji went to see famous saint Nammalwar place, who was living under a tamarind tree of 5000 years old and sacred seashore temple known as Tiruchendur Lord Murugan temple. In the afternoon Swamiji went to Kokkarakulam D.L.S. Branch at Tirunelveli town. There was a very good gathering of eminent persons in that Satsang. Swamiji spoke about the efficacy of Japa Yoga, bringing out the fact that the name of the Lord has got tremendous powers and it will elevate the minds of Sadhakas. Thereafter Swamiji attended the Satsang at the newly constructed Satsang Hall of D.L.S. Gopalamudram Branch and blessed the gathering. On 18th Swamiji left Pattamadai, arrived at New Delhi at about 10 pm.

19th August afternoon Swamiji reached Dehra Dun, went to Shanti Niwas, met Worshipful President Swamiji, H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, briefed about Pattamadai Trustee Meeting, conveyed Pranams of all Trustees, sought blessings from Swamiji Maharaj for his further tour to Malaysia! Swamiji Maharaj spoke about Sri Swami Pranavanandaji Maharaj and about his tour to Malaysia in the year 1966. Swamiji

Maharaj laughed and raised his two hands, blessed Yogaswarupanandaji for his further successful tour!

In response to kind invitation of Sri Swami Guhabhaktanandaji, President of Divine Life Society of Malaysia, Worshipful H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj deputed Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji to participate in Birth Centenary celebrations of Sri Swami Pranavanandaji, Founder/President of D.L.S. Malaysia from 26th to 29th August, 2008. Swamiji arrived at Kuala Lumpur, Sivanandashram, Batu Caves, on 26th morning, attended Satsangas, gave talks on "Vedanta in Daily Life", Sri Swami Pranavananda Birth Centenary Memorial lecture on 27th in addition to morning talks. The main function was on 28th August from morning to evening with prayer and meditation, Gurudev's Paduka Puja, Arati and Annadaanam. Sri Swami Guhabhaktanandaji spoke elaborately about the life of Swami Pranavanandaji and his noble work of expanding the D.L.S. activities in Malaysia with the cooperation of all dedicated devotees of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj in Malaysia for the past four decades. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji officially declared open the new three storey building called "Yoga Block" consisting of Sri Swami Pranavananda Birth Centenary Memorial Hall and other two storeys of rooms for the guests and halls for multifarious purposes. At 10.45 pm Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji received phone message about the Mahasamadhi of Worshipful H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj at Shanti Niwas, Dehra Dun, he cancelled all other programmes, returned to Headquarters on 30th August, 2008.

## DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS OF YOGA-VEDANTA FOREST ACADEMY

By the grace of Most Worshipful Gurudev His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and with the blessings, guidance and support of Worshipful H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, President of the Divine Life Society Headquarters, the Diamond Jubilee of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy was celebrated from 29th June to 3rd July, 2008 in Swami Sivananda Auditorium of Headquarters Ashram in a grand manner. About 450 devotees including faculty members, speakers, ex-students, guests, visitors and Ashramites participated in it.

The celebrations started with solemnity and sacredness by performing Yajna from 6 a.m. to 7 a.m. on 29th June, 2008 for peace and welfare of all and for the success of the programme. The forenoon session started with a grand Paduka Puja, Inauguration of the Celebrations by H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, General Secretary, The Divine Life Society Headquarters, by lighting the Deepa and reading of the Message of Blessings of Worshipful His Holiness Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj by H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj, Treasurer of the D.L.S. Headquarters.

On this auspicious occasion all the senior Swamijis blessed the audience. H.H. Sri Swami Nirliptanandaji Maharaj, Vice-President, D.L.S. Headquarters gave hearty congratulations to all those who contributed for the growth of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy to such a laudable height, and said that the basic aim of the Academy is to provide knowledge of Yoga and Vedanta which makes us better human beings and thus helps us in our spiritual as well as secular life.

H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj, Vice-President, D.L.S. Headquarters said, by starting Y.V.F. Academy on 3rd July 1948, Gurudev brought Jnana Ganga to Sivananda Ashram. By entering in Academy all the Vikaras are removed; because it provides knowledge and enables one to go a step further on the path of Self-realisation.

Sri Swami Yogavedantanandaji Maharaj, Registrar of the Academy, informed the audience that a Diamond Jubilee Souvenir, a book titled "Spiritual and Ethical India", four booklets—"Happiness is Within and Other Pearls" by Swami Sivananda, "Yoga and Vedanta According to Swami Sivananda and Swami Chidananda", "The Truth About Yoga and Meditation" by Swami Chidananda and "Swami Sivananda and Spiritual Renaissance" by Swami Krishnananda and the memento depicting Sivananda Pillar got prepared on this occasion were

released at Shanti Niwas, Dehradun by Worshipful H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, President of the D.L.S. Headquarters on the 27th June, 2008, the photos of which were displayed on the dias. Pujya Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj while releasing the souvenir, books, etc., appreciated all the items and showered his blessings.

In the afternoon session on 29th June, 2008, twenty ex-students and two faculty members expressed their views, experiences and suggestions. All the speakers were of the opinion that the present Basic Yoga-Vedanta Course is very useful and they have gained a lot from it. Some suggestions were also put forward by some of the speakers.

From 30th June to 2nd July, 2008, a three-day Spiritual Conference on "The Role of Spirituality in the Present Age" was held. H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj inaugurated the Conference and delivered the keynote address. Swamiji said that Divine Life is based upon Yoga and Vedanta, and in order to lead our life according to these two canons, we should understand these two concepts and also our mind properly. Swamiji stressed on moderation in everything and concluded by mentioning the importance of the instructions given by Lord Krishna, i.e., Vairagya (dispassion) and Abhyasa (practice).

Twenty learned speakers, from our Ashram as well as from different parts of the country, participated in the Conference and expressed their views on the theme of the Conference.

Prof. Hrudananda Ray of Cuttack (Orissa) pointed out that every 'age' is the present age of that time and stressed that not only man is facing challenges due to globalisation, free trade, free economy, global warming, etc., in the present age but environment is also facing challenges from man. We should probe what we are doing and why we are doing. He was of the opinion that this probing will solve our problems.

H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj said that we should follow the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita and Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. Meditation, Japa and Pranayama are very good spiritual practices to calm the mind which is the root cause of all problems. Be good. Do Good; do not hurt or injure physically or mentally any one. Swamiji advised to practise spirituality daily, as it is a life-long process.

H.H. Sri Swami Atmaswarupanandaji Maharaj, a faculty member of the Academy discussed the role

of spirituality from three angles—first, Spirituality means doing our Sadhana to seek what we are already. Second, it could also mean reconciliation within and without. Third, we should truly appreciate the genius of the Vedic way of life by following its four aims and remembering that while the first half of our life is meant for accumulating everything we need to fulfil our duties, the second half is meant to be dedicated to Moksha.

Sri Swami Sivananda Gurusevanandaji Maharaj of Berhampur (Orissa) stressed that Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj's teachings SERVE, LOVE, MEDITATE, REALISE are excellent and they must be practised to be free from evils. Even householders can make their life spiritual by following the path of purity, honesty and fair play.

H.H. Sri Swami Nirliptanandaji Maharaj said that faith in the existence of Self is spirituality. To have direct contact with the Supreme Reality is spirituality. Swamiji mentioned about four Purusharthas—Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha and pointed out that man wants permanent happiness, which can be had by following the law of Dharma and through spiritual Sadhana. We should live in such a way that we are always connected with That Universal Spirit. To make things normal and better, spirituality is much more important in today's world.

Dr. Jayant B. Dave from Vadodara was of the opinion that spirituality is communion with God, companionship with man and environment. Anything that lifts our consciousness is spirituality. Spirituality is anything that is blissful and pure. Spirituality tells us that we spiritual beings, if we want to be happy then we should act as an instrument of the Lord. He said that Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj's teachings are excellent in this field and the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy is doing its job nicely in promoting spirituality in a secular country like ours.

Prof J.N. Asopa from Jodhpur (Rajasthan), a faculty member of the Academy pointed out that the theme of this Conference how spirituality is relevant in the present age is very simple and is at the same time also very complex. According to him it is a disposition, a way of living or leading a life. We live in spirituality and whatever we do, we think of God. The concept of God is not new to our understanding. Spirituality is tradition-bound and the life-breath of modesty. He gave examples to bring home his point of view. In short, it is the cultivation of the soul.

Sri Swami Ramarajyamji Maharaj of the Divine Life Society Headquarters, was of the opinion that man, as an individual is a closed entity under the

control of ego. This ego collides with others with a view to dominate over them which leads to quarrels, self-centeredness, and incapacity to communicate with others. The ego can be reduced through spirituality, which is a science of inner life. Meditation is a strong support to morality and spirituality. Swamiji advocated that everybody, therefore, must practise spiritual Sadhana.

H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj, a faculty member of the Academy pointed out at the outset that due to technological advancement people are more comfortable now but they are not happy. The youth are facing stress in the materialistic world despite best education and material comforts available to them. This is because they have neglected to take care of their real personality. The students after undergoing the Yoga-Vedanta Course feel a change in their attitude and have more peace and happiness. Swamiji stressed that we should know our real personality, which will enrich the life. We should take care of our "Spiritual Personality."

Sri Swami Nirakaranandaji Maharaj, ex-faculty member of the Academy was of the opinion that today due to technological development, media has control over our body and mind. Under these circumstances spirituality is a must. Everyone should know Vedanta and the effects of Moha and Ajnana. We should think about our real nature. He advised the audience to strictly follow Gurudev's teachings.

Prof. Rajinder Kumar Bhardwaj, a faculty member and Assistant Registrar of the Academy said that life has become very fast and the society is infested with many ills which has resulted in widespread unhappiness everywhere and on all fronts. Therefore, spiritualism is the only solution for all these ills. Spiritualism is based on Dharma and Dharma is our duty. We should become a better person through control of senses, selfless service, love and compassion. Gurudev's *Sadhana Tattwa* is excellent for restructuring spiritualism.

Sri Swami Radhakrishnanandaji Maharaj said that we have to see the problems of the society and how we can solve these spiritually. Without Vairagya there is no spirituality. We should respect the beliefs of others because all names and forms are of the same God and we should not have jealousy towards others.

Sri Swami Bhagavatanandaji Maharaj of Jaipur (Rajasthan) said the word spirituality has many meanings. We are Sat-Chit-Ananda Swarupa. Universal Spirit is One. Unity is Spirituality. Today's world has electronic media, rapid growth in industrialisation, etc., and all these have resulted in more crime, pollution, unrest and terrorism, etc. Swamiji is

of the view that the Educational System should be reformed and transformed. It should cater to head, heart and hand. Values of life have to be inculcated so that we may become more spiritual.

Sri Swami Yogavedantanandaji Maharaj, a faculty member and Registrar of the Academy pointed out that spirituality has an important role to play in all the ages. According to Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, "Spirituality means growing into the form of Divine Ideal. It is the transformation of your nature from human to Divine." For this we should have self-discipline, control of senses, do daily introspection, lead a simple life based on Dharma and ethical principles. It will enable us to adjust with the world on the one hand, and attain God-realisation on the other. He said that some people are allergic to the word 'spirituality.' For them spirituality should be 'Goodness in action.'

Prof. B.B. Choudhuryji from Cuttack (Orissa), a faculty member said that the present age is the age of science and technology. But in spite of all the amenities, the modern age has made man 'restless.' Restless, because he finds no meaning in his life. He said this is because he acts from the standpoint of 'ego.' When one frees himself from the grip of ego he becomes an actor, a witness to all that happens. He is not a victim of his action, but only an onlooker and he is at peace with everything that happens around him.

H.H. Sri Swami Tyagavairagyanandaji Maharaj said that Chitta Suddhi is very important for a Sadhak. Instead of searching for happiness, we should search for Truth; with truth happiness will come automatically. Our happiness should not cause sorrow for others. It should not be a problem to society or environment. Swamiji said we should always remember death as it will bring about Vairagya in us and evils like anger, lust, greed, etc., will also go. It will make our life spiritual.

Dr. M.N. Rastogiji of Bareilly (Uttar Pradesh), an ex-faculty member said that Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was an embodiment of spirituality. He was an advocate of Integral Yoga. He advised the audience to follow the teachings of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivananda and Worshipful Sri Swami Chidananda.

Prof. Vasudev Randeveji of Rewari, an ex-faculty member, said that the present age is the age of stress and strife in which man's mind is aching and heart is bleeding. The way out is spirituality only which is to live with full faith in the Divine. 'Being' is the true nature of man but he is always busy in 'Be-

coming' at the cost of 'Being'. Instead of need and feed he is enchanted by greed. He should do introspection and shun his base approach to life. He should have spiritual recovery and divine discovery. This is the role of spirituality in the present age.

Sri Swami Sivachidanandaji Maharaj, Secretary of Swami Sivananda Centenary Boys' High School, Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar (Orissa) said that spirituality is to live a pure life. He emphasised on Yoga of Synthesis and unity of religions. For Gurudev all religions are one. He advised the audience to practise and preach Gurudev's teachings, viz., Twenty Spiritual Instructions, National Code of Conduct and Universal Prayer.

Sri Swami (Devi) Vasantananda Mataji of Chennai, a direct disciple of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, speaking on the Role of Spirituality in the present age, praised the services rendered by Gurudev to the humanity by bringing Advaita Philosophy from ivory tower to the common man, by making it available in English language as many people in our country and abroad do not know Sanskrit language. Mataji said that Gurudev Swami Sivananda broke away from the traditional caste system, and creed, and encouraged people to reach the Supreme Reality.

On the concluding day 3rd July, 2008, in the early morning prayer and meditation session, H.H. Sri Swami Atmaswarupanandaji Maharaj delivered a short discourse.

At 6.00 a.m., Prabhat Pheri was taken out. Despite a little drizzle, quite a good number of participants and Ashramites participated in it. There was lot of enthusiasm in them; they sang the Name of the Lord and some of them danced also.

The concluding Forenoon Session started at 8.30 a.m., with Jaya Ganesh Prayer and Kirtan. Thereafter, H.H. Sri Swami Nirliptanandaji Maharaj, H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswaroopanandaji Maharaj, H.H. Sri Swami Advaitanandaji Maharaj and H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj blessed the audience. After this, all the guest speakers, the present and ex-faculty members, and others who gave a helping hand in managing the celebrations were honoured and Prasad was given to the volunteers. With the vote of thanks by Sri Swami Yogavedantanandaji Maharaj, Registrar of the Academy, concluding prayer, distribution of Prasad, Jnana Prasad—Souvenir, books and booklets to all, the function came to a close with a joyous note on every face.

## BOOK REVIEW

### **LIVE HAPPILY THE GITA WAY**

By **Dr. V. Krishnamurthy**

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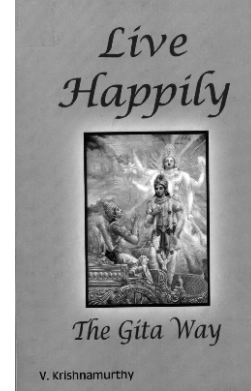
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The Bhagavad Gita contains the quintessence of all Upanishads of the Vedic lore. But the readers of the present-day superfast life consider learning the Sankrit language daunting, and studying all the available commentaries translated into English, carefully contemplating upon the sublime truths contained therein, critically analyzing them, rather a challenging task. Nowadays the approach is to have all things in concise and compact form, consuming less time and energy. The book under review satisfies all such norms and we hope the readers, particularly students and busy executives will surely like the original and direct approach ingrained in the book. The author remained in academia and administration in renowned organisations like K.K. Birla Academy (New Delhi) and BITS (Pilani), earned many awards and wrote a set of inspiring books on life and spirituality. Therefore he understands well the taste and the trend of the readers.

Plunging into the depths of the Bhagavad Gita Dr.V. Krishnamurthy presents the readers his jewels in the form of essays. All will agree to his idea that happiness can-

not be found outside, however desperately we may search. Seeking happiness outside us will prove futile. Happiness is our very nature and we are unhappy because our mind stands in the way. So the task is to look for it within, rather than chasing it around the world. He puts under scanner our interior and finds the *gang of thirteen* (the thirteen vices lurking in us). In his own words, "Man's external unhappiness is not his basic unhappiness. It is his internal unhappiness that is fundamental. If the latter is taken care of, the former will pale into insignificance." So the main task before everyone is to pin down these vicious tendencies with the help of will-power, *Sraddha* (Faith), *Bhakti* (Devotion and Dedication). Never losing sight of his central theme of *happiness* he succinctly explains Brahman, Maya, Action, Actionlessness, Sense-control, Meditation, Devotion, Non-attachment, etc. and concludes his ideas in dialogue form in the last chapter. In doing so he revisits every dimension of the Indian concept of spirituality and espouses various aspects of spiritual practice of multiple hues.

—THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

## BRAHMACHARYA FOR LONGEVITY

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

### SECRET OF LONGEVITY

It is on the mere attainment of establishment of Achara that you may be able to attain full age and eternal happiness. You can attain full age, even if you are devoid of all other qualities, by the establishment of Achara (good conduct) only. Achara is character-building. You must have a good character. Otherwise you will lose your Brahmacharya or Veerya, the vital energy, and thereby attain premature death. Srutis declare full life or age of one hundred years for a man. This you can attain only by the establishment of Brahmacharya.

You have to remember one thing more! The secret of longevity may be based chiefly upon discretion in the choice of food and drink, temperance, sobriety, chastity and a hopeful optimistic outlook on life; and so gluttons, drunkards, the idle, the dissipated or the lazy, cannot reasonably hope to attain full age.

“That one may attain to the age of one hundred years or more is no visionary statement. According to psychological and natural laws, the duration of human life should be at least five times the period necessary to reach full growth. This is a prevailing law which is exemplified in the brute creations. The horse grows about four years and lives to be about 12 to 14; the camel grows for eight years and lives to be about 40; man grows for about 20

to 25 years, if accidents could be excluded, his normal duration of life should not be less than one hundred years,” so says Milton Severen of the West. Just compare this to the period of life declared by the Srutis, Puranas and the Shastras of the Hindus and the period of Brahmacharya as full 25 years. The period of growth for a Brahmachari which can be established by the attainment of Veerya is to be had by the rigid attainment of Brahmacharya.

And so Patanjali Maharshi, writer of Raja Yoga or Ashtanga Yoga, says: “*Brahmacharya-pratishthayam veerya-labhah.*”

There are instances of men who have attained longevity and intellectual powers despite their loose, immoral ways. Obviously this is due to their Prarabdha. But they would have been still more powerful and brilliant had they possessed a good character and continence as well.

### BRAHMACHARYA IN ACTIVE LIFE

Practice of Karma Yoga is not possible without Brahmacharya. I have given here a short description of methods by which one can be established in physical and mental celibacy.

One of the students of Dhanvantari approached his teacher after finishing his full course of Ayurveda and asked him: “O

Bhagavan, kindly let me know the secret of health now." Dhanvantari replied: "This Veerya (seminal energy) is verily Atman. The secret of health lies in preservation of this vital force. He who wastes this energy cannot have physical, mental, moral and spiritual developments."

If the Veerya is lost, Prana gets unsteady. Prana is agitated. The man becomes nervous. Then, the mind also cannot work properly. The man becomes fickle-minded. There is mental weakness.

The ignorant man is an instrument in the hands of his Samskaras and Karmas. He slowly gains strength by understanding his real essential nature by doing spiritual Sadhana, by removing the desires and egoism.

If the sexual energy is transmuted into Ojas or spiritual energy by pure thoughts it is called sex-sublimation in Western psychology. Just as chemical substance is sublimated or purified so also the sexual energy is purified and changed into divine energy by spiritual Sadhana, by entertaining sublime, soul-elevating thoughts of Self or Atman. In Yoga it is called Urdhvaretas or one in whom the seminal energy has flown upwards into the brain as Ojas Sakti. There is no possibility of semen going downwards by sexual excitement.

The process of sex-sublimation is extremely difficult. It demands constant and protracted Sadhana and perfect discipline. That Yogi who has achieved perfect sublimation has perfect control over lust. There is no fear for his downfall. He is perfectly safe. This stage is a very high stage. A microscopic mi-

nority only have attained this sublime exalted state. Sri Sankara, Sri Dattatreya and Jnana Dev of Alandi had reached this stage.

That Yogi who has disciplined himself through ceaseless protracted Sadhana, continuous meditation, Pranayama and Atmic Vichara, the practice of Shama (serenity), Dama (self-control), Yama (vows) and Niyama (observances) is also safe, although he has not attained the stage of perfect sex-sublimation. He will have no attraction for ladies. He has thinned out the mind. The mind is starved to death. It cannot raise its hood. It cannot hiss.

This process of sex-sublimation is very difficult and yet it is most necessary for the aspirant in the spiritual path. It is the most important qualification for the Sadhaka, either in the path of Karma Yoga, Upasana, Raja Yoga or Vedanta. You must achieve this at any cost. You will surely attempt this in future births. But, why not now?

It is a fundamental prerequisite for an aspirant. If one has this qualification or merit, all merits will cling to him. All good qualities will come by themselves.

It is quite possible for a man to practise celibacy while remaining in the world, albeit there are various sorts of temptations and distractions. Many have achieved this in times of yore. There are many even at the present moment also. A well-disciplined life, study of religious scriptures, Satsanga, Japa, Dhyana, Pranayama, Sattvic and moderate diet, daily introspection and enquiry, self-analysis and self-correction, Sadachara, practice of Yama, Niyama, physical, verbal and mental Tapas in accordance with the

teachings of the seventeenth chapter of the Gita, will pave a long way in the attainment of this end. People have an irregular, unrighteous, immoderate, irreligious, undisciplined life. Just as the elephant throws sand on its own head, so also they themselves bring difficulties and troubles on their own heads on account of their foolishness.

Sex-sublimation is within your reach if you wish to attain it. The path is quite clear, straight and smooth, if you understand it, and if you apply yourself with patience, perseverance, determination and strong will, if you practise discipline of the Indriyas, right conduct, right thinking, right action, regular meditation, assertion, auto-suggestion and enquiry of "Who am I?" Atman is Nirvikara (formless). Feel this. Can there be any trace of lust or impurity in the eternal pure Atman?

Thou art Nitya, Suddha, Buddha, Mukta Atman (eternal, pure, perfect, all-wise, free Self). O sweet dear Paramananda! Feel this. Assert this birthright. Claim this hereditary property. You can even fight with that "Old Man of the Upanishads." Claim this birthright amidst typewriting, arranging chapters for the book and other multifarious works. This is better than cave-life. This is the dynamic, integral Yoga of Siva. This was the Yoga of Sri Sankara and Lord Buddha too.

#### **BRAHMACHARYA—BASIS OF HEALTH**

"If the spermatic secretion in man is continuous; it must either be expelled or reab-

sorbed. Whenever the seminal secretions are conserved and thereby reabsorbed into the system, it goes towards enriching the blood and strengthening the brain." Doctor Dio Lewis taught that the conservation of this element is essential in strengthening the body, vigour of mind and keenness of intellect. Another writer Dr. E.P. Miller declares, "All waste of spermatic secretions, whether voluntary or involuntary, is a direct wastage of life-force. It is almost universally conceded that the choicest elements of the blood enter into the composition of the spermatic secretion. If these conclusions are correct then it follows that a chaste life is essential to man's well-being."

Brahmacharya is the basis for the attainment of Kaya Siddhi (perfection of physical health). Complete celibacy must be observed. This is of paramount importance. By the practice of Yoga, the semen becomes transmuted into Ojas Sakti. All the cells are vivified or galvanised by the power of Ojas. The practice of Brahmacharya, Pranayama, Sirshasana and other Hatha Yogic Kriyas and meditation entirely renovates the system and gives new strength, vigour and vitality to the cells. The Yogi will have a perfect body. There will be charm and grace in his movements. He can live as long as he likes (Ichha Mrityu). That is the reason why Lord Krishna says to Arjuna: "*Tasmat yogee bhavarjuna*—Therefore, become a Yogi."

The pressure of the truth of the absoluteness of consciousness is the source of the force that compels individuals to transcend their finitude and find their eternal repose in it alone.

—Swami Krishnananda