



## SUBLIME THOUGHTS—A NECESSITY FOR ALL ASPIRANTS

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

Perhaps we are prone to underestimate the value of our thoughts. This is partly due to the circumstance that the world is yet to see the wonderful things (favourable and unfavourable) that may be accomplished through this great agency, namely, *thought*. Though this subject is of vital importance to man, not much thought appears to have been given to it in regard to its significance. Therefore, it is well that every one of us searches as deeply as possible for definite suggestions as to the particular line along which true thought can be attained.

The ancient Rishis of this country were seers of 'thought' and exhibited phases of spirituality and wisdom quite unparalleled, perhaps, in any age. In meditation they were dexterous of effacing the restlessness of their thought, reaching that fixity of mind till the plane of Divine consciousness was reached. Hence it is no surprise that these men, strong in their beliefs and finding their lives in the realms of highest truth, felt their religion so strengthening and elevating. They carried conviction to members of their fellow-men, for their belief was not so much of a faith as a certainty of absolute knowledge, that the Supreme Being (the innermost Being in the very core of things) was felt by them in the depths of their own hearts. This claim has been made by Yogis for long ages and the verification of their high attainments is entirely conclusive of the strange things ascribed to their sight and hearing and of the bliss transcend-

ing human thought into which they merge. When the intellect is purified, the whole nature becomes purified and when it has been purified, memory becomes firm. And when memory of the Self remains firm, then all the ties which bind us to a belief in anything but the Self are loosened. Such ideas have permeated necessarily slowly amongst men, but as spirituality increases, there is hope that people will become more receptive. Nevertheless, very few have the power of sinking their own personality in an ideal one, for this is the highest and rarest gift.

In the present-day world, amidst the ruins of the decaying systems of thought, we catch glimpses of new light stirring in the hearts of earnest men and women, and probably very soon this ruling power of thought will be better understood. This is tantamount to saying that our relation with the basic principle of Truth will be perceived and acknowledged. Great indeed are the results of this subtle force, extending as it does from the most trifling to the most important pursuits of life, and to the extent to which it is spiritualised, does it become more cogent and more intense. Noble thoughts shed a flood of light on our lives, bringing out exalted character, purifying our intellectual powers, transforming our spiritual nature and gradually connecting them to the Spirit within. This declaration will not be found to be extravagant. When we appreciate and remember the essential fact that thoughts are constructive,

the forerunner of our deeds, good thoughts will produce all that is good and noble, uniting one by an invisible chain to kindred spirits who act and react to each other; and similarly wrong thoughts return like boomerangs, producing disunion and discord.

As we all know that only one thought can possess us at one time, we should awaken to the necessity of checking the growth of delusive and undesirable ideas. These should immediately be expelled by substituting good for bad, thereby setting up harmonious currents which are capable of producing abundant sympathetic conditions. Just as a body grows vigorous through proper exercise in the same way do virtuous, honest thoughts gain increased power through use of their capacities. Everyone of us possesses abundant energy for thought-power. The trouble is, how should it be directed and what is the ultimate object at which we should aim. It is very necessary that we should direct our efforts to right thinking, because the mental attitude we hold when we seek to work affects our relative success or failure. Only when we have mastered the secret of thought-power, the true determining factor of life, we may be able to carry into our outer life the embodiment of our highest ideals.

Thought-control, therefore, must be acquired by concentration, and receptivity to thought is of primary importance to true advancement. The principle is simple and its application is easy, only we should be sincere in our efforts to carry it into effect. The principle of right thinking consists in disengaging one subject from distracting stream of ever-varying thoughts and dwelling in that thought alone; thus letting in that enlightenment which finally leads us to become one with the higher Self. Regular thought-training

tends to this development and enables one to arouse the higher vibrations of thought, the most powerful of all the invisible forces.

When our lives are guided by a sound and understood principle, our actions will be self-sufficient and effective. Even under adverse circumstances, when things press heavily upon us, we can rise above all anxiety and gloom by the help of such a principle, as the bravest and noblest men and women of all ages have done. Now, if we learn to do this, we must first deal with the within before we can effectively deal with the without. Mental worries, forebodings and troublesome thoughts have a tendency to scatter, weaken and disorganise the powers of mind and inner vibratory forces; it is only by drawing on the higher Self that the mind is strengthened. All things take their character from the internal state of the spirit. It is impossible to experience good and bad or, so to say, to be in heaven and hell externally as a place without being in it internally as a state.

Thought rules the world, they being inseparable as inner and outer expressions respectively. Clothe your thought with positive and living words and you can rule your life. Negative thoughts are base and blind and cause a vital loss of power. Spiritualise your thought, word and action and they become subtle, significant and sweet. Think in terms of conscious, vital realisation of the spirit of infinite life. Thoughts imprison you, being base; and they liberate you, being noble. You do not attract that which you want but stick to that which you are. You do not get what you wish and pray for, but that which you justly earn. Your wishes and prayers are gratified and answered when they harmonise with your thoughts and actions. You should not revolt continuously against an effect without,

while all the time you go on nourishing and preserving its cause within your heart.

The chief function of thought is to quicken the sensibilities of the spirit within us, to urge it to a new creative effort, to stimulate us to bring human life more into unison with our truest ideas. Further, the immutable law of nature that each atom in the universe must serve as a universal end, eternally prevails and cannot be permanently set aside by man. Let this fact inspire our hearts with noble purposes and let us apply these truths to the efforts that will enable us to live our best, to be earnest and capable workers for the service of the world. Let us kindle the hearts of men and women with the same lofty aims and help other souls whose environments do not give the same advantage, to surmount their ignorance and its attendant weaknesses. In our effort to interlink ourselves with the law of Oneness, we should remember that one of its basic principles is service, and a sure test of our ability and sincerity of purpose is shown by consecrating our lives to the service of some other parts of the One great Whole, that we may become living representatives of our Divine Origin.

We should keep the inner activities of our lives overflowing with love, mingling love with truth, because love's vibrations are through the thoughts of man, the renewing agents of Truth's almighty power. We cannot exert great influence unless we live the life of love, of boundless pity and compassion for our fellow-men. With tenderest love in our souls and affinitive thoughts vibrating towards all creatures, we can so much better take our position as servers of mankind, comprehending the immensity of our real nature, estimating its value and wisdom and seeing all in One True Self and the One Self in all. the Prashna Upanishad says: 'Who verily knows the unfading One in Whom the knowing self, with all the directing intelligences, the senses and the elements nestle, he the all-knowing enters indeed into all, viz., realises that he is the Self or Atman in beings and feels that he himself exists in all.'

May you all obtain Lord's Grace through noble thoughts, actions, faith and devotion! May the Lord shower His Grace upon you all to cultivate only noble thoughts, say only noble words and do only noble deeds!!

Hear the great truths proclaimed by the prophets, godmen, saints and sages of real wisdom. Thou art neither this perishable body nor this impure mind. Thou art the Truth Eternal—ever-free ever-perfect and ever-blissful Spirit Immortal. Thou art in essence, Sat-chit-ananda Atman. Thou art imperishable. This is thy real glorious nature. Where then are thy body-mind-bound ego, the little intellect, the little learning, the skin-deep beauty?

Feel this, meditate over this and assert this. Realise this and attain the wisdom of the Self. Then you will not function on the sensual, animal plane. Life is meant for the practice of Yoga. Yoga is life divine. Yoga is right performance of duty. Practise the Yoga of saintliness. Do selfless service in a spirit of humble worship of the Virat. Cultivate devotion to God. Purify the heart through charity and generosity. Meditate daily on the Lord.

—Swami Sivananda

## SWAMI SIVANANDA—A SYNTHESIS OF DYNAMISM AND RENUNCIATION

*(Sri Swami Chidananda)*

The lives of great men are as so many lights removing the darkness that besets the highway of human progress. Their lofty actions are sources of perennial inspiration not only to peoples of their own immediate times, but for human beings in times to come as well. Their lives and actions serve to vivify the present and to supply perennial vitality to the future. Everything about them is so invested with unique power that during their lifetime, as well as for long many years after their time, their every word, act and example continue to exert a powerful influence over the lives of men and to carry a persistent message to all humanity.

In Sri Gurudev Swami Sivananda, we see a unique and amazing confluence of two trends, viz., of renunciation, and all the inwardness and detachment that it connotes, and the thrilling dynamism with all the outwardly expressed activity, and active, sympathetic interest in human beings and their lives implied by it. These two trends seemingly so much mutually exclusive and far apart would lead us to suppose revered Sri Gurudev to be a mixture of contradictions. But, no. Rather, it is precisely to teach us that true renunciation and dynamism are not contradictory and to bring home to us the lofty lesson that all inspired, altruistic activity for commonweal is actually based upon and springs forth from a whole and genuine renunciation of one's self-centred life, that our revered Master has lived his noble life of unceasing good works

and innumerable services unto all classes and sections of present-day humanity all over the world. His renunciation represents, as it were, a fertile seed out of which has sprung forth the great tree of his latter illumined life, full of the flowers, fruits and the shade-giving foliage of a many-sided Lokasangraha or selfless service unto humanity, upon the physical, mental, moral and spiritual fields of modern man's life. The Master's act of Tyaga and Sannyasa carries the message, 'O Man! Give up thy little 'I' and thy petty selfish life, and, let thy selfless life flower into cosmic love, world brotherhood and service unto all. Give up thy little self and give yourself in body, mind and spirit to the whole world. To renounce is verily to offer yourself as a gift unto the noble cause of human welfare.

His Holiness' act of renunciation and Sannyasa, done years ago, has served during these years as an incontrovertible proof positive that this ancient tradition of holy Bharatavarsha, that this ancient heritage received from our bygone seers and sages is not a negative lapsing into a selfish and careless quiescence (as it is sometimes thoughtlessly misconstrued) or an unfeeling retreat from realities, but, on the contrary, is an utmost positive step, pregnant with the possibilities of unlimited human welfare and containing within it the seeds of selfless service of the most glorious type. It is a step by which man breaks out through the barriers of his little limited and narrow life of selfishness

and attachments and soars high into the empyrean of world-consciousness, cosmic love and vision of the world's oneness. It transports him into the field of world service or Loka Seva. This is the dynamic structure of genuine renunciation and true Sannyasa. It is vibrant with love and compassion, dynamic with worshipful service and divinely pervaded by Karma Yoga in the spirit of the Gospel of the Bhagavad Gita. Such has been the exemplary Sannyasa life of our holy Sri Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji, and such the significance of his Tyaga done decades ago. The giving up of his secular life has come to mean the bestowal of a lofty new Divine Life to countless thousands of people in this present age of restlessness and warfare. His renunciation and Sannyasa have been a blessedness not merely to him as the renouncer, but a blessedness to countless thousands who have now come to receive the rare fruits of his renunciation.

The cultural genius of Bharatavarsha, her wondrous heritage of Yoga and Vedanta and the ideals of Sanatana Dharma received a tremendous fillip and became infused with a new life through the fact of Swami Sivanandaji's great renunciation and through the wave of spiritual force released thereby. To those who could perceive it, it was an act according to the Divine Plan. In the building of the New India within the set up of this memorable and significant nuclear age, his renunciation was a constructive feature that has proved prolific and richly fertile in that it has showered an incomparable wealth from the treasure-house of India's ethical and spiritual culture like bounteous life-giving rain to an impoverished world where all higher values and nobler ideals had been seared and scorched by the consuming flames of de-

structive, materialistic trends and God-denying ideologies. The power that sprang out of his renunciation has outspread into the world of today, reached into all points of the compass and penetrating many lands and homes, has brought new life, hope, solace, light, strength, joy and inspiration to literally countless millions of souls throughout the modern world. Thus, the "loss" (if it can be termed as such at all) of one little family became the blessedness of the entire universal family of mankind. Truly and factually, the great event constitutes a divine gift unto modern mankind. It is a heavenly bestowal. Saint Sivananda's renunciation can rightly be said to be an offering by God of divine Manna to appease the spiritual hunger of his soul-famished children in this crucial century.

To us all, fortunate ones of this age, our Master's glorious Sannyasa has indeed become synonymous with world awakening. The almost unknown act, which he did years ago to become Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh, was like unto a great and tremendous tree towering high over the present-day scene to waft the breeze of Yoga and Vedanta and a Divine Life of spiritualised human activity on earth. His renunciation has become transformed into the spirit of the New Age, the spirit of Divine Life. His Sannyasa has come to pervade the modern world in the form of a divine urge, a divine impulse towards virtue, goodness and godliness. It has taken a concrete shape as this great institution from where this lofty message of service, selflessness, purity, devotion and worshipful living radiates everywhere today. We, the devout votaries of the Master's Gospel of Divine Life who now bask in the radiance of his holy spiritual presence, are directly the products of his renunciation and its powerful creative

dynamism. We are living witnesses to its positivism and potency. The worldwide spiritual brotherhood that has sprung up under his benign leadership and noble inspiration is the visible result and fruit of his glorious renunciation. His Sannyasa has transformed itself into a spiritual force that holds within itself the hope and promise of the future world welfare and world order based upon a divine life of love, compassion, virtue and goodness.

This solitary act of his Sannyasa at the turn of the quarter century has become a swelling flood of self-giving that marks the stream of this saint's dedicated life through the better part of the past half century. By this he proclaims the grand idea that renunciation is not to be a single act at some momentous occasion but that it should characterise one's entire life, and mark every thought, word and act throughout one's entire life. One must lit-

erally live renunciation. This is the way of all attainment. This is the key to true and lasting happiness and peace. This is the secret of world welfare and universal happiness. In renunciation lies the end of all strife and hatred. In renunciation lies the source of true peace and progress. This his life proclaims. By his life, Swami Sivananda, the modern Maharshi, has given to the present and future humanity the new law of welfare, saying "O Modern Man! Know that renunciation is the law of life. Renunciation is the path that leads to friendliness, co-operation and unity. Renounce selfishness, greed, hatred and egoism. Embrace love, humility, contentment and charity. You will have Rama Rajya or the Kingdom of Heaven here upon earth now."

May the world respond to this living call. May the Master's radiant life inspire one and all!

### AN ANNOUNCEMENT

#### **DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY, SURENDRANAGAR BRANCH, GUJARAT GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATION & SADHANA SHIBIR, 6TH TO 9TH NOVEMBER 2008**

By the grace of Most Worshipful H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj the Divine Life Society, Surendranagar Branch will be celebrating its Golden Jubilee from 6th to 9th November 2008. A Sadhana Shibir is also proposed to be conducted on this occasion. Senior Swamijis from the Divine Life Society Headquarters will be participating and guiding the Sadhana Shibir. All devotees are cordially invited to participate in the functions.

For enrolment and information please contact:

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—THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

## THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

(Sri Swami Krishnananda)

[Continued from the previous issue]

### VII

We have heard it said that there are many kinds or types of Yoga. This idea of a variety in yoga arises on account of a sectional thinking, into which we perforce have introduced ourselves as the result of our mental structure. Really, the Yogas are not many, just as we cannot say that the rays of the sun are many, though they appear to be so due to a peculiar projectional structure of the mechanism of this emanation.

We have observed that there is an objective way of thinking and also a subjective way, the connection between which is what we call knowledge, or perception. Our knowledge of the world, or the knowledge of anything, is a reaction set up between the subject and the object. Unless these two are there in juxtaposition, there will not be knowledge; there will not be any kind of experience. Every experience is a reaction between the percipient subject and the perceived object, whatever be the nature of that object, physical or otherwise.

Now, we can think in three ways and so there are supposed to be three Yogas, the well-known systems of *karma* (action), *bhakti* (devotion) and *jnana* (knowledge), in which schools like that of *kundalini yoga*, *tantra yoga*, *japa yoga*, and even Patanjali's system of Yoga, and various methods of self-analysis, get subsumed.

We have to recall to our memories that when we go deep into ourselves, we find the

very same things that we discover when we go deep into anything outside. That which is deeply within us is also deeply within everything in the world. Even as, at the bottom of the crests of the ocean, we find the same base of the ocean, which is at the back of every other crest also, likewise, we will discover a common reality underlying every individuality. There is a substance which is equanimously present as the background of particulars, and Yoga is the process of the gradual withdrawal of consciousness from particulars to the generals, until the highest common factor is reached. The particularised attention paid by consciousness in respect of anything is to be withdrawn into the more general background of it, and the more it goes near to the general background, the more does it approximate to the ideal of Yoga. This withdrawal, to repeat again what was noticed earlier, can be either inward, outward, or transcendent.

There are three kinds of withdrawal. But how is it possible to withdraw oneself in three ways? We are generally accustomed to the idea that withdrawal means going into one's own self in an individual sense, but it need not necessarily mean that. One can withdraw oneself even into an object by a peculiar adjustment of consciousness and in that technique of objective withdrawal, the object ceases to be an object any more. Here consciousness assumes a different position by

an adjustment of itself with the object in a novel way. In fact, yoga is a gradual attempt of consciousness to convert every object into a subject; and the more do we succeed in transforming the object into the subject, the more are we said to be advancing in yoga.

The greatest problem in life is involvement in objectivity, externality, the conditioned attitude of the mind by which it segregates itself from all things which it thinks, or visualises. The world of objects is a connected whole; this is the doctrine of Yoga. The world is not constituted of isolated parts as it appears to the outward senses of perception. The recognition of this inward connectedness of things in the form of the universe is the endeavour of Yoga. Inasmuch as we are accustomed to think only in terms of objects and we cannot think in any other manner, we have to take the stand of the object first, and that method is the way of *karma yoga* and *bhakti yoga*, and partly of the Yoga of Patanjali, and the initial stages of even *jnana yoga*. Everything starts with the concept of the object; only the notion of the object varies according to the different systems of practice, the notion getting widened gradually, in an ascending degree.

Before we start seriously any kind of practice in the direction of Yoga, we must be well up with the requisite preparations. The achievements in Yoga are a gradual evolution, a systematic advance and not a sudden jump. It is not a revolution that we are setting up. There is no revolutionary process in Nature. Everything grows slowly, stage by stage, without missing even one link in the process of development, as we have grown from babyhood to the adult stage. How beautifully does a tree grow from the seed! How many years does it take? There is no abrupt skipping from the seed to the fruit.

So is Yoga a gradual developmental process of the 'wholeness' of our personality towards an achievement of All-Being. We have, therefore, to be cautious that the necessary preparations are made. We cannot suddenly conceive of the goal without being aware of the preparatory stages. Apart from the techniques to which we shall refer a little later, five of the requisites may be noted with advantage among many others: 1. Place, 2. Time, 3. Method, 4. Regularity, and 5. Whole-souled devotion to the Ideal.

You must have a place which is suited to the practice. You must also have a time chosen for the practice. You should have a method which has to be adopted continuously, without changing it every now and then. Then the practice must be regular and there should be no break in it. And, lastly which is perhaps the most important aspect of it, you must have a whole-souled love for the practice. It is said in the Yoga scriptures that one loves Yoga as the mother loves the child and thinks of it the whole day and night, and there is no other thought in the mind except that. "How shall I get it?" This ardent longing from the heart is itself half of the success in the practice, and everything else comes afterwards.

The co-operation from your deepest feelings is the affection that you have for Yoga. You do not approach it with suspicions or doubts in the mind. It is absolutely certain that you are going to achieve the goal. This conviction should be there at all times. If the calculations are correct, the mathematical problem should yield the required result. You cannot doubt whether the calculations will give the result or not. The system of mathematics is so exact that there cannot be any suspicion about it. *(To be continued)*

Harmony is nothing but your adjustment with the cosmos.

*(Swami Krishnananda)*

## NIRGUNA-BRAHMA-VIDYA

(MEDITATION ON ATTRIBUTELESS BRAHMAN)

(Sri Swami Brahmananda)

The goal of all *vidyas* (meditations) is the one, non-dual, infinite Brahman alone. All Upanishads practically deal directly or indirectly with *Brahma-vidya* alone. This particular *NirgunaBrahma-vidya*, however, confines itself to what the Kenopanishad says on this subject. A doubt may arise in the reader whether there are two Brahman, one *saguna* (with attributes) and the other *nirguna* (without attributes). The answer depends upon the state of the questioner and answerer. The answer may be 'yes' or 'no' or 'both' or 'neither'. Brahman (the Absolute, the Consciousness pure) includes all and excludes all, is immanent in all and transcends all. Perhaps It is also free from all inclusion, exclusion, immanence and transcendence. The one and only aim of all meditations is to directly know and realise that the meditator is always non-different from Brahman, the 'object' of meditation, and the act of meditating.

It is significant that the word *vidya* in Sanskrit can mean both knowledge and meditation. We may not be far from the right if we say that meditation which is said to end in Knowledge is the same as Knowledge. Meditation or meditating is really no action like talking, thinking, eating, etc. It is the 'object' realising its forgotten subjectivity, thus doing away with the false division of 'subject' and 'object'.

Kenopanishad chapters I and II give this *Nirguna-Brahma-vidya*. The word *nirguna* as antonym of *saguna* means 'attributeless'. But here we have to understand it in a different

sense altogether. Brahman cannot be limited by saying that He is attributeless. Attributelessness is also an attribute in one sense. *Mantras* 1-5 to 9 say: *tad-eva brahma tvam viddhi*—Know That alone to be Brahman. What is meant by the word 'That'? The answer is given: (1) It is That which is not uttered by speech, but by which speech itself is uttered. (2) It is That which is not thought of by the mind, but by which the mind thinks. (3) It is That which cannot be seen by the eyes, but by which the eyes are able to see objects. (4) It is That which cannot be heard by the ears, but which enables the ears to hear sounds. (5) It is That which cannot be smelt by the nose, but by which the nose gets its power of smelling. Though the 'Upanishad refers to only four organs and the mind, we have to add to these five the remaining organs, viz. the four motor-organs: hands, legs, anus and the sex organ; the two sense-organs: taste and touch; and the three sub-divisions of the internal organ: the intellect, the ego and the subconscious. Thus, the word 'That' in the *mantras* refers to Brahman which can be contacted neither by the five motor-organs, nor by the five sense-organs, nor by the four parts of the internal organ (*antahkarana*). One has thus to meditate on That which transcends all the organs.

Meditation is a function of the mind in the early stages. How can the mind meditate on that which is beyond itself? It seems to be an impossible feat. Even supposing that someone by some means succeeds in meditating on Brahman as indicated in the

Upanishadic *mantras*, the Upanishad in the second half of the second line of the five verses referred to above makes the repeated statement that Brahman is not what people worship and meditate (*upasate*) here. If anyone says that he is practising meditation on Brahman, then let him be certain that what he meditates upon is not Brahman, the Infinite, the whole.

In *mantra* II-1 of this Upanishad the teacher says to the disciple: If you think that you have known Brahman well, you have not known It fully; you have known only a part, a little expression of that Infinite Being at the most—about the gods above and the self within. You have to deliberate and meditate further. Then the disciple, says Sri Sankara in his commentary, having heard this observation made by the teacher, sat in solitude with his mind concentrated, reflected on the teaching of the master (as contained in chapter I) together with their import hidden by the words, meditated on it and made it a matter of direct, personal Experience. Then he goes to the teacher and says: 'Now I think Brahman is known.' Explaining his statement further, the disciple says: 'I do not feel that I have known It properly; not that I do not know, I know also. He among us who knows and yet knows not, really knows' (II-1 and 2). These *mantras* are very enigmatic and are capable of giving different meanings. The disciple is trying to express through words what he has directly 'experienced', without the intervention of the mind which is present in all ordinary experiences. That which cannot be experienced through the mind cannot be expressed through words. The disciple is trying to do an impossible task and hence the apparent contradiction that we see in his statements.

This seems to contradict the previous statement of the master, repeated five times, that Brahman is not what people worship and meditate, for it is said that the disciple after

hearing from the teacher meditated on what he heard about Brahman. But really it does not contradict. For although in meditation there is the functioning of the mind in the form of the triad of the meditator, the object of meditation and the act of meditation, the result attained, viz. the Supreme Brahman, is beyond all triads, and therefore transcends the mind. All meditations start with the triad, but take the meditator to that which is beyond the triads. A thorn is used to remove a thorn in the leg and both the thorns are thrown away leaving the leg in its original healthy condition. The soap-nut powder put in muddy water makes all the mud sink down and along with the mud it also sinks down, leaving the water in its original pure state. Similarly, here concentration and meditation by the mind on the attributeless nature of Brahman takes the meditator to the supreme state of Brahman—the unconditioned, unlimited Consciousness which is beyond the mind, beyond all attributes and their negation. Even at the time of thinking of an object, the mind is really one with the object. In meditation also the result is attainment of oneness with the object of meditation which is Brahman. So the Upanishadic declaration that Brahman is not what people worship here, not only eliminates all limited forms of the deities that are worshipped, but also all objects thought of by the mind. In short, all *anatman*—all that is not-*atman*, all names and forms perceptible to the senses and the mind and their negation—are not to be mistaken for the Supreme Brahman.

The Atman appearing to be within the meditator, atomic in size, seated inside the small space in the heart-lotus, is really Brahman that pervades the whole space outside and extends further by ten inches, as the *Purusha-sukta* puts it. The secret behind our never-ending desires is that it is this Infinite Brahman that is behind these desires. Hence it is that the desires are also infinite. It is beautifully and picturesquely given in the

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*Puranas* in the story of the *Vamana-avatara*. A small dwarfish boy asked King Bali for land measuring three paces by his little feet. The king who granted his request could not fulfil it, for the small boy, *Vamana*, was really the infinite Brahman in disguise who measured all the universes by two paces and demanded the remaining one pace. Then Bali showed his head and the Lord placed His third step on that head. Our desiring also is really the desire for the Whole—the gross, the subtle and the causal realms and that which is beyond them—and hence it is that no one is completely satisfied even with all the objects that this mortal world can give.

Now, the first chapter of the Upanishad gives the incomprehensible nature of Brahman or its attributelessness to help meditation. The language naturally is very pithy and aphoristic. Brahman is to be meditated as the Ear of the ear, the Mind of the mind, the Speech of the speech, the *Prana* of the *prana*, the Eye of the eye, and so on. As Brahman is thus beyond the organs, neither these organs nor even their presiding deities can know Brahman. Nobody has known Brahman as an object, and hence it is difficult to teach or communicate it to another through words. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa says that God alone is unpolluted by the mouth, because no one has so far expressed Him through words by the organ of speech. The word 'God' itself when expressed through the mouth cannot connote that Infinite Brahman whom even the mind cannot think of. All objects of the world including all concepts expressed in words by the organ of speech may be said to be polluted, because they have contacted the saliva and the germs in the mouth. Brahman is different from all that is known, from an atom up to *Hiranyagarbha*, the Creator, and It is above the unknown and unknowable *Isvara*. This is the knowledge which has come down from the ancient past to the modern times through a chain of teach-

ers and disciples. Thus should one meditate on Brahman.

In the second chapter of the Upanishad is given some more help to meditation. The language here is again very abstruse and likely to cause confusion, nay, even a feeling of frustration in the seekers, especially the neophytes. Brahman, says the Upanishad, should be meditated upon as That which is known to those to whom It is unknown, and That which is unknown to those who know. Those who after reading a few scriptures think they know Brahman, to them Brahman remains unknown. The Seers who have realised the truth that Brahman cannot be known like an object or a concept by the senses and the mind—to them Brahman is said to be known, as they have directly realised It through intuition which transcends all intellectual knowledge. Such knowers of Brahman perceive It in every cognition, in every modification of the mind, as the Self-awareness in all sensations as well as in their absence. They have gone beyond all concepts of the mind which have revealed their real nature, viz. the Atman-Brahman. Because in all concepts it is the light of the Atman that reveals the mind which has assumed the form of the particular concept.

This meditation results in Immortality in addition to strength—physical, mental and spiritual.

A Sufi saint says: Man passes through three stages. First he worships anything—man, woman, money, children, earth and stones. Then when he has progressed a little further, he worships God. Finally, he does not say, 'I worship God', nor does he say 'I do not worship God'. He has now passed from the first two stages into the last. First there is knowledge; then there is asceticism; then there is Knowledge that comes after asceticism. The 'Ultimate Knower' is worth a hundred thousand ascetics.

## WAYS OF MEDITATION

(Sri Swami Shivapremananda)

[Continued from the July issue]

### PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESS

We can know our mind by observing our desires and tendencies, and our reaction to challenge, when the security of the ego is threatened. Our inclinations, choices as to books, magazines, TV programmes, places of entertainment and friends give a general indication to our nature. We also know about the kind of insecurity and lack of fulfilment by observing our intolerance, nagging, vituperation, harping on mistakes made by others, nursing of resentment over the years.

To observe the mind well one has to be impartial, that is, egoless. It is as if observing someone else's mind as a silent witness, not getting involved in self-justification, nor self-condemnation, but as a patient, kindly and understanding friend trying to help, pointing out that unhappiness is caused by selfishness and self-aggrandisement, dissatisfaction by superficiality and frivolity, anxiety by attachment and insecurity of the ego. It is a method called *sakshi bhava*. Self-observation and analysis should not be overdone but, in order to overcome the fear of one's negative shadow, one has to face and come to terms with oneself, from time to time.

The state of the mind is dependent on the state of the 'I', as it projects itself in the process of its survival and fulfilment, through the archetypal and recent background of race, religion, culture, social influence and

education, and gathers experience by interaction, thereby forming layers upon layers of memory, one's happiness or unhappiness always depending on how the 'I' has been treated.

Consciously or unconsciously one envies those who are successful in their profession due to their motivation, intelligence, endeavour and, above all, being more alert and, therefore, capable of learning, more astute to process and make use of knowledge, and more strong-willed to get where they wish to be. One also admires those who have been able to realise some spiritual ideals and gathered a measure of peace and happiness.

However given the choice, one is likely to pursue material success first and, failing or not being fulfilled by it, would turn to spiritual values. The reason is that one is oriented more empirically than philosophically, as survival is a greater priority than one's need to be happy through a philosophically-induced or religiously-consoled state of mind. One is hardly aware of being related to a spiritual origin from which flow security and happiness, security by faith and happiness by doing something useful for and loving the good of others.

Since the infinite spirit is immanent in all, the experience of a sacred presence within by meditation and as a bonding link to those we can identify with by a loving relationship of

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caring, sharing and understanding, is the only way to lighten the weight of selfishness and loosen the strain of pride and vanity. This can never be done by meditation alone but by identifying the good of oneself with that of those we live and work with.

### SELF-EDUCATION

The following guidelines for self-discipline may be useful:

*Watch your thoughts.* When you find yourself thinking badly of someone, immediately remember the good the person had done to you before. Then think of someone you love. This is one way of overcoming negative thinking.

*Avoid the sin of generalised aspersion.* The individual alone is responsible for his or her guilt or fault. To accuse an entire race or nation for individual misdeeds and deficiencies is uncivilised.

*Watch your behaviour.* If you are lying, remind yourself to be truthful and then make the correction, because trustworthiness is more important than a dubious advantage of the moment.

If you are angry, *ask yourself to be patient* and then explain to the person your problem and what you expect, saying that you would expect the same from yourself.

When you attempt to pass the blame to others, *correct yourself* and accept your share of responsibility. Otherwise, you will never learn.

When you think of another as a sexual object *ask yourself if you really love and care for the person.* Then be reminded that it is the human qualities that determine the durability of happiness in a relationship, not the pas-

sion of the moment, nor the physical attraction.

The following ways of coping with our problems through self-education may be tried:

1. Identify the basic problem rather than generalise and say that you are smothered by so many problems, which is a mental trick for not having to deal with one, because the mind knows that it cannot solve all of them at the same time.

2. After identifying a problem, such as unhappiness or frustration or anger or intolerance, locate the main cause. You will find that most probably it is self-centredness or egoism or selfishness, whichever way you look at it.

3. Then identify some of the lateral causes flowing from the basic cause. For example, in the case of unhappiness, they could be: a) self-pity, b) too many expectations, c) too much attachment or possessiveness, d) self-importance, and e) lack of spiritual goals.

4. Match each of them with a counterpart to practise specifically in the following way, which is called the *pratipaksha* or counter-posing method in Raja Yoga.

a) Think more of others than of your own problems, be considerate, listen more and be helpful.

b) Expect more from yourself than from others, expect only when you deserve, expect only after making it quite clear as to what you expect in a given situation, and expect after taking into account the limitations of human nature.

c) Excessive attachment or possessiveness is caused by the insecurity of one's love.

Therefore, it is necessary to think of the good of someone you love rather than your loving. Understand that such a good is best achieved the way the loved person wants it to be rather than on your own terms. Ask yourself if you are doing anything good or merely proclaiming your love, and if you are concerned about drawing the attention of others to the good you are doing. Unselfishness overcomes the insecurity of love and lessens attachment or possessiveness.

d) If you are vain, know that there is a lot to learn because you do not know enough. If you wish to be regarded well, you have a lot to improve your nature. Control self-justification and indirect self-praise as well as eulogising your children or spouse to others.

e) Write down in bold letters on separate cards and keep them only where you can see them, in order to be reminded of some worthy goals such as: Be Just, Love Mercy, Do not Be False, Be Unselfish, Control Passion, Be Modest, Think Positively.

Even if these may sound rather old-fashioned, they have a timeless value. The Buddha says: "Do not accept a teaching just because it is given by your teacher, but find out if it is valid in your own experience, and only then accept it." All these steps are arduous and need a lot of faith, discernment, patience and practice. But who has ever progressed and achieved anything worthy without toil?

(Concluded)

The bee which has found the taste of honey can never leave it even at the cost of life. Thou art the bee; Sadhana or spiritual practice is the honey. Drink deep at the fountain source of the Self within. Be ever immersed in the bliss of the Atman. Shun the alluring baits of Maya.  
—Swami Sivananda

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## SIMPLE SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTIONS

(Sri Swami Atmaswarupananda)

**G**urudev wrote over 300 books and there are many valuable scriptures available for seekers. However, what is not available for most people is the time to study, the time to read, the time to practise. And the problem is becoming more and more difficult as things continue to speed up.

But still, this problem was not unknown during Gurudev's time. So one time he said, "I will give you three simple things to do that will lead you to *moksha*. *One*, Eliminate vices and cultivate virtues. *Two*, Remember God. *Three*, Dedicate all your actions." Strangely enough, from one point of view, perhaps the only instruction he needed to give us is to eliminate vices; the other instructions are a way of helping us to do that—and to thus return to our natural state, which is a place of goodness and enlightenment.

This is helpful to remember because most of us have a tendency to trip over the instruction to eliminate vices. Often we think we are getting worse rather than better. It is because we are concentrating on the negative rather than the positive. It is almost impossible to eliminate a vice by, so to speak, wrestling with it. Rather, Gurudev wants us to practise its opposite.

If we have a tendency to be harsh with people, then practise non-injury, consideration. "Be kind, be compassionate," Gurudev said. If we have a habit of not being straight with people, Gurudev wants us practise *satyam*, truthfulness in thought word and deed. If we have a problem with self-control,

Gurudev wants us to practise purity, self-restraint. In other words, cultivating the virtues is the way to eliminate the vices.

However, even that can be a terrible struggle which can seem to be too much for us. That is because we don't remember God. We don't remember that everything is He alone. When we shift our mind to that truth, which is the second instruction that Gurudev gave us, then by themselves, our vices will gradually weaken. The remembrance of God, His omnipresence, His omnipotence, His omniscience, His other attributes, will weaken our vices and help us to cultivate their opposite virtues. And especially if we constantly dedicate all our actions, which is Gurudev's third instruction, then we offer not only our struggle with our vices to God, but the vices themselves.

Our fundamental error has been wrong identification. The essence of all our spiritual practices, no matter what they are, is to get over that wrong identification. Remembering God and dedicating all our actions to Him is the positive way to do it. Eliminating vices and practising virtues purifies the body, mind and heart, so that what we find by remembering God will stick. Therefore, no matter how little time we have in this modern world, Gurudev tells us that if we will eliminate vices and cultivate virtues, remember God and dedicate all our actions, that these simple instructions in themselves will lead us to the goal.

## IN MEMORIAM

### THE SAGA OF A GREAT SHINING STAR

#### MOST WORSHIPFUL

#### H.H. SRI SWAMI CHIDANANDAJI MAHARAJ

[A Note: As it has been noticed late that two pages of the 3-page report of the 'In Memoriam' have inadvertently been left out at the binding stage in some copies of the previous issue of the magazine, we are reproducing the report here again for the benefit of the readers.]

The great Shining Star who was worshipped and adored by millions all over the world is no more with us physically, but has enshrined himself in their hearts for all time to come.

We announce with a heavy heart the sad news of the Mahasamadhi of our beloved President, Most Worshipful H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, at 20.11 hours on Thursday, the 28th August. We humbly and most respectfully offer our homage and obeisance to him, whom our Pujya Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj had held in high esteem.

Pujya Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj has been ailing for the last 3 or 4 years but has surprised everyone by meticulously conducting the affairs of the Ashram as the Spiritual Head of the Institution—The Divine Life Society—almost till the end of his life. Swamiji Maharaj was about to complete his 92 years of age on the 24th September. Unexpectedly, on the morning of Tuesday, the 26th of August, his condition took a serious turn and he slid into coma. Doctors were at hand to monitor his condition. Since there was no palpable improvement, the next day they created all the facilities of the Intensive Care Unit where he has been staying itself. The inevitable end came the next day. Thereupon, in strict compliance of his ardent wish that his mortal remains should be consigned

to Holy Ganga Mata before sunrise, preparations were afoot forthwith for that great ceremony starting at 3.30 in the early hours of the 29th August. Swamiji's body was placed on a chair bedecked with flowers and carried from Gurudev's Samadhi Shrine to the Ashram's Ghat on Ganga via Ashram's Bhajan Hall and Gurudev's Kutir with chanting of Om Namah Sivaya, Om Namo Narayanaya, Om Namo Bhagavate Sivanandaya and Maha Mantra Kirtan. There, after the ceremonial Abhisheka with milk and Ganga Jala to the chanting of Purusha Sukta and Narayana Sukta, they dressed up the body with new clothes, garlands and Chandan and Kumkum, to fulfil another wish of Pujya Swamiji which stipulated chanting of Om Namo Bhagavate Sivanandaya 7 times, Maha Mantra 5 times, Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra 5 times and the Pranava Mantra OM 16 times before placing the body in a sac as per the norm. Then the senior Swamis and the officials of the Ashram, seated in 2 boats, took the body and consigned it to Holy Mother Ganga.

Our dear readers do not need an exhaustive introduction of Revered Swamiji Maharaj as a lot has been in print about his life in various biographies, besides their personal acquaintance of him over a long period, whenever they had Swamiji Maharaj's

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 Darshan, or whenever they had heard his illuminating talks and Kirtans.

Revered Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj was born on the 24th September, 1916 as the second of the five children and was given the name Sridhar Rao. His father, Srinivasa Rao, was a prosperous landlord owning several villages and farmlands and his mother, Sarojini Devi, was a very religious and saintly person. In an atmosphere of wealth, discipline and spiritual inspiration, young Sridhar Rao had naturally and effortlessly imbibed all the great qualities of head and heart. As a brilliant student, Sridhar had graduated in 1938 with distinction from the prestigious and predominantly Christian Loyola College in Madras, and easily gained the knowledge of Christian ideals and saints on account of which he could easily find the similarities in Christian and Hindu faiths.

Fired with zeal to find the Truth, he disappeared from home and joined an Ashram near Tirupathi in southern India, but the family brought him back home. But the young Sridhar continued his spiritual practices without losing sight of the Goal even while living at home.

Coming from a noble and aristocratic family of the upper strata of society in Mangalore City in the southern State of Karnataka, he unmistakably displayed from early in life the sterling qualities of nobility, magnanimity, generosity, compassion and a host of other traits that go to make one a man of great stature. So, it is simply superfluous to say that he was a stalwart!

Most Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj joined the Sivananda Ashram in 1943 as Sridhar Rao and, by dint of his amiable nature and his love and dedication to the Institution, he soon endeared himself to one and all at the Ashram. Soon, Pujya Gurudev recognised in him potential

saintliness. In 1949, fittingly, Gurudev bestowed Sannyasa Diksha on him and made him the General Secretary of the Institution, which duty he fulfilled creditably throughout his tenure as such.

Pujya Swamiji was noted for his tender care of the sick, and for his exceptional attention to lepers and sick animals. He delivered brilliant lectures, wrote soul-stirring articles and founded the most instructive Yoga Museum all which naturally elicited the admiration of Gurudev who subsequently sent him as His spiritual Emissary all over the world.

Swamiji Maharaj accompanied Gurudev and His other disciples on the epoch-making tour of India and Ceylon in 1950 lasting for 2 months. He had been a most favoured and chosen disciple of Gurudev almost from the beginning of his entry into the Ashram. On the visit of any important dignitary, or a high ranking official of the Government, or a saint to the Ashram, Swamiji Maharaj was there, readily to talk to them and acquaint them with the activities of the Ashram besides impressing them with the aims and objects of the Institution under the spiritual banner of Gurudev. He used every available opportunity to glorify Gurudev and earned His coveted blessings in abundance.

A crucial moment came in his life in 1956 when Gurudev called him and opened His heart to tell him that He wanted to nominate Swamiji as His successor. In all humility, Swamiji Maharaj played down the offer, citing his preference to pursuing his spiritual practices exclusively, which he could not hitherto attend to due to the heavy responsibilities as the General Secretary of the Institution. But Gurudev knew in His heart of hearts that Revered Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj was the rightful, deserving successor. There was another occasion in 1962 when Gurudev mooted the same idea which also somehow

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Revered Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, ably assisted by Revered Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj as the General Secretary, held the reins of the Institution dexterously, led it from progress to greater progress, and transformed Gurudev's Mission into a mighty global and international Institution that you see now. A worthy disciple of a worthy Master indeed!

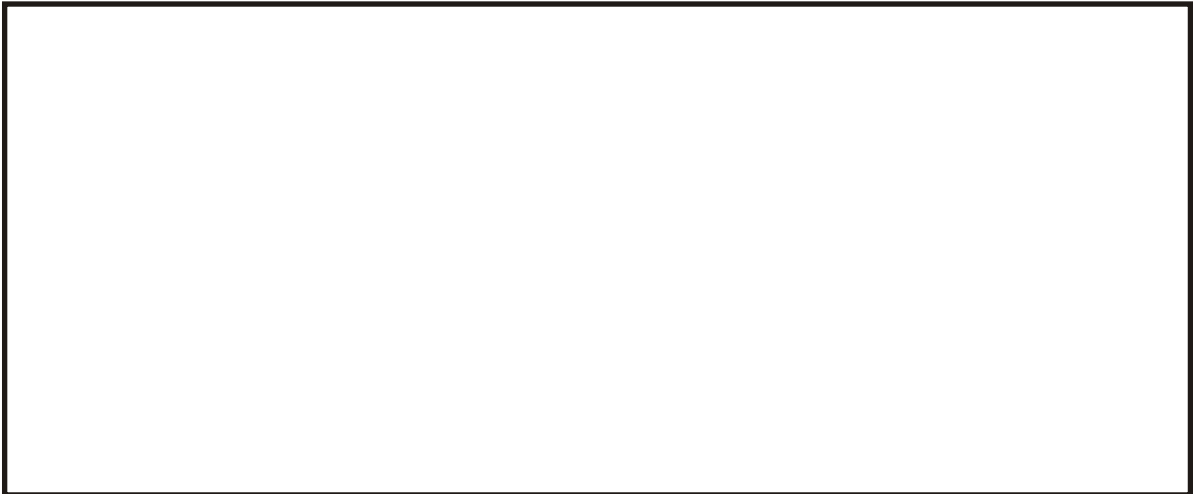
Revered Swamiji Maharaj extensively travelled to every nook and corner of the globe times without number, again and again. He spared no pains to propagate Gurudev's life-transforming teachings effectively whenever opportunity offered itself. Rather, he created opportunities galore to vigorously fulfil that duty of his to his Master and His Mission in carrying Gurudev's torch of Jnana-Yajna.

Thousands had been closer to Revered Swamiji Maharaj in his life rendering service to him personally, doing correspondence for him, assisting him in the Ashram's administrative work or chores of any other nature which all cannot be mentioned here for want of space. But one thing cannot slip from anybody's memory, i.e., the outstanding, untiring and unreserved services of our honourable General Secretary, Revered Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, to Pujya Chidanandaji Maharaj for 55 years since he came to the Ashram in 1953.

Many glowing tributes are coming from devotees, spiritual personalities, Heads of Ashrams and men of letters from different parts of the world, and many leading newspapers and TV Channels of English as well as other vernacular languages have widely splashed the write-ups about Pujya Swamiji Maharaj.

As per the custom in Sannyasa tradition, the 16th day of his Samadhi (Shodashi) will be observed on 12th September as a solemn occasion. Hari Om Tat Sat.

—The Divine Life Society



### OUR HIDDEN IDENTITY

The *being* who attains the experience of That which is beyond thought and speech attains liberation from the cycle of births and deaths. That being is hidden within you as butter is concealed in a vessel of milk, as oil is hidden in seeds. If you churn the milk, the butter arises. If you press the seeds, the oil comes.

That *being* is your eternal identity beyond your apparent being—your physical, human identity and personality which people photograph and say this is So and So. Gurudev said: “Mr. So and So is a false non-entity,” because all that is projected into the time and space dimension, this frame, did not exist before it was thus projected and will soon pass away.

Everything here, including time and space, are finite modes of an infinite Principle. Everything that is seen in manifestation is, therefore, a temporary appearance upon the surface of that eternal Principle. That part of you which is part of that eternal Principle is the hidden God within you—your true Self.

Gurudev’s central mission was to awaken us into an awareness of this hidden inner identity where we are beyond time and space. His daily admonition to us was: “You are neither mind nor body, Immortal Self you are.” And he kept hammering: “Realise thyself and be free.”

That is our central mission. That is our purpose for coming here, existing here—to realise our Self and be free, which means that until you have realised your Self you are a bound being. And there is no greater sorrow than a state of bondage. A caged bird is an unnatural thing. A bird flying in the sky is nature’s own piece of art; it is perfection, beauty.

We are all meant to be such ever-free spirits soaring in the Infinite which is our true element and dimension. We belong to That. What a great and grand privilege it is to have attained a status where the full ability to realise this—our essential, ever-free nature—is given to us as a spontaneous and natural endowment. To man alone is given this supreme privilege which is denied to all other species of living beings upon planet Earth.

And the being who makes use of this privilege proves his God-given supremacy, and justifies the bestowal of this status. Do this and fulfil your divine destiny! May God’s grace and Gurudev’s blessings grant you full success in this supreme objective of human existence!

—Swami Chidananda

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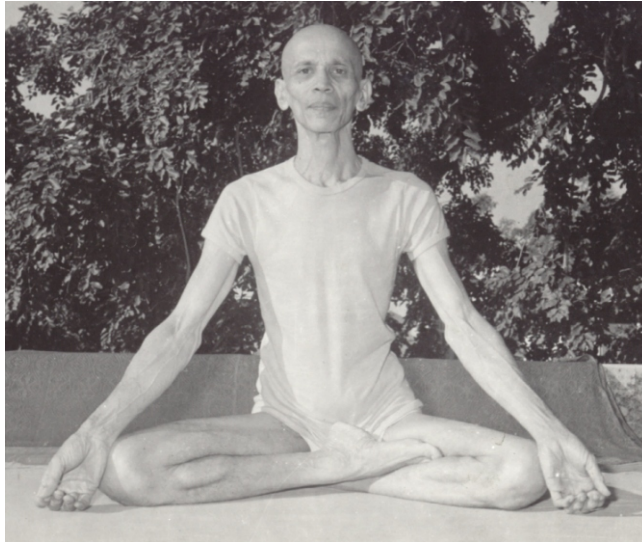
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—The Divine Life Society

Yoga for Health

**SIDDHASANA**

*(Sri Swami Chidananda)*



**TECHNIQUE**

Place one heel at the anus, the terminal opening of the alimentary canal or digestive tube. Keep the other heel at the root of the gen-

erative organ. The feet and the legs should be so nicely arranged that the ankle-joints should touch each other. Hands can be placed as in Padmasana.

O Man! Who has created your experiences? And if, through blindness and stupidity and self-will and folly you have created painful experiences, you have only yourself to change.

\* \* \*

Before doing any work, think that you are going to worship God. While doing work think: 'I am not doing the work: God is doing everything through me. I am an instrument only.' After completion of work, offer; offer it at the lotus feet of the Lord as your humble love. Then Karma will not bind you.

\* \* \*

The whole world is not going to change for you. Change yourself.

—**Swami Chidananda**

## GLORY OF BRAHMACHARYA

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

[Continued from the previous issue]

### GLORY OF BRAHMACHARYA

There cannot be any language without vowels. You cannot draw a picture without a canvas or wall or background. So also, you cannot have health and spiritual life without Brahmacharya. Brahmacharya brings not only spiritual power but great material progress and psychic advancements. Brahmacharya is the basis for acquiring Immortality. It is a substratum for a life of peace in Atman or Pure Spirit or Absolute Consciousness. It is the firm support for Brahmishtha, which is eagerly longed for by sages, aspirants and Yogic students. It is the potent weapon for waging war against the internal Asuras (devils), Kama (lust), Krodha (anger), Lobha (greed), etc. It serves as a gateway for the bliss beyond. Even Rishis, Devas and Gandharvas (the denizens of the astral world) were at the feet of a true Brahmachari—a genuine and established celibate. With this power only, one has to open the Sushumna (the important psychic nerve-current that passes through the spinal column) and to allow the Kundalini to pass through it. Eight Siddhis and nine Riddhis\* roll under the feet of a true Brahmachari. They are ever ready to obey his command. The Lord of

Death (Yama) flies away from him. Who can describe the magnanimity, majesty and true glory of a real Brahmachari?

Arjuna was a strong man but he became nervous and gave up his bow on the battlefield. At that time Lord Krishna explained to Arjuna the doctrines of Gita. This is due to the power of Brahmacharya.

Look at the activities of Bhishma! He possessed superhuman powers. He had tremendous will-power and physical strength. He could even shake the world with the tip of his little finger. He took the vow of life-long Brahmacharya. Because of his qualities the Devas (gods) cried out “Bhishma—the terrible”, while his original name was Devavrata. He had the power to die at will.

Indrajit had a boon of being invincible to all except to one who could abstain from all sorts of sensual enjoyments at least for a full 14 years. It was Lakshmana who was the cause for the death of Indrajit because of his power of Brahmacharya. Carrying a big mountain and other activities were nothing for Hanuman. All these were due to the power of Brahmacharya.

“*Brahmacharyena tapasa deva mrityumupaghata*” (The Vedas declare that

\*There are eight major Siddhis and eighteen minor Riddhis. the eight Siddhis or psychic powers are Anima (atomic size), Mahima (colossal size), Garima (excessive bulk), Laghima (extreme lightness), Prapti (attainment of desire), Prakamya (unhampered will), Isitva (lordliness) and Vasitva (control over everything). Riddhi means affluence. It is inferior to Siddhi.

by Brahmacharya and penance the Devas have conquered death). How did Hanuman become a Mahavira? It is with this weapon of Brahmacharya that he acquired unsurpassable strength and valour. That great Bhishma, the grandfather of Pandavas and Kauravas, conquered death by Brahmacharya. It is only Lakshmana, the ideal Brahmachari, who put down Meghanada, son of Ravana. It is through the force of Brahmacharya that Lakshmana was able to defeat that invincible Meghanada. The valour and greatness of emperor Prithviraj was due to the strength of Brahmacharya. There is nothing in the three worlds that cannot be attained by a Brahmachari. The Rishis of yore knew fully well the value of Brahmacharya and that is the reason why they have sung in beautiful verses about the glory of Brahmacharya.

Just as the oil comes in a wick and burns with glowing light, so also the Veerya or semen flows up by the practice of Yoga Sadhana and is converted into Tejas or Ojas. This nourishes the brain-cells. The Brahmachari shines with Brahmic Aura in his face. Brahmacharya is the bright light that shines in the house of human body. It is the fully blossomed flower of life around which the bees of strength, patience, knowledge, purity and Dhriti (firmness) wander about humming hither and thither. In other words, he who observes Brahmacharya will be endowed with the above qualities. Scriptures declare emphatically: "*Ayustejo balam veeryam prajna sreescha yashastatha; Puram cha sat-priyatvam cha vardhate brahmacharyayaa*" (By the practice of Brahmacharya, longevity, glory, strength, vigour, knowledge, wealth, undying fame, virtues, devotion to Truth increase).

The intellect becomes sharp and clear by continence. Strength and Dhairya (fortitude) are obtained. He is a master of the three worlds. No Yoga or material or spiritual progress is possible without Brahmacharya. Brahmacharya is the most important virtue of Self-realisation.

A man who has the power of Brahmacharya can turn out immense mental, physical and intellectual work. He has a magnetic aura around his face. He can influence the people by speaking a few words, or even by his very presence. Look at Mahatma Gandhi! He had acquired this by constant and careful practice of Ahimsa (non-violence), Satya (truth) and Brahmacharya (celibacy). He wielded the world through this power alone.

It is needless to say that a true Brahmachari possesses tremendous energy, clear brain, gigantic will-power, bold understanding, retentive memory and good Vichara Sakti. Swami Dayananda stopped the carriage of a Maharaj. He broke the sword with his hands. This is due to his power of Brahmacharya. All the spiritual leaders have been true Brahmacharins. Jesus, Sankara, Jnana Deva, Samartha Ram Das were all Brahmacharins.

#### **BRAHMACHARYA— THE ALL IMPORTANT FACTOR**

There is no greater curse than the lack of self-restraint. There is no greater sin than the desire for copulation.

He who is calm and serene, who is endowed with wisdom of the Self, discrimination, dispassion and divine virtues becomes the guide for humanity.

Cosmic love is a great unifying force. Therefore cultivate cosmic love through self-

less service, loving every creature on this earth.

Absolute Brahmacharya is the *sine qua non* of Divine Life or spiritual higher life. There is no half-measure in the spiritual path.

He who is free from lustful thoughts even in his dreams is a veritable God on this earth. He is worthy of the world's adoration.

Mere control of animal passion will not constitute Brahmacharya. This is incomplete Brahmacharya. You must control all the organs—the ears that want to hear lustful stories, the lustful eye that wants to see objects that excite passion, the tongue that wants to taste exciting things and the skin that wants to touch exciting objects.

A life of perfect Brahmacharya or celibacy in thought, speech and action is very necessary for attaining spiritual perfection and Self-realisation.

Spiritual path is full of setbacks. As you advance, the temptations and obstacles will be more. Kindle the fire of resistance. Take refuge in the Lord and His Name.

He who is without violence, and who is ever controlled in body, attains the eternal abode of immortal bliss.

Permit not the sensual objects to tickle your senses and nerves. Be a Dheera or a man of steadfastness. Practice of ethics will strengthen you.

There is no meditation for him who is not moral. There is no intuition for him who meditates not.

Meditation and virtuous life will enable you to enter the kingdom of Peace of the Eternal.

Brahmacharya is the gateway to Moksha or eternal bliss. It bestows superhuman strength and supreme peace. He who is established in Brahmacharya can control anger and move the whole world. It is the basis for morality.

Brahmacharya or purity can be attained only through constant striving. It cannot be achieved in a day or week. Lust is doubtlessly very powerful. It is your deadly enemy. But your most powerful friend is the Name of the Lord. It will destroy lust from its very root. So always recite and sing Ram, Ram, Ram.

Self-control must be your ideal. Self-control gives you immense inner spiritual strength. Therefore, practise self-control. Self-indulgence is not a safeguard against involuntary dreams.

Dissipate not thy energy in sensual pleasures. Conserve thy energy. Do noble deeds and practise meditation. You will soon become a superman. You will commune with God and attain Divinity.

(Concluded)

Merge the whole universe in the cause of all things, viz., Brahman, the Supreme Self. See the entire existence as verily Brahman. Thus abide in the Self, which is full and bliss in itself and knows nothing external or internal.

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Acquire the grace of the Guru. Know the oneness of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul through the experience of the great utterance, Tat Twam Asi—That Thou art and be happy and stable.

—Swami Sivananda

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Children's Page

## THE SECRET OF RECEIVING

(Sri Swami Ramarajyam)

That was a small town. A road leading to the famous temple of Aparna Devi crossed the town. Pilgrims moved along this road throughout the year. Once I was staying with the owner of a shop in that town. He had a small house and the front room of the house had been converted into a shop. On one side there was a big compound which was a part of the house. I noticed that while only a few customers were seen at other shops, they crowded into his shop throughout the day. In the evening I said to him, "I was surprised to see a crowd of customers at your shop all day long but the other shops looked almost desolate."

He narrated the following incident in reply to my observation:

"Till a few years ago only a few customers used to visit my shop. As my income was very low, I was always worried. One day a Sadhu came to my house. He was quite familiar with my family. I opened my heart to him and apprised him of my financial distress. He said, "You wish only to 'receive'. You don't want to 'give'." Elaborating his statement, he further said, "There is a well in your house. Make its cold water available to the passersby. Open the gate of your compound and allow the pilgrims to use it. Think again and again as to what you can give others out of your resources." I could not understand

how this would help me to raise my income, but I had great reverence for the Sadhu and I acted exactly in accordance with what he had said. The very next day, I made arrangements for supplying cold water free of charge in one corner of my shop. My wife, my son and myself supplied water to the pilgrims by turns. I placed cots under the trees in the compound. Tired pilgrims took rest on those cots. Gradually the number of pilgrims, who stayed in the compound, began to increase. Those pilgrims would buy goods from my shop. At the moment I have two helpers in my shop. I find it difficult to attend promptly to my very many customers. A few days later, the same Sadhu came again and said to me, "You can 'receive' only when you 'give'." Today I am prosperous by the grace of God. I am never tired of 'giving'. I see God in those whom I give and I feel very happy."

Dear children, you can learn a lot from this episode. You must 'give', if you wish to 'receive'. When you 'give', do not think about 'receiving'. Do not even think that somebody will say his thank-you to you. Forget that you have given immediately after giving. You should always bear in mind that God has appeared in the forms of those to whom you have given. God loves those who give and provides them with whatever they need. This is the secret of 'receiving'.

That the Self is of the nature of absolute Bliss is proved from the fact of its being the eternal Consciousness which is self-luminous in nature.

—Swami Krishnananda

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### NEWS FROM THE HEADQUARTERS

#### SEVA THROUGH SIVANANDA HOME

Sivananda Home started by the Divine Life Society Headquarters has been of great help to the needy and the poor people requiring medical aid, but not having resources, human help, shelter, attendant and also those who are suffering from difficult diseases. The Home tries to serve such people in all possible ways as it can.

It so happened this month that one night, around 10.00 p.m. a patient was brought in for admission, being in a destitute and desolate condition. He was an elderly Babaji, completely wet due to pouring and showering rain almost continuously for a couple of days. His tiny body was undernourished, aching and ailing, and his Hb was found to be unbelievably 1.8 only! Though blood transfusions were started, his time had come to leave, and just as silently as he had come, so he passed away. May his soul rest in everlasting peace. Om Shantih, Shantih, Shantih.

*"Birth and death are two illusory scenes  
In the drama of this world.  
Really no one is born, no one dies.  
No one comes, no one goes."*

(Swami Sivananda)

How difficult is it to imagine the feelings of a person who is abandoned and who has not voluntarily left his home and herd, for example, in order to lead a spiritual life, of his

own choice, ready to surrender to whatever comes on his path. Nay, this is a person who has been deliberately scared out of the house, never to come back, because of his illness, and literally left alone at the mercy of the Supreme.

How difficult and challenging it is, in Sri Gurudev's words, to: "Think for a moment that you yourself are the patient. What are the things you will need? Enter into the patient's spirit." When we take the example of another Babaji, admitted last month, with a half-sided paralysis of the body, walking with utmost difficulty and having lost his ability to speak, due to a previous stroke. He is not capable of expressing his thoughts, feelings, doubts, etc., any longer by words, but is at the same time fully cognitive and understanding. Slowly and gradually this patient seems to feel at home, has started walking by himself, trying to exercise the weaker part of his body, training and directing his voice and trying to overcome the fear of making unusual sounds. In his own way he communicates and has found a place in the Sivananda Home among his brothers.

*"The Lord has promised good to me.  
His Word my hope secures.  
He will my shield and portion be,  
as long as life endures."*

(Amazing Grace)

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

## ANNUAL SADHANA WEEK AT THE HEADQUARTERS ASHRAM

To inspire, to awaken and to guide the seekers after Truth and God-realisation, was the unique life-work of Holy Master Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. With this object in view, the Headquarters Ashram hosted its forty-fifth Sadhana Week from 19th July to 25th July 2008. The Sivananda Satsang Bhavan (Swami Sivananda Auditorium) housed the programmes. All the seven days, the programme started with early morning prayer-meditation which was conducted by Sri Swami Devabhaktanandaji and it was followed by Prabhat-pheri. Sri Swami Dharmanshthanandaji conducted the Yogasana class. Senior monks of the Ashram and the spiritual luminaries of different organisations, who were specially invited, graced the programmes, showered their inspiring and illuminating messages.

**Mahamandaleswar Sri Swami Divyanda Saraswatiji Maharaj** of Kailash Ashram, Rishikesh, in his inaugural discourse said that Brahman is the only reality and we are not different from Brahman. Though all the three aspects—Existence, Knowledge and Bliss—are inherent in us, due to ignorance we feel bound. By the practice of Shrivana, Manana and Nididhyasana we can acquire knowledge. By doing one's respective duties (Varnashrama Dharma) and other spiritual practices like Japa, Puja, Kirtan and selfless service one acquires the fourfold qualifications (Viveka, Vairagya, Sadsampat and Mumukshatva) and becomes eligible for Shrivana. Swamiji Maharaj, towards the end of his discourse, reminisced his early years of Sadhana and striking a chord with the devotees present, said that he is also a disciple of Worshipful Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and offered his obeisance to Gurudev.

**Mahamandaleswar Sri Swami Shyamasundar Shastriji Maharaj** of Garibdas Ashram, Haridwar, in his discourse, gave many useful guidelines for spiritual practice. He highlighted the importance of Guru Kripa for quick evolution in spiritual life and also the need for change in one's angle of vision. One should recognise the all-pervading nature of God and love His creation, re-

main simple and contented, and should be benevolent and useful for others like trees and rivers.

**Mahamandaleswar Sri Swami Asanganandaji Maharaj** of Paramarth Niketan, Rishikesh, emphasised upon faith in the Name of God and the importance of doing spiritual practices, for in human life alone one can distinguish Self from non-Self. He said one should not yield to the Vasanas (desires) and never forget the transient nature of human body which is like a bubble. While playing one's role in the world-play one should derive inspirations from the life of King Janaka who attained the perfection through being engaged in activities of the world.

**His Holiness Sri Dandi Swami Hamsanandaji Maharaj** of Swargashram said the ultimate quest of all is immortality, infinite knowledge and perennial bliss. The Vedas declare that we are not different from Satchidananda Brahman. It is our ignorance that stands in the way of experiencing the Reality. The ignorance in its three aspects (Mala, Vikshepa and Avarana) obstructs the vision of the Truth. To give an analogy, it is just like the dark clouds coming between our eyes and the sun. Vedanta declares: *Karmani chitta suddhyartham, ekagrayartham upasana; mokshartham brahma vinyanam sarva vedanta nirnayah*. By doing selfless service (performing duties without expecting for fruits of actions and making them God-oriented) the mind becomes pure; by devotion to God and holy people the mind becomes steady and it drops its fickle nature; acquiring the necessary qualifications (Sadhana Chatushtaya) and listening to the Avantara Vakya (*Satyam-jnanam-anantam brahma*) and Mahavakyas like *Tattvamasi* (That Thou Art) from the Guru and contemplating the true meaning of these great statements, one knows his real nature (Sat-Chit-Ananda). Furthermore, the world which is experienced by the senses is understood and perceived as non-different from the substratum (Brahman).

**Mahamandaleswar Sri Swami Ananda Chaitanya Saraswatiji Maharaj** of Ananda

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Krishna Dham, Haridwar, very lucidly explained the inter-relationship between the three concepts Sadhana (spiritual practice), Bhavana (thought) and Kamana (desire). Inclination of our Bhavana towards Sadhana makes us Divine and its inclination towards Kamana brings about bondage. Sadhana bestows bliss and Kamana results in bondage. He also explained the role of Guru in spiritual life and also how the Guru bestows his Grace by Chintana (thought), Sparsha (touch), Drishti (look) and Sabda (word).

**Mahamandaleswar Sri Swami Viswatmananda Puriji Maharaj** of Sadhana Sadan, Haridwar, in his discourse focused on man's quest for eternal, unalloyed and infinite happiness which is found only in Paramatma or the Supreme Reality. Sadhana enables the seeker to understand his real nature (Sat, Chit and Ananda) which is not experienced due to ignorance and wrong identification with the body. After doing one's duties (Kartavya Karma) sincerely and worshiping the Lord with unflinching devotion, the seeker approaches the Guru with his pure and sharp intellect and carefully listens to the great statements (Maha Vakyas) of the Upanishads and thus slowly grasps the true meaning and perceives Brahman which is subtler than the subtlest.

**H.H. Sri Swami Nirliptanandaji Maharaj**, Vice-President, the D.L.S. Headquarters, in his series of discourses during the seven days programme early in the morning and another session in the day, covered a wide range of topics touching different facets of Sadhana. He said that three things are rare in this world, namely, human birth, the burning desire for Liberation and the shelter under a sage. The most important thing in life is God-realisation as it puts an end to all suffering in the world and secures unalloyed permanent happiness. For this one has to do spiritual Sadhana which thus becomes the most important purpose of life. A Sadhak, with his endowed faculty of intellect, by the practice of discrimination and by acquiring a burning aspiration for Liberation should steadily proceed towards the Goal of Life.

Proper culture of mind occupies a prominent place in spiritual life. By deliberate practice of selfless service, devotion and by acquiring true

knowledge, one should remove all the defects—Mala, Vikshepa and Avarana. Though Yogas are classified as Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Dhyana Yoga, they are not contradictory but complementary to each other. Swamiji spoke about the different Yogas at length. For speedy spiritual growth and development Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj has blended them in his Yoga of Synthesis. The most important factor in spiritual life is Atma Kripa or self-effort, as without this one will not engage in Sadhana sincerely and cannot reach the Goal.

Swamiji said that it is our mind which brings about bondage when it is attached to sense objects and is also the cause of Liberation when it is free from such attachment. The purpose of all Sadhana is to bring the mind under control which can be done by the twin methods of Vairagya (dispassion) and Abhyasa (positive spiritual practice). One has to resort to these for success in Sadhana. He also drew attention to the need for cultivation of virtues which is essential for speedy spiritual growth and ultimate success. Of these Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj laid great emphasis on Truth, purity and non-injury as the foundation of Yoga Sadhana. Swamiji also highlighted the obstacles usually faced by a seeker and the ways to overcome them and the imperative necessity to carry on Sadhana regularly, continuously and with love and devotion in order to have success. One has also to avoid extremes in every aspect of life as also in Sadhana, and exercise moderation in all matters following the golden middle path.

**H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj**, Vice-President, the D.L.S. Headquarters, explained that the happiness that we aspire to have is not possible without doing the necessary Sadhana. A Sadhak need not necessarily be a highly educated person. In the words of Worshipful Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, it is to have complete faith in God. Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj has indicated the Sadhana in his *Twenty Important Spiritual Instructions*. Maharshi Patanjali has stressed upon purity of mind which is achieved through the practice of Yamas and Niyamas.

According to Bhagavad Gita intellect plays a vital role in spiritual life. Human beings only can do Sadhana. Asanas and Pranayamas also help a lot to control the body. Practice of Pranayama helps to control the state of mind and meditation helps to control the intellect. Sadhana should be made part of our life to experience the Lord.

**H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj**, General Secretary, the D.L.S. Headquarters, recollected that he was blessed to sit at the holy feet of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj for ten years and remained in the holy presence of Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj for about forty years. He observed them very closely and found that their daily life was their message of Divine Life. Swamiji Maharaj's discourse was laced with many useful ideals that we should follow. Our actions should in no way harm others. We should see God in all and all in God. Practice of doing good and being good in our life, and constant remembrance of God and death will not allow us to do anything wrong. Maintaining purity in life, daily reading of scriptures and Japa of the Divine Name paves the way for God-realisation.

**Sri Swami Advaitanandaji Maharaj** said that the *summum bonum* of human existence is God-realisation. Many are the ways to achieve this goal. Bhakti is the easiest one. In the Bhagavad Gita the Lord Himself says that worshipping Him in His Nirguna Svarupa (formless and attributeless aspect) is very difficult for a person who is attached to his body. Worshipping Him with a form is comparatively easy.

**Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj** lucidly explained the esoteric meaning of the term Guru which denotes light, the remover of darkness (*Gukaro andhakarasha rukarah-tannirodhakah*). Citing the message of Worshipful H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, he said that because of the obstructing medium in between the moon and the sun, except on Purnima day, the moon does not get the full light of the sun. Even so the disciple does not get the full glory of the light of the Guru because of his desire for mundane things.

**Sri Swami Tyagavairagyanandaji Maharaj** mentioned that life is a voyage to be completed successfully. There is a constant struggle be-

tween our good and evil natures. While explaining the fourfold objectives of human life, he said that Artha (wealth) and Kama (satisfaction of desires) should be based on Dharma (righteousness) and it should lead the individual to Moksha (Liberation).

**Sri Swami Sivachidanandaji Maharaj**, in his discourse suggested a simple but useful technique of meditation. By sticking to one's Guru Mantra one can easily still the mind. God is within us all and there is absolutely nothing to worry, for everything is happening according to His will.

**Sri Swami Atmaswarupanandaji Maharaj** said that God-realisation means to make God real. Therefore, the goal of our life is to make God real. Normally we think that to make God real means a grand experience within our consciousness. However, we usually judge spiritual people by what we see them do. Therefore, whatever reality we have found within is meant to be used to make God real without. It means that we are meant to wear away the ego a little bit each day, so that gradually the Reality we have always been is able to shine forth in this world without the distortion of the ego.

To help us in this task of wearing away the ego, there is no better practice than Ahimsa, Satyam and Brahmacharya, which is not only the expression on earth of God as Love, Truth and Purity, but is a direct hammer blow to the ego—which, in either a gross or subtle form, is an embodiment of self-love, crooked thinking and the desire for unending gratification. Following the Vedic Aims and Stages of Life, with its foundational values of Dharma and Moksha, will also help us in a most natural way to make real in this world the eternal Divinity within.

Swamiji concluded by saying that if we thus follow the Vedic way of life, have as our goal making God real, and practise Ahimsa, Satyam and Brahmacharya, we are following the eternal Dharma in a simple form that is suitable to today's busy world.

**Sri Swami Ramarajyamji Maharaj** placed the humanity into four types: Satpurusha, Samanya Purusha, Manushya Rakshasa, and Adhama Nara. An analysis of our mind reveals that most of us fall into the second and the third

categories where selfishness dominates. In order to get rid of our base nature, we should strictly follow the Yamas and the Niyamas. The first and foremost step in Sadhana is to remove selfishness from our interior which will go a long way in helping us in realising the Self.

**Sri Swami Radhakrishnanandaji Maharaj** explained how the world is superimposed on the Brahman by giving the example of the illusory snake on the rope. Practice of Vedanta should go hand in hand with selfless service, devotional practices and charity as happened in the life of Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj.

**Sri Swami Nirakaranandaji Maharaj**, in his discourse said that the root cause of all our sufferings is 'I-ness' and 'Mine-ness'. We have to learn a lesson from the life of sage Yajnavalkya and Maitreyi: we should never strive for worldly things, but for Supreme Bliss.

**Sri Swami Vaikunthanandaji Maharaj's** discourse contained many useful points for Sadhana. He said that a Sadhak should not hanker after sense pleasure. He should utilise his capacity to control the mind that keeps him distinct from the lesser beings. He should be pure, humble and gentle in his life so that he can easily reach the Goal of Life.

**Sri Swami Yogavedantanandaji Maharaj**, told the Sadhaks about the life and teachings of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. He said that Gurudev did not believe in distinction based on caste, creed, colour, etc. He saw God in all creation and laid emphasis on selfless service that purifies mind and heart. He advised Sadhaks to chalk out a practicable daily schedule, lead a simple and honest life, reduce wants, always have strong aspiration to achieve the Goal of Life and do spiritual practices regularly. They should develop good-finding nature and see good in others. These will help them in getting peace, happiness and success in concentration and meditation.

**Sri Swami Vivekarupanandaji Maharaj** described the Sadhana as enunciated in the Devi Sukta and Devi Mahatmya. The elimination of the demons Madhu, Kaitabha, Mahishasura, Shumbha, Nishumbha by the Divine Mother illus-

trates the point that if we take refuge in the Divine Mother, She will Herself cut asunder all the three knots—Kama, Karma and Avidya and thus we can become liberated.

**Prof. Rajinder Bharadwaj ji** said that the four words—Serve, Love, Meditate and Realise—in the Crest of the Divine Life Society stand for Gurudev's Yoga of Synthesis. Practice of the Yoga of Synthesis is the royal road to realise God. He also said that Karma Yoga should be practised to serve others and it should not be desire-oriented.

**Prof. Vasudev Ranadevi** emphasised the Yoga of devotion according to Bhagavad Gita. He reminded the Sadhaks about the Lord's promise in the Bhagavad Gita where the Lord says, "I give Yoga of Discrimination to those who always live their life centred on Me." By living such a life, we can be endowed with the faculty of discrimination that will enable us to discriminate the Real from the unreal.

**Sri Harihar Singhji** in his discourse explained the idealism represented by Sumitra in the Ramayana. Sumitra's devotion and knowledge made her worthy to get a son like Lakshmana. We should imbibe the virtues of the queen in order to progress in Sadhana.

In addition to the discourses by various Swamijis and other speakers, recorded discourses of Parama Pujya Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj and H.H. Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj that were recorded live, preserved in digital video format, were screen played. There were also Question-Answer sessions in which questions were answered and doubts of the Sadhaks were cleared by H.H. Sri Swami Nirliptanandaji Maharaj and H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj.

In the concluding session, on the 7th day, H.H. Sri Swami Nirliptanandaji Maharaj, H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj and H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj blessed the Sadhaks with their parting advice. The Sadhana week came to a close with distribution of Jnana Prasad and Prasad.

Remembrance of God is Life. Forgetfulness of God is Death. (Swami Chidananda)

## REPORTS FROM THE DLS BRANCHES

### INLAND BRANCHES

**Ambala (Haryana):** During the month of July 2008, the Branch had daily Satsanga to which 30 minutes Mahamrityunjaya Mantra on Sundays, 15 minutes 'Om Namah Sivaya' Mantra Japa on Mondays, Sri Hanuman hymns on Tuesdays and Saturdays, 15 minutes Japa of 'Om Namo Narayanaya' Mantra on Wednesdays, Guru Bhajans on Thursdays, and Sri Devi hymns on Fridays were added. It also held Paduka Puja on the Aradhana Day and a special Satsanga on 27th July. Seva through two Homoeopathy clinics was continued.

**Badakuanl (Orissa):** In addition to the daily programmes of morning Puja followed by Sri Gopal-sahasranama Stotra Parayana, and evening Puja followed by recitation of Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotram, Bhajan-kirtan and a discourse of Srimad Bhagavatam, the Branch conducted on Thursdays Paduka Puja in the morning and the weekly Satsanga in the evening. The programme on Sivananda Day was Paduka Puja, and on Chidananda Day, Akhanda Kirtan.

**Bangalore (Karnataka):** Regular Activities: (1) On Thursdays, Paduka Puja, devotional music, Kirtans and Svadhyaya of Gurudev's teachings. (2) On Fridays, Parayana of Sri Lalita-sahasranama Stotram and Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotram. (3) Monthly Satsanga in a prominent Mutt with Puja-Abhisheka, Svadhyaya of Gurudev's teachings, collective chanting of Mahamrityunjaya Mantra and meditation on the first Sunday. (4) Special Satsanga and poor feeding on the last Sunday.

Guru Purnima-Aradhana Day special programmes were as under: Guru Purnima: Spiritual talks on significance of Guru Purnima on 18th July, on Swami Ramadas's Mano Bodha (Manache Sloka) on 19th, and on Guru-mahima on 21st; devotional music on 20th, on 22nd-Thirupugazh Isai Vazhipadu (devotional Bhajans of the Lord) of Lord Subramanya; on life of Jnaneswar Maharaj on 23<sup>rd</sup>, and on 24th after Paduka Puja, devotional music. On 26th July special Aradhana Day programme—Paduka Puja, Satsanga, a discourse on the greatness of Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj by

Parama Pujya Mahaswamigal of Sri Belimutt Maha Samsthana, release of books "Mind", "Gurugeetha", "Swami Sivananda", "Swami Chidananda--Dayaswarupi", and Maha Mangal Arati, Maha Bhog Prasad in the forenoon session, and Harikatha on Saint Purandara Das in the evening.

**Baripada (Orissa):** The Branch conducted Paduka Puja on Thursdays, Paduka Puja and Satsanga / Sadhana Day on 1st and 3rd Sunday, and mobile Satsanga on other Sundays. It provides medicines in a Leprosy Colony, and distributed food to the poor on 16th June and fruits and food to inhabitants of an old-age home on 21st and 28th May. It organised various programmes on Sri Guru Purnima and Aradhana Day including Paduka Puja, Bhajans, Kirtan, discourses and poor feeding.

**Bhanjanagar (Orissa):** The Branch held Sunday Satsanga with Paduka Puja, Satsanga on Ekadasis with recitation of various hymns including Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotram, and also Bhagavad Gita Chapter xii and xv. The programmes on the Sankranti Day were Paduka Puja, Sri Sundarakanda Parayana, Svadhyaya of 'Ponder These Truths', etc.

On Sri Guru Purnima, and on the Aradhana Day, the morning session had special Satsanga and Paduka Puja, and the evening session, Puja, Homa, spiritual talks, etc.

**Bhavnagar (Gujarat):** The Branch conducted the weekly Satsanga on Saturdays and Paduka Puja on Chidananda Day. It continued its regular service through daily Yogasana class, Homoeopathy Free Clinic, distribution of fruits, biscuits and monthly requirement of dry ration to a Leprosy Colony, and Sivananda Library.

During Sri Guru Purnima-Aradhana Day, it organised daily special Satsanga, Bhajan-kirtan, Japa, etc., on all the nine days, and Paduka Puja on the first and last days.

**Bhawanipatna (Orissa):** The Branch had bi-weekly Satsanga on Thursdays and Sundays, four mobile Satsangas in June-July, monthly Sadhana Day on the first Sunday every month, and Paduka

Puja on Sivananda Day. It has launched Swami Sivanada Jana-samparka Yatra and visited 19 villages and held Satsanga in 8 of them. On Sri Guru Purnima and Aradhana Day, after Paduka Puja sweets were distributed to the children of Swami Sivananda Bal Vilas. The Car Festival and the return Car Festival were on 4th and 12th July and the 1500 and 300 tribal devotees who participated on these days were served Anna Prasad.

**Bhongir (A.P.):** The Branch organised a special programme on Sri Guru-Purnima in Sri Kanyaka Parameshwari Temple.

**Bikaner (Rajasthan):** The Branch conducted daily 2-time Puja and evening Satsanga, Matri-satsanga on 8th and 26th July with Sri Sundarakanda Parayana, Sikh scripture Path (reading with proper intonations), Paduka Puja on Sivananda Day, and Havan on Chidananda Day. On Sri Guru Purnima, it organised Sri Vyas Puja, Sri Sankaracharya Puja and Paduka Puja, as well as a special Satsanga. Aradhana Day programme special features were Paduka Puja and a talk on Gurudev's Life and teachings. It conducted 9-day Sri Ramayana Parayana from July 3 to 11. Social service activities of scholarships to students, Sivananda Library and Yogasana training were continued.

**Chatrapur (Orissa):** In addition to the daily Satsanga, the Branch conducted weekly Satsanga on Thursdays, Paduka Puja on Sivananda Day, and Chidananda Day and Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on Sankranti Day.

Sri Guru Purnima programmes were Paduka Puja in the morning and a special Satsanga with a talk on Guru Purnima Mahima in the evening. Aradhana Day programmes included Prabhat Pheri from 4-30 to 5-30 a.m. 5-hour special Satsanga with Paduka Puja, talks, Bhajan-kirtan, etc, and distribution of food and clothings to destitutes. It also held early morning meditation session (with 32 participants) daily from July 19 to 25. The Branch held a special Satsanga in a nearby village on 8th July, and another one as inaugural function of Maa Saraswati Sisu Mandir on 19th June.

**Chennai, Washermenpet (Tamil Nadu):** The Branch organised a special function on Aradhana Day, which was also the 33rd Foundation Day anniversary of the Branch in Sri Ramaswamy Temple

Mandapam. It included Guru Puja, Bhajans, recitation, a spiritual discourse, etc.

**Dhenkanal (Orissa):** The Branch held on Sri Guru Purnima, Paduka Puja and talks by Revered Sri Swami Arpananandaji and the Branch President, and Prasad Sevan in the morning, and a special Satsanga with Bhajans and a talk by Swamiji in the evening.

**Gandhinagar (Gujarat):** The regular activities: Satsanga and Svadhyaya on Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays, daily Yogasana session in the morning and Yogasana class for women in the evening, Yogasana training class from July 1 to 10, Narayana Seva on Sivananda Day, Bal Narayana Seva on Chidananda Day, financial aid to a leprosy colony and poor patients, Sivanada Library and Homoeopathy Clinic.

Special activities: Paduka Puja and special Satsanga on Sri Guru Purnima, and mobile Satsangas on 22nd and 26th July.

**Gangtok (Sikkim):** The Branch organised Paduka Puja and a special function on Sri Guru Purnima. 200 devotees including many dignitaries participated. It also conducted 6-day Maha-Rudra-Abhisheka Yajna along with chanting of Mahamrityunjaya Mantra 1,25,000 times. Hundreds of devotees attended it daily.

**Jaipur Malaviya Nagar (Rajasthan):** The daily schedule of the Branch is meditation session from 11 a.m. to 12 noon, sharing knowledge and discussion in the study circle, and Yogasana class in the morning and evening. It holds the weekly Satsanga and Havan on Sunday, 2-hour Matri-Satsanga on Fridays, and Narayana Seva on Tuesdays. It organised 9-day Sri Ramayana Katha from June 21 to 29. 500 devotees attended it daily. Everyday, one saint was specially invited and honoured.

**Jaipur Raja Park (Rajasthan):** In addition to the daily Sri Devi Bhagavat Katha, the Branch conducted Havan and weekly Satsanga on Sundays, 90-minutes Satsanga and Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Japa on Thursdays, Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on Saturday, and Satsanga and Svadhyaya on the remaining four days. It continued its social service activities of Swami Sivananda homoeopathy clinic (689

patients treated in June), daily Yogasana class, Swami Sivananda Spiritual Library, cash doles to 24 poor widows and scholarships to 80 students, supplying monthly requirement of dry ration—50 kg. rice, 15 kg. tur dal, 15 kg. sugar, 2 kg. edible oil and 1 kg. tea—and daily Narayana Seva.

**Khatiguda (Orissa):** The Branch conducted the weekly Satsanga on Thursdays, two mobile Satsangas, Ekadasi Satsanga with Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Parayana, and the monthly Sadhana Day with 12-hour Akhanda Japa of Mahamantra and Narayana Seva on 6th July.

**Sri Guru Purnima—Aradhana Day:** Sri Guru Purnima—early morning meditation, followed by Sankirtan Yatra, Paduka Puja, Prasad Sevan (lunch), along with 12-hour Akhanda Japa of 'Om Namoh Bhagavate Sivanandaya' Mantra. On Aradhana Day, 13-hour programmes including morning meditation, Mahamantra Kirtan Yatra through the lanes of the town, Paduka Puja, discourses by Revered Sri Swami Sivananda-Gurusevanandaji, along with Akhanda Japa of Mahamrityunjaya Mantra for 12-hours. During the Sadhana Week, Srimad Bhagavat Parayana and discourses by Swamiji from July 23 to 26.

**Khurja (U.P.):** The Branch conducted the weekly Satsanga with Svadhyaya and Sankirtan on Sundays, Mahamantra Japa on Ekadasis by Matri-mandali in the afternoon and by men in the evening, and daily Yogasana class for men in the morning and for women in the evening. It gives Rs. 200/- per month to one poor, sick woman from 1st April.

**Langthabal (Manipur):** The special Satsanga held on Sri Guru Purnima included a talk also.

**Nabarangpur (Orissa):** The Branch organised Srimad Bhagavat Katha Yajna from May 28 to June 2. Revered Sri Swami Sivananda-Gurusevanandaji performed Bhumi Puja for well digging in the Branch premises. In the evening, Swamiji, Revered Swami Amritanandaji, Prof. G. Ranga Rao and Prof. P.C. Jena gave spiritual discourses. It also held a special Satsanga on Sri Guru Purnima.

**Nandini Nagar (Chhattisgarh):** The Branch conducted daily 2-hour Brahmamuhurta Session

from 4-30 a.m., in Swami Sivananda Bhajan Mandir with recitation of Sri Vishnu-sahasranama, Sri Hanuman Chalisa and other hymns, weekly mobile Satsanga on Thursdays, Matri-Satsanga with Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on Saturdays, Ekadasi Matri-Satsanga that covers recitation of Sri Vishnu-sahasranama and Srimad Bhagavad Gita, and 6-hour Mahamantra Kirtan on 3rd July. Though 40 members attended Sri Guru-Purnima-Aradhana Day 9-day programmes at the Headquarters, it also organised Paduka Puja on Sri Guru Purnima, and Havan and Sri Ramayana path on Aradhana Day. It also held Rudra-Abhisheka and Havan on 30th July.

**New Delhi, Vasant Vihar:** The main features of Sunday Satsanga of the Branch were Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on the first Sunday, Sankirtan and meditation on the second, Svadhyaya of Gurudev's teachings on the third, a spiritual discourse by some saint on the fourth, and Svadhyaya and question-answer on Gurudev's teachings on the fifth Sunday.

**Nimapara (Orissa):** The Branch conducted daily one hour Mahamantra Kirtan, the weekly Satsanga with Paduka Puja on Thursdays, three mobile Satsangas, two of which were in nearby villages, and the monthly Sadhana Day on 27th July. The Branch organised 9-day Sri Ramayana Parayana and Katha by Revered Sri Swami Rameswaranandaji from July 4 to 12. The daylong Guru Purnima programmes included early morning prayer-meditation, discourses by Swamiji and Revered Sri Swami Sadasivanandaji, Srimad Bhagavad Gita Parayana, Bhajan-kirtan, Narayana Seva, Prasad Sevan, etc. Aradhana Day programmes were morning prayer session, Paduka Puja, one lakh Archana with 'Om Namoh Bhagavate Sivanandaya' Mantra by 64 devotees, discourses on Guru Tattva and Life and Teachings of Swami Sivananda by the two Swamijis and Pandit Baidyanath Dash, Prasad Sevan, etc.

**Rajkot (Gujarat):** The weekly Satsanga with a discourse at Sivanada Bhavan of the Branch was on Sunday, at other two centres on Saturdays and Thursdays, Satsanga by Mahila Kendra on Fridays, and daily at one Satsanga Kendra. Discourses on Sri Ramacharita-manas were organised at one Satsanga Kendra. Revered Sri Swami Pavitrnanandaji spoke on Satsanga Mahatmya and

Revered Sri Swami Satyanarayananandaji demonstrated Yogasanas on 29th May. Sri Rama Navami was observed as Sadhana Day.

The Homoeopathy Clinics at Rajkot and Wankaner treated about 500 patients every month. Four free Eye Camps in two villages were organised in three months. 410 patients were treated and 87 were operated upon at Sivananda Central Hospital, Virnagar. An All Disease Diagnosis Fee Camp was held on 11th May. The Civil Surgeon, Rajkot and many specialists gave free service voluntarily. The Branch gave Rs. 25,000/- to 9 heart patients, distributed fruits worth Rs. 3,500/- to patients, gave a tricycle to a disabled girl, and donated one stretcher and one wheelchair for use in the Civil Hospital.

**Salipur (Orissa):** Regular Activities: Twice a day Puja; early morning meditation, morning prayer session with one hour Kirtan of 'Om Namah Sivaya' Mantra, one hour Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Japa, recitation of Sri Hanuman Chalisa 3-times, Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotram, etc.; evening Satsanga which includes one hour study class; weekly Satsanga on Sundays; chanting of Siva-sahasranama on Monday; Srimad Bhagavad Gita Parayana on 6th July; Sivananda Day—one hour chanting of 'Om Namoh Bhagavate Sivanandaya' Mantra and Paduka Puja in the morning and special Satsanga in the evening; Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on 12th July; Sadhana Day on 22nd June and 20th July; Yogasana and meditation session on 13th July; Sivananda Charitable Hospital—498 patients treated in 2-months.

Special Activities: (1) Anniversary of Sannyasa Diksha of Gurudev: Paduka Puja, a special Satsanga with a talk on 'Glory of Sannyasa'. (2) On Sankranti Day, Sri Hanuman Chalisa recitation 108 times, a talk on Sri Hanuman, Prasad Sevan. (3) Akhanda Japa of Mahamrityunjaya Mantra for 3 hours on 29th June (4) Sri Gundicha Festival: special Puja of Lord Jagannath, recitation of His hymns and eulogies, a special Satsanga with a talk. (5) Sri Guru Purnima: Paduka Puja, Sri Guru-Gita Parayana, Akhanda Kirtan of Mahamantra for 3 hours, Akhanda Kirtan of 'Om Namoh Bhagavate Sivanandaya' Mantra in the morning, and a talk of 'Life and Teachings of Gurudev'. (6) Yoga Training Camps: On 23rd June (157 participants), and on all

the Mondays of July (739 participants in four Camps), with talks on Maharshi Patanjali's teachings, Yogic diet, Health and Yoga, Yogic Discipline, etc. The Camps were conducted by Prof. B. Chinnara (7) Rural Yoga Camp in a High School on 19th July—200 students participated.)

**Sambalpur (Orissa):** The Branch conducted 3-time Puja in its Viswanatha Mandir, weekly Satsanga on Sundays, meditation on Saturdays, special Satsanga with Paduka Puja on two occasions, and Paduka Puja on Sivananda Day and Chidananda Day. Food was distributed to the poor on Mondays. The Homoeopathy Clinic treated 340 patients during June.

**South Balanda (Orissa):** The regular activities of the Branch were weekly Satsanga on Fridays, Paduka Puja in the morning and a special Satsanga in the evening on Sivananda Day and Chidananda Day, and Paduka Puja in the morning and 3 hour Akhanda Japa of Mahamrityunjaya Mantra in the evening.

It declared Sri Guru Purnima-Aradhana Day 9-Day period as Sadhana period. It held daily Sankirtan Yatra at 4-30 a.m., Brahmamuhurta meditation, Paduka Puja and special Satsanga in the evening, and conducted during this period recitation of Sri Hanuman Chalisa, Sri Sundarakanda, Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotram, Srimad Bhagavatam, and Sankirtan of Mahamantra and 'Om Namah Sivaya' Mantra. The additional activities on Aradhana Day were Rudra-abhisheka, Narayana Seva, Prasad Sevan, Video show on Gurudev's life and a health Camp. The incessant rains had caused various diseases and ailments among the inhabitants of the Leprosy Colony that the Branch looks after. It arranged a health camp with medical personnel and gave proper treatment and diet.

**Vadodara (Gujarat):** The Branch conducted the weekly Satsanga on Thursdays, and Mantra Japa and Paduka Puja on Sivananda Day and Chidananda Day. It continued social service through its Homoeopathy and Ayurvedic dispensaries, acupuncture treatment, special electronic acupuncture treatment at subsidised rate, and distribution of medicines to the poor and needy patients.

**Varanasi (U.P.):** The fortnightly Satsanga was on 13th and 27th July. Sri Guru Purnima programme was Paduka Puja, Bhajans, Arati and Prasad Sevan.

**Vikrampur (Orissa):** The Branch conducted 2-time Puja followed by prayers, daily evening Satsanga, weekly Satsanga on Wednesdays, Matri-Satsanga on Thursdays, one mobile Satsanga and Paduka Puja on five occasions. The programmes on Gurudev's Sannyasa Diksha anniversary also included Srimad Bhagavad Gita Parayana done on the first Sunday. Akhanda Kirtan of Mahamantra was done for three and half hours on 8th June.

**Visakhapatnam (A.P.):** The regular activities of the Branch were daily Satsanga with Mahamantra Sankirtan and Svadhyaya of Gurudev's writings, weekly Satsanga on Mondays, Ekadasi Satsanga with recitation of six chapters of Bhagavad Gita, free medical check-up by Dr. Nageswara Rao on Mondays, and daily one and half hour session of Yogasana and meditation in the morning.

Special programmes: (1) Sri Guru Purnima: Paduka Puja, Prasad distribution. (2) Aradhana Day: special Satsanga, video Darshan through VCD on Gurudev's life, Prasad. (3) Sadhana Week: daily special Satsanga, video show and Prasad from July 19 to 25.

### OVERSEAS BRANCHES

**Hong Kong (China):** During June 2008, the Branch held one hour chanting of Mahamantra on Saturdays (except the second Saturday). There were 199 participants in the regular Yogasanas class, and 19 in the 4-session Yoga workshop. On the occasion of the 8th Anniversary of the Foundation Day of the D.L.S. Yoga Centre on 14th June, the Branch organised a Yoga Gala with demonstration of Yogasanas (91 participants). The Branch made donation for the Sichuan Earthquake victims in China mainland.

### FORTY-FIFTH PUNYATITHI ARADHANA OF H.H. SRI SWAMI SIVANANDAJI MAHARAJ AT THE HEADQUARTERS ASHRAM

The holy and sacred Punyatithi Aradhana of Sri Sat Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was celebrated at the Headquarters on the 26th of July 2008. The programme of the day was similar to the one followed on Sri Guru Purnima. The special feature, however, was the Laksharchana conducted during the collective Paduka Puja at the Sivananda Auditorium, where all devotees did Aradhana. The speakers of the day were Sri Swami Atmaswarupanandaji Maharaj in the morning session, Sri Swami Nirliptanandaji Maharaj and Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj in the forenoon session, and Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj and Sri Swami Advaitanandaji Maharaj, in the afternoon session, who highlighted the teachings of and the practical example set by Worshipful Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. In the forenoon session, a Havan was also conducted for the peace of the world, and the worship of Mother Ganga with Arati was performed in the evening.

The concluding Satsanga in the night of the Aradhana day went up to beyond mid-night. In the long session, many visitors and devotees who had come specially for the occasion sang devotional Bhajans and Kirtans. After this, a film was screened depicting the life of Gurudev. The night Satsanga came to close after Arati and distribution of Prasad specially prepared for the occasion.



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**GLORY OF BRAHMACHARYA (OCT-2008)**

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

*[Continued from the previous issue]*

GLORY OF BRAHMACHARYA

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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!”

### LEARN AND BE VIGILANT

“I was coming out of my cottage. A horse-cart was standing on the road. A Sadhu and a Bhakta were having hot words with the driver. The Sadhu is a very learned pundit. Suddenly the Bhakta started thrusting his umbrella into the driver’s ribs. The Sadhu jumped into the cart and started kicking the driver.

“Mysterious is the power of Maya. The past impressions of the mind are very powerful. This Sadhu has been practising austerities here for at least twenty-five years. He is old and learned, but these evil traits do not leave him.

“We should learn a lesson from this and be extremely vigilant.”

The Master spoke the above words and immediately entered the office.

### THE MASTER CONSOLES

A heart-broken man walked into the office. Disgusted with the world on account of a series of failures, he wanted solace.

The pen dropped from the Master’s hand. The pair of spectacles disappeared

into the case. He led the young man out of the office and seated him on a bench outside.

“Now repeat the Name with me.”

He did Kirtan with the visitor. Om chanting followed. The effect on the man was miraculous. He regained his composure.

The Master asked him to do Japa on the Ganga bank.

### SECRET OF ABUNDANCE

“Take Sannyas, then you will get whatever you need. That is the secret of renunciation. When you require some money you have to run to your bank. When I need it someone comes in and offers it with prostration and with love and respect. Some bring sweets. Others bring torches, medicines, etc. Renounce all desires, then God will ever dwell in you and take care of you,” the Master said to Srimathi Liliane and Sri Annapurna of America.

### TRUE RENUNCIATION

“Neither want nor give up—this should be the attitude of a Vedantin. He should not say, ‘I have given up salt; I have given up sugar.’ No, not even ‘I have given up the world.’ He should be quite indifferent. He should rest in his own essential divine nature and realise the unity of existence. He should always see Brahman alone in everything and everywhere,” the Master said, When a Swami quietly placed a packet of sweetmeats—a visitor’s offering—on his table and walked away. In such cases the conveyor usually got the first and lion’s share of the offering. The young Swami, who was full of dispassion, was reluctant to put himself in that position.

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In the early morning, as soon as you get up, sit for japa and meditation. Therefore, get up at 4 a.m. Brahmamuhurta, and sit in Padma, Siddha or Sukha Asana for Japa and meditation for half an hour, facing east or north. You get up in order to think of God, to remember Him, to take His Name and focus your mind upon Him. This is the way to start the day. So the purpose of getting up early in the morning is not to listen to the BBC radio or take your tea or coffee in bed, but to take the Name of God and meditate upon Him. Gradually increase the period. Do not be satisfied. We are never satisfied with eating tasty things. We are never satisfied with fulfilling our cravings, so, let that not apply only to the lesser part of our being, let it also apply to the greater and the higher part of our being. Let us have this aspiration to gradually increase the period of Japa and meditation to three hours.

—Swami Sivananda



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## IN MEMORIAM

### THE SAGA OF A GREAT SHINING STAR MOST WORSHIPFUL

#### H.H. SRI SWAMI CHIDANANDAJI MAHARAJ

The great Shining Star who was worshipped and adored by millions all over the world is no more with us physically, but has enshrined himself in their hearts for all time to come.

We announce with a heavy heart the sad news of the Mahasamadhi of our beloved President, Most Worshipful H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, at 20.11 hours on Thursday, the 28th August. We humbly and most respectfully offer our homage and obeisance to him, whom our Pujya Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj had held in high esteem.

Pujya Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj has been ailing for the last 3 or 4 years but has surprised everyone by meticulously conducting the affairs of the Ashram as the Spiritual Head of the Institution—The Divine Life Society—almost till the end of his life. Swamiji Maharaj was about to complete his 92 years of age on the 24th September. Unexpectedly, on the morning of Tuesday, the 26th of August, his condition took a serious turn and he slid into coma. Doctors were at hand to monitor his condition. Since there was no palpable improvement, the next day they created all the facilities of the Intensive Care Unit where he has been staying itself. The inevitable end came the next day. Thereupon, in strict compliance of his ardent wish that his mortal remains should be consigned to Holy Ganga Mata before sunrise, prepara-

tions were afoot forthwith for that great ceremony starting at 3.30 in the early hours of the 29th August. Swamiji's body was placed on a chair bedecked with flowers and carried from Gurudev's Samadhi Shrine to the Ashram's Ghat on Ganga via Ashram's Bhajan Hall and Gurudev's Kutir with chanting of Om Namah Sivaya, Om Namo Narayanaya, Om Namo Bhagavate Sivanandaya and Maha Mantra Kirtan. There, after the ceremonial Abhisheka with milk and Ganga Jala to the chanting of Purusha Sukta and Narayana Sukta, they dressed up the body with new clothes, garlands and Chandan and Kumkum, to fulfil another wish of Pujya Swamiji which stipulated chanting of Om Namo Bhagavate Sivanandaya 7 times, Maha Mantra 5 times, Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra 5 times and the Pranava Mantra OM 16 times before placing the body in a sac as per the norm. Then the senior Swamis and the officials of the Ashram, seated in 2 boats, took the body and cosigned it to Holy Mother Ganga.

Our dear readers do not need an exhaustive introduction of Revered Swamiji Maharaj as a lot has been in print about his life in various biographies, besides their personal acquaintance of him over a long period, whenever they had Swamiji Maharaj's Darshan, or whenever they had heard his illuminating talks and Kirtans.



Revered Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj was born on the 24th September, 1916 as the second of the five children and was given the name Sridhar Rao. His father, Srinivasa Rao, was a prosperous landlord owning several villages and farmlands and his mother, Sarojini Devi, was a very religious and saintly person. In an atmosphere of wealth, discipline and spiritual inspiration, young Sridhar Rao had naturally and effortlessly imbibed all the great qualities of head and heart. As a brilliant student, Sridhar had graduated in 1938 with distinction from the prestigious and predominantly Christian Loyola College in Madras, and easily gained the knowledge of Christian ideals and saints on account of which he could easily find the similarities in Christian and Hindu faiths.

Fired with zeal to find the Truth, he disappeared from home and joined an Ashram near Tirupathi in southern India, but the family brought him back home. But the young Sridhar continued his spiritual practices without losing sight of the Goal even while living at home.

Coming from a noble and aristocratic family of the upper strata of society in Mangalore City in the southern State of Karnataka, he unmistakably displayed from early in life the sterling qualities of nobility, magnanimity, generosity, compassion and a host of other traits that go to make one a man of great stature. So, it is simply superfluous to say that he was a stalwart!

Most Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj joined the Sivananda Ashram in 1943 as Sridhar Rao and, by dint of his amiable nature and his love and dedication to the Institution, he soon endeared himself to one and all at the Ashram. Soon, Pujya Gurudev recognised in him potential saintliness. In 1949, fittingly, Gurudev bestowed Sannyasa Diksha on him and made

him the General Secretary of the Institution, which duty he fulfilled creditably throughout his tenure as such.

Pujya Swamiji was noted for his tender care of the sick, and for his exceptional attention to lepers and sick animals. He delivered brilliant lectures, wrote soul-stirring articles and founded the most instructive Yoga Museum all which naturally elicited the admiration of Gurudev who subsequently sent him as His spiritual Emissary all over the world.

Swamiji Maharaj accompanied Gurudev and His other disciples on the epoch-making tour of India and Ceylon in 1950 lasting for 2 months. He had been a most favoured and chosen disciple of Gurudev almost from the beginning of his entry into the Ashram. On the visit of any important dignitary, or a high ranking official of the Government, or a saint to the Ashram, Swamiji Maharaj was there, readily to talk to them and acquaint them with the activities of the Ashram besides impressing them with the aims and objects of the Institution under the spiritual banner of Gurudev. He used every available opportunity to glorify Gurudev and earned His coveted blessings in abundance.

A crucial moment came in his life in 1956 when Gurudev called him and opened His heart to tell him that He wanted to nominate Swamiji as His successor. In all humility, Swamiji Maharaj played down the offer, citing his preference to pursuing his spiritual practices exclusively, which he could not hitherto attend to due to the heavy responsibilities as the General Secretary of the Institution. But Gurudev knew in His heart of hearts that Revered Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj was the rightful, deserving successor. There was another occasion in 1962 when Gurudev mooted the same idea which also somehow didn't fructify for similar reasons. It became quite evident by that time that he was the un-

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mistakable choice for succession. So, Sri Gurudev's ardent wish, call it a prophecy or Satsankalpa, took precedence over everything else and Revered Swamiji Maharaj was installed as the President of the world-wide Divine Life Society after the Maha Samadhi of Pujya Gurudev in the month of August 1963.

Revered Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, ably assisted by Revered Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj as the General Secretary, held the reins of the Institution dexterously, led it from progress to greater progress, and transformed Gurudev's Mission into a mighty global and international Institution that you see now. A worthy disciple of a worthy Master indeed!

Revered Swamiji Maharaj extensively travelled to every nook and corner of the globe times without number, again and again. He spared no pains to propagate Gurudev's life-transforming teachings effectively whenever opportunity offered itself. Rather, he created opportunities galore to vigorously fulfil that duty of his to his Master and His Mission in carrying Gurudev's torch of Jnana-Yajna.

Thousands had been closer to Revered Swamiji Maharaj in his life rendering service to him personally, doing correspondence for him, assisting him in the Ashram's administrative work or chores of any other nature which all cannot be mentioned here for want of space. But one thing cannot slip from anybody's memory, i.e., the outstanding, untiring and unreserved services of our honourable General Secretary, Revered Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, to Pujya Chidanandaji Maharaj for 55 years since he came to the Ashram in 1953.

Many glowing tributes are coming from devotees, spiritual personalities, Heads of Ashrams and men of letters from different parts of the world, and many leading newspapers and TV Channels of English as well as other vernacular languages have widely splashed the write-ups about Pujya Swamiji Maharaj.

As per the custom in Sannyasa tradition, the 16th day of his Samadhi (Shodashi) will be observed on 12th September as a solemn occasion. Hari Om Tat Sat.

—The Divine Life Society

Life does not stand still. If you grasp time by the forelock and utilise it, it is yours. Otherwise, it is not yours; it is finished. Life is not a thing to be idled away, to be allowed to go by in daydreaming and fanciful imaginations. It is something to be grasped with both hands and utilised.

—Swami Chidananda



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## 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 con-

nected 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 Randevji 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 'Becoming' 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.