



RAMA

FIVE OBSTACLES TO PROGRESS

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

1. ARROGANCE

Arrogance is undue assumption of importance. It is unreasonable or excessive assumption or assertion as of superiority. It is overbearing pride.

An arrogant man is unduly or excessively proud, as of wealth, status, learning, etc. He shows pride in spirit or conduct. He is unwarrantably assuming, overbearing and haughty. It is that species of pride which consists in exorbitant claims of rank, dignity, estimation or power, or which exalts the worth or importance of the person to an undue degree. It is pride with contempt for others.

An arrogant man is abject and base. His head is swollen, like the swelling of dropsy.

Haughtiness thinks highly of itself and poorly of others.

Arrogance claims much for itself and concedes little to others.

Pride is an absorbing sense of one's own greatness.

Haughtiness feels one's own superiority to others.

Disdain sees contemptuously the inferiority of others to oneself.

Presumption claims place of privilege above one's right.

Pride deems nothing too high.

In the presence of superiors, overweening pride manifests itself in presumption or insolence.

Pride is too self-satisfied to care for praise.

Vanity intensely craves admiration and applause.

Superciliousness, as if by the uplifted eye-brow, as its etymology suggests, silently manifests mingled haughtiness and disdain.

Insolence is open and rude expression of contempt and hostility, generally from an inferior to superior, as from a servant to master or mistress.

Assumption quickly takes for granted superiority and privilege which others would be slow to concede.

2. INCONSTANCY

Inconstancy is fickle-mindedness. The mind is subject to frequent change.

Inconstancy is instability of affection or temper. It is the quality or state of not being uniform. A man of inconstancy is unstable. He is vacillating. He has a character or constitution which renders change natural or preferable. He is inconstant in friendship or love like an inconstant flame. He changes his views and opinions. He is not firm in resolution. He is unsettled in his thoughts, speech and action.

Clocks will go as they are set, but man, irregular man, is never constant, never certain. His mind ever vacillates, oscillates, and fluctuates, on account of Rajas or passion.

Inconstancy makes you imperfect, fills you with faults and makes you run through sins.

The man of inconstancy has no peace of mind. He is never at ease. His life is unequal. Today he loves you, tomorrow he detests you. This morning he is joyful and laughs; this evening he weeps and is sorrowful.

Cultivate resolution, firmness and steadiness and conquer inconstancy, the cause for unhappiness and misfortune.

Be firm, be steady, be resolute, you will attain success in all your undertakings. You will have neither anxiety nor disappointment.

3. PROCRASTINATION

Procrastination is putting off till a future time, through indolence or lack of resolution. It is dilatoriness. It is postponing or delaying. It is culpable delay.

Procrastination is the thief of time. It is the destroyer of initiative. It closes the door to advancement.

That "tomorrow" will never come. Tomorrow is too late for anything. He who sees help and salvation in tomorrow shall continually fall today. That lazy tomorrow will be like today.

The foolish man says: "I will rise early tomorrow. I will pray and meditate tomorrow. I will carry out my intentions tomorrow." But the wise man rises early today, starts prayer and meditation today, carries out his intentions today and attains strength, peace, and success today.

What you can do this morning never postpone till the evening. Never put off till tomorrow that which you can do today.

Tomorrow is a period found in the fool's calendar alone.

Be wise today. Delay not till tomorrow.

'By and by' is a dangerous thing. You can arrive at the house of 'Never' by the avenue of 'By and by'.

4. COVETOUSNESS

Covetousness is greed or avariciousness. Inordinate desire of wealth is covetousness.

All virtue, all honesty and peace run away from a man of covetousness. A covetous man is always poor and discontented.

A covetous man is a fool. He is a miserable wretch. He lives in perpetual slavery, fear, suspicion, sorrow, discontentment. He never enjoys life.

A covetous man heaps up riches not to enjoy, but to have them. He starves himself in the midst of plenty. His sons squander his money quickly.

Covetousness is the first vice in corrupt nature which moves and the last which dies.

A covetous man acquires money by unjust or unlawful means. He leads a miserable life. His lot is pitiable and lamentable!

5. COWARDICE

Cowardice is want of courage. It is timidity.

A coward is a faint-hearted person. He is afraid of danger. He fawns upon those who are above him. He falters. He yields to fear. He dreads pain or harm unduly.

A coward is a poltroon. He is a pusillanimous man. He is a dastard.

A coward dies many times before his death. A coward can never attain God-realisation.

Cowardice is the one deadly sin. Cowardice is loss of fame.

A lie is contemptible, chiefly because it is cowardly.

PRASANTA MANAS—A FIT INSTRUMENT FOR MEDITATION

(Sri Swami Chidananda)

I will start my discourse with a little humorous illustration. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, when he was a boy, had a sense of humour and a mischievous voice too. Now, there was in the village, a very rich Zamindar of the Laha family. They were very close family friends of Ramakrishna. Those were British times and Calcutta was the capital. So orthodox Hindu ladies observed strict discipline. They did not come out and mix with menfolk. And in the house they had their own quarters to which men had no access.

Once Ramakrishna's father and the chief of the Laha family were freely talking. The latter was telling Ramakrishna's father that in his house he was very strict and the ladies were strictly guarded. Ramakrishna happened to be there and he heard this. And he said it was difficult to maintain strict control. He challenged: "However strict you may be, I can get in." "What do you mean?" asked Laha, "How can you do it?" Ramakrishna said he would prove his word. After some time, a poor young village woman went to the Laha's house. The guard asked the woman, "Who are you?" The woman answered, "I came to this village with my relatives. They have left me and gone away. So I am all alone and I need some place to stay..." The menfolk were sitting in the verandah and Laha said, "All right, go in. My wife is in. Be with her." The menfolk were continuing with their conversation. After about an hour, Ramakrishna's elder brother came in search of him and said to Laha that his brother had gone away some-

where and that his Puja time was nearing. He asked Laha whether Ramakrishna had come to his house as was his usual wont. When told that Ramakrishna had left, Ramakrishna's brother was on the point of leaving the place to look elsewhere for his brother.

Just then a voice from inside the Laha's house came piercing: "Hey brother, I am here." Laha was astonished. He wondered how it was ever possible. From inside came the young village girl who had gone in a little while earlier. Ramakrishna had so perfectly impersonated the village girl that Laha was completely deceived. Then Ramakrishna took off his veil and asked triumphantly, "Now who has won the bet?"

The point I am trying to make is this. In order to go into the family of Laha, Ramakrishna had to become a woman. In the same way, if you want to get into military barracks, you must have their uniform. In civilian dress you will not be allowed. You must be a Rotarian to enter into a Rotary Club meeting. Anyone cannot enter anywhere. Each place is meant for specific types of people. If you become that type, then you can go in, then you can gain access to that place.

Now, we want to attain the realm of God. If you want to attain the divine realm, you have to become divine. What does 'divine realm' mean? It means Suddha Sattva—pure, spotless, spiritual Reality. Naturally, the seeker who wishes to enter into that plane *par excellence* has to make himself com-

pletely worthy, pure. Becoming godly, one should worship God. When God is pure and all Sattva, the seeker has to have the quality of Bhagavan to realise Bhagavan. This is one point to bear in mind. You have to be of that quality which is also the quality of that which you wish to enter. This is something important.

Secondly, meditation is the process of lifting the mind from the lower state of consciousness. Today one man put a question: "What are the different planes of consciousness?" First you have the physical consciousness. Then there is the mental or psychological consciousness. At the next higher rung is the pure consciousness or the Anandamaya Kosha. Even beyond it is the spiritual consciousness. So it is a gradual upliftment of the mind. The mind has to become very fine, very subtle. The Jnana of Reality is not ordinary knowledge like the knowledge of physics, chemistry, mathematics, botany, zoology, biology and so on. Even a drunkard who has a weak character with a little intellect can become an M.A. or even a Ph. D. But this Para Vidya or the knowledge of the Supreme is totally different. It is not knowledge of any 'thing'. It is not a thing which is cognised by the senses of touch, smell, sight, hearing, feeling. It is rather understood by the negative way of telling oneself 'Not this', 'Not this'. Any thing which is known by the five senses is not God at all. God is totally different. It cannot be grasped even by the intellect. The intellect, the Antahkarana, must be made very, very subtle, highly pin-pointed. Also, the mind must be in a state devoid of agitation. 'Prasanta Manas' says the Upanishad.

As you all know, if you want to have a Prasanta Manas, devoid of restlessness, you must conquer desires, because desire is the cause of Asanti or restlessness. Therefore, you must cultivate two important vir-

tues—contentment and simplicity of life. Only if you are simple, you will be content. Being content, the mind will be serene. Contentment is a virtue. It must not be forced. Be happy if you get nothing; be happy if you get little; be happy if you get more and lose. The mind becomes depressed when it is dejected or when the expected desire is not fulfilled; and the mind which is depressed is always downgoing. Therefore, do not allow the mind to be in the depressed state. In the Gita, Bhagavan encourages Arjuna to have a positive mind. Keep a positive mind. It will take away the depression. Contentment is the key to keep the mind serene and always in the positive state. If there is no contentment, the mind is in the negative state; it is apt to go down. The more you go on satisfying the senses, the more food they want. The sense-desire becomes stronger. It is like pouring ghee into a burning fire. The more you pour, the more it burns. So, this is the quality of the mind. As you try to satisfy the senses you get lost in them, completely merged in them. This is the downward trend.

Try to establish the right relationship between you and your senses. You, in spite of being the master of the house, the body, are being fooled by the senses. Even animals have discretion. A sick animal does not take food. Even a dog, a puppy, when sick, refuses food. Even a cock, a bird, when sick, does not take food. But man suffers because of his inability to relate himself to his mind and his body. He must know that he is always the master. He must be a commander of the senses. Otherwise, he will be destroying his mental peace, he will be denying to himself all chances of getting to higher realms. Therefore the key to mental serenity is simplicity of life and a contented mind. In a peaceful mind, the search for peace is also peaceful. Therefore, the upward tendency takes place automatically. This is the fit instrument for

Jnana Sadhana. If you go on attending to the desires of the senses, the mind becomes grosser and grosser. It becomes more and more turbulent if you give way. Therefore have self-control.

This subject requires constant study. Someone must be constantly telling you: "Don't satisfy the desires of the senses as it would destroy the peace of mind. Reject desires; be the master of your own self." Swami Chidananda cannot be always with you to say this and you cannot come to Rishikesh often. We cannot also talk over the phone always. Through phone I cannot always be telling you: "Be brave," "Be a hero," "Be you the Master," "Do not believe your senses," and so on. How then are you to have this inspiration every day? Study the works of Swami Sivananda. Every day draw inspiration from the inspiring books of Gurudev and get recharged with spiritual wisdom and strength. We should constantly be recharging the spiritual battery. This is the unfailing method established long ago by the ancients. This is known as *Svadhya*—the regular study of spiritual books of the great Masters.

Even a thief who is in the habit of pickpocketing, stealing, picking, even he, when he sees a police officer, will keep quiet. You know how, if the teacher is not in the classroom, the students are noisy. As soon as the teacher comes, everything is silent. This is what happens when you are in the presence of the Master who is your guide. You feel serene, holy, divine. In his presence you cannot be lost. You will not drift away

from your ideal. This is because the influence of his presence is always there. Feel always that you are in the presence of God. Never feel that you are alone. Feel the influence of the Almighty. It is proved by the great sages of the past. Lord Krishna proves it to Arjuna in the Gita in the eleventh chapter.

So, feel that you are always in the presence of God. Offer yourself into the hands of the Divine. Then your life will be uplifted. You will never do that which you should not do. You will never commit any error. Will anyone speak in the presence of a king who is at his Durbar? Even if you get a cough or sneezing, you will try to suppress it. Feel yourself to be in the presence of God. Then automatically your life becomes pure. This is very, very important that you feel that you are in His presence always. Keep the senses under check by refusing to give the fatal fuel which makes your mind agitated. This taming of the senses is *Tapasya*. Draw inspiration from the great ones always. Have contentment which is all happiness, which helps you in your Sadhana. Be happy always. Keep yourself pure in and out. Go nearer and nearer to Reality. Reality is pure—it is Nitya Suddha Atman. Therefore, purity, contentment, study of spiritual books and total surrender to God—these are important elements in the discipline of yoga, these are vital elements in the yoga of Patanjali Maharshi. By practising these you can gradually ascend the yogic ladder and, ultimately, become radiant yourself with the glow of spiritual wisdom, become a Purna yogi.

Faith and belief are the twin wings, as it were, of the bird of your spirit. Faith and belief are the two legs that have to take you to your destination. Faith and belief are the left and right hands that can enable you to achieve anything, take up any task and do it. Faith and belief are like the two eyes that enable a person to see correctly, wholly, with the right perspective. Faith and belief are the indispensable twin factors that succeed in making you what you wish to become a person with deep faith, deep belief. —Swami Chidananda

THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

(Sri Swami Krishnananda)

[Continued from the previous issue]

IX

The whole of life is permeated with various conflicts and irreconcilabilities varying in nature from person to person. The aim of yoga is to resolve all such conflicts and make us perfectly normal in the absolute sense of the term. Whenever there is an inward feeling of irreconcilability in a family, there is a conflict, and when it gets deepened, it can become a malady, a disease by itself.

We have a rough idea of what these conflicts are, and they are the common difficulties that we face in our day-to-day life. We cannot bear too much heat or too much cold, we cannot bear hunger and thirst, we cannot tolerate the presence of certain persons, and so on; of an unending nature are our pin-pricks. But all these diversified conflicts of life can be boiled down to four conflicts finally, in the philosophy of yoga, or, we may say, the philosophy of the Vedanta. All problems are reduced to four fundamental conflicts.

The lowest or the immediately cognisable conflict is the social one, where people cannot get on with one another for one reason or the other, i.e., the immediately visible external conflicts. We are unable to face situations created by people outside; and others, too, cannot strike a reconcilability with our own conducts and activities. There is a mutual difficulty, one hanging on the other, each one attributing its cause to the other, thus making life a scene of sorrow. Everyone is unhappy, saying that the cause is somebody else.

Now, apart from this ostensible external conflict of a social character, we have internal conflicts in our own selves. We are not aligned in the layers of our own personality. We have the physical body, we have the *pranas*, we have the sense-organs, we have the mind with all its various functions, we have our reasoning capacity; we have so many things in us, which we study in psychology. These facts or aspects or layers of our personality are not in harmony, so there is an internal conflict apart from the outer social conflict. There is a psychological conflict in addition to social frictions.

There is a third type of conflict which is of a more serious nature. We cannot get on with the world itself. There is something seriously wrong with the very structure of things, and nothing does attract us. We cannot see any perfection or beauty in this creation of the physical Nature. The seasons, even the five elements, appear to be very defective to us. We are not happy somehow, and we have a feeling that we are harassed by the very make-up of Nature. The elements create a torturous irreconcilability with ourselves; we are grief-stricken.

And, finally, as the last but not the least, we have a tension with God Himself. There is no harmony between us and the Ultimate Reality. The truth seems to be made of characters which do not appear to be the characters

which we exhibit in our life. We are at loggerheads with God, Nature and human society.

These four conflicts can be called the social, personal, natural and spiritual irreconcilabilities. In India we have a great scripture called the Bhagavad Gita which has devoted itself entirely to the resolution of these conflicts.

While the Bhagavad Gita is openly dedicated to the resolution of these problems, every other text on yoga also is devoted to the very same subject, including the Sutras of Patanjali, the Upanishads, or the scriptures of any nation, for the matter of that.

Before we go into the details of these peculiar conflicts which are to be resolved in yoga, so that we may become universally healthy and perfect, we have to consider another aspect which we observe in our life, viz., the aims and objectives that we are pursuing,—the intention behind activities, which has something to do with the joys and the sorrows that we pass through in our life. We are here for some purposes and these may be called our desires, broadly speaking. We have certain basic desires, longings, and if they are not fulfilled, they create problems in our own selves.

Ancient adepts have classified these desires also in the same way as they have categorised the conflicts. The aims of existence, or the aims of human life with which we are concerned now, appear to be manifold on the surface, even as conflicts. Just as conflicts appear to be a hundredfold, or a thousandfold, but really they are only fourfold, likewise, our aims, too, are fourfold. They are not many as they appear on the surface. It is not that we have some millions of desires. We have four desires, to which every desire can be reduced finally.

The first one is the physical or the economic need of our personality. We have hun-

ger and thirst, and we require clothing and shelter. To fulfil these requirements we have today what we call money or wealth. In ancient times, this money idea was not there. There was only the barter system. If you have some commodity which I need, I take it from you in return for some other commodity which I have but which you need. But as it was a very inconvenient system, we have created a new policy of currency, which is very helpful because we cannot carry commodities from place to place for purpose of exchange. This is the principle of wealth or the economic system of life. But wealth has only an instrumental value. Money is a means to the fulfilment of our needs which are primary. We do not require money as such. Nobody wants money only. It is a tool to the fulfilment of our desires. So, when we ask for economic fulfilment, what we actually ask for is the fulfilment of the bodily or physical needs, with all their social relations. However, it is not actually currency note, or money; that is not the requirement. Money is an instrument which is utilised as a necessary means to the fulfilment of the longings of man. All the material requirements of human life come under this particular category. This is one desire.

Then we have certain other stronger desires, at least as strong as the urges for material requirements. And they are our vital urges. These are the emotional needs of the human personality. It is not that we require only bread and jam and a house to live in and clothes to put on. We have also emotional necessities. With all the material needs we can be unhappy if our emotions are not satisfied. So this is another aspect of human longing or desire—the loves, the affections, the aesthetic promptings of human nature.

(To be continued)

MANY FACETS OF IDENTITY

(Sri Swami Shivapremananda)

[Continued from the previous issue]

THREE CHARACTERISTICS

There are three characteristics of consciousness which yogic tradition defines as *sattwa*, *rajas* (pronounced in German *radjas* and in Spanish *rayas*), and *tamas*. *Tamas* is physical and mental lethargy, and a psychologically negative disposition, such as lack of transparency, wickedness, intrigue. *Rajas* denotes a hyperactive nature, restless, as well as egotistic and ambitious, driven by desire.

Sattwa is calmness whilst being constructively active, always positive in outlook, loving compassionate, having integrity and humility of spirit. Human nature is a composition of these three qualities called *gunas*, one predominating over the other two, generally *tamas* and *rajas* over *sattwa*. In highly-evolved souls *sattwa* predominates.

Sattwa indicates awareness of what is around beyond selfish interest, especially of the needs of others. *Rajas* focuses itself through self-interest. *Tamas* functions mainly through reaction. Evolution is possible only by being conscious of what is needed. That 'necessity is the mother of invention' applies only to those who are capable of thinking.

ASPECTS OF INTELLIGENCE

There are many aspects of intelligence that help to shape our identity. It functions through observation, and understanding of

what is observed by a reasoning process. It could be classified in six categories, relative to what is required.

The first is alertness. Perception is possible only through mental focus, and relating what is observed to the memory field to know what it is, inferentially or directly.

The second is the objectivity of perception, or assessment of reality without emotional involvement. An intelligent mind is that which can evaluate a situation without wishful thinking. It also requires freedom from prejudice.

The third aspect is astuteness. One may lack in the first two, alertness and objectivity, but can be quite realistic as to one's self-interest. Cunning is a mundane kind of intelligence impelled by instincts, such as in the mind of a peasant, but its range is very limited.

The fourth is inferential, a capacity to assess the underlying causes of a current situation.

The fifth is spatial or the ability to project into the future a possibility on the basis of evaluating the present, or being imaginative realistically.

The sixth is precision in thinking or arithmetical understanding of a situation by combining the different factors causing it.

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WHAT ARE WE TO BE LIBERATED FROM?

(Sri Swami Atmaswarupananda)

As seekers in the Vedic tradition, we have two principal aims: The first is to live our lives according to *dharma*; the second is to have as our ultimate goal *moksha*, liberation. But what are we to be liberated from? The scriptures will say that it is from the rounds of birth and death, but when Pujya Swami Chidanandaji once asked the rhetorical question, “What are you to be liberated from?” his answer was, “Yourself!”

We, who are pure Spirit, are lost in a false identity. Our goal is to be liberated from that false identity, so that we can abide as we truly are. And what is it that keeps us bound to this false identity? Each teaching will emphasise a different aspect, but there are three things that we could look at. They will give us a hint as to what we should work on in order to liberate ourselves from ourselves.

We are all aware of the first one which is desire. It is wanting things, especially wanting the things of the senses. There are, of course, good desires—the desire for liberation, the desire to choose the good over the pleasant—but we have to be aware that one of the principal things that binds us to this false identification is wanting—I want.

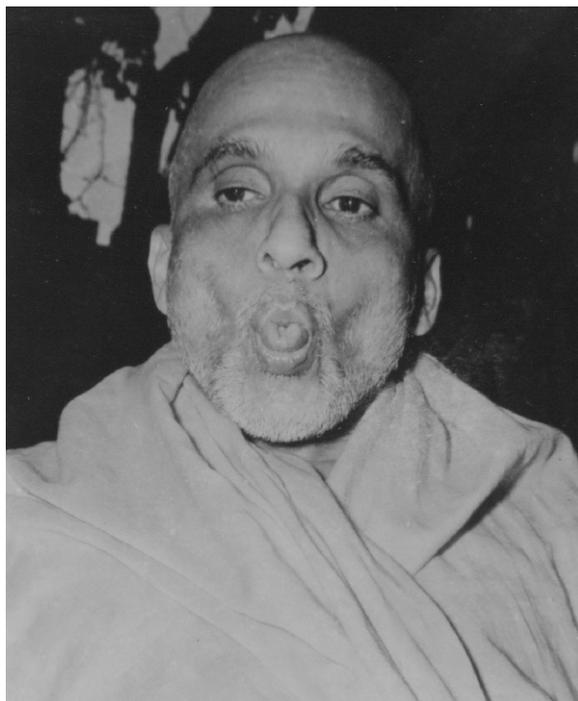
The second thing is something that we may not be nearly as much aware of—but

that nevertheless binds us to this false “I”—is the feeling that we know best. Usually this is a result of the conditioning we receive as we grow up in a certain culture. We feel that our culture is the best, that what we believe is the correct thing. Often this will put us in conflict with others. Indeed, we seem to be always having different ideas than others whether it is individuals, groups or nations. We think that we know best and this self-centredness strengthens our false identification.

The third thing that we should be aware of is perhaps the most dire of all. We all suffer from a common illusion—thinking that we are the centre of the universe, instead of seeing ourselves as part of the universe or all of the universe. We consider ourselves to be the subject, and everything else, including God, is an object to us. This is not only patently false, but also puts us in conflict with others. We treat each other as objects rather than fellow subjects, and naturally there is clash and quarrel.

Thus, the purpose of our life, as seekers, is to choose the good over the pleasant, to live a life of *dharma*, and to seek liberation from ourselves, especially from I want, I know best, and I am the centre of the universe.

Undivided love has to be carefully cultivated by doing everything that you do with a deep love in your heart: “I do this for God, for the love of Him. Everything I do—sitting, eating, drinking, lying down, working, typing, speaking, moving—I do for the love of that Being who dwells within me, who is constantly by my side, in whose presence I am living each moment of my life.” —Swami Chidananda

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

Sit in any one of the postures. Open the mouth and form the lips into 'O' shape. Protrude the tongue like a tube. Draw in the air through the tongue tube. Fill the lungs with fresh and cool air as much as possible. After inhalation, withdraw the tongue and close the mouth. Lower your head and touch the collar bone with the chin during retention of breath. Exhale slowly through both the nostrils after bringing your head erect. Practise this daily ten to fifteen times.

BENEFITS

This Pranayama cools the system, soothes the eyes and ears and purifies the blood. It quenches thirst and appeases hunger. It cures chronic dyspepsia (indigestion), inflammation of the spleen, various chronic skin diseases, low fever, biliousness and phlegm disorders.

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The fourth or inferential intelligence is relevant to sociology, politics and economics. The fifth or spatial is to literature and philosophy. The sixth is to scientific investigation by the precise understanding of the chemical components of matter as in chemistry, or wavelengths of energy as in physics.

For an efficient expression of consciousness what is paramount is the love of what is expressed, not who is expressing it. Without the mind absorbed in music, for example, the pianist cannot express it properly.

If the attention is distracted by the fingers playing on the keyboard or what is around, music cannot be good. It needs the reflex of mental energy in co-ordination with the physical.

The love of the ideal of what is done makes action efficient. Motivation comes first, and then it has to be combined with training. The combination of inspiration and practice is fundamental to efficiency. Higher science requires the fifth or speculative intelligence, and applied science the sixth or the precision kind. *(To be continued)*

LUST AND PASSION

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

ERADICATION OF LUST

A lustful man becomes shameless. A greedy man loses courage. An angry man loses his health. Therefore, destroy lust, greed and anger.

As long as lust smells sweet in your nostrils, so long you cannot entertain sublime, divine thoughts in your mind.

Give up tasty food, reading, conversation, imagination and associations that are likely to stimulate sexual desire.

Do not look at a woman with an evil eye. If she is old, treat her as your mother; if she is young, as your sister and if very young, as your child.

Lewdness or licentiousness is a very broad way to destruction or death. Be pure. Be chaste. Slay this licentiousness, the dire enemy of man.

POWER OF LUST

Lust is the greatest enemy on earth. It devours a man. A great deal of depression follows the sexual act. You have to exert a lot in earning money to please your wife and satisfy her wants and luxuries. You commit various sorts of sins in acquiring money. You mentally share her pains and sorrows and the pains and miseries of your children as well. You have to worry in a thousand and one ways in running the family. As two minds cannot agree, there will always be quarrels in the

house. You have to unnecessarily multiply your wants and responsibilities. Your Buddhi (intellect) gets spoiled. On account of heavy loss of seminal fluid, you will suffer from disease, depression, weakness and loss of vitality. Consequently, you will have an early death. Therefore, become an Akhanda Brahmachari (lifelong celibate). Free yourself from all miseries, worries and troubles.

Energy expended in one sexual intercourse is tantamount to the expenditure of mental energy in mental work of 24 hours or to physical energy in physical labour of 7 days.

The fly runs towards the fire or lamp thinking that it is a flower and gets burnt up. Even so, the passionate man runs towards a false, beautiful form thinking that he can get real happiness and gets himself burnt in the fire of lust.

Man has degraded himself to a great degree by becoming a puppet of passion. Alas! He has become an imitative machine. He has lost his power of discrimination. He has sunk into the most abject form of slavery. What a sad state! What a lamentable plight indeed! If he wishes to regain his lost divine state and Brahmic glory, his whole being must be transformed; his sex-desire must be completely transmuted by entertaining sublime thoughts, and practice of regular meditation. Transmutation of sex desire is a very potent, efficacious and satisfactory way to realise eternal bliss. *(To be continued)*

True religion begins where intellect ends. —Swami Sivananda

Sivananda's Gospel of Divine Life

VEDAS—THE WISDOM-SOURCE

REAL SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

“Can you visualise what you will feel three days later? Beloved Ramachandraji, the whole thing will appear like a dream. You will realise that the offensive words were mere vibrations in the air. Now you are excited. This excitement blinds your vision. You are not able to discriminate, to reason properly. When your mind cools down, you will surely realise your mistake.”

Sri Ramachandra Iyer is immersed in deep thought.

“Where else will you get such a spiritual atmosphere? There is the temple here. You can attend the worship both morning and evening and get hot, hot *kitchadie prasad* also. There is the Bhajan Hall where you can do unbroken Kirtan for a few hours daily. Even if you sit for a few minutes in the Bhajan Hall you will feel elevated. Ganga bath, good food, tea, milk and fruit—oh! it is a blessing to live here. When you go out and suffer, you will realise the difficulties of worldly life.

“My dear Ramji, so many people are daily writing to me that they cannot live in the world any more, and wish to join the Ashram after resigning their jobs. The Lord Himself is looking after us. This entire place is filled with the peace vibrations of sages and saints of yore. So we are ever content and peaceful.

This is the best place for your Sadhana. Why do you think of running here and there? Ohji, give up this idea.”

Sri Ramachandra Iyer prostrates to the Master. He has decided to stay. He is completely transformed now!

THE MASTER'S INDIFFERENCE

After a few hours had elapsed another case comes before the Master.

Swami X., an old disciple who had taken Sannyas from the Master some years ago, and who had his own circle of followers, got a little irritated over a trivial incident and thought of going back to his followers. He came to take leave of the Master.

“Om Namo Narayanaya, Swamiji Maharaj! I want to return today,” he said, and briefly explained what had happened.

“But what do these little boys know? You are an old Sannyasin. You are a pillar of the Society. The mission needs veteran Sadhus like yourself. Now I have all young boys. There must be some aged Mahatmas like yourself. Only if you stay here will the institution be respectable,” the Master argued for a little while.

“All right, if you feel like it you can go.”

The Master then forgot all about it.

The Jivanmukta-Purusha, the one liberated while living, during this state of spiritual expansion, sees no difference between the different types of activities in the world, because, from his standpoint, all movements are movements within the Absolute. —Swami Krishnananda

Children's Page

THE SUPREME WEALTH

(Sri Swami Ramarajyam)

This incident dates back to the fifteenth century. There lived Jeevan Thakur, a poor devotee, in Kashi. He struggled with poverty throughout his life. When he grew old, he could no longer stand the agonies of poverty. He would now pray to Lord Siva daily for an end to his sufferings.

One night the Lord appeared in his dream and said to him, "Go and meet Sanatan Goswami. He will help you out."

Sanatan Goswami was a great devotee of Lord Krishna and lived in Vrindavan. Jeevan Thakur approached him and narrated the story of his sufferings.

The great Sanatan Goswami who felt no attachment to the worldly wealth and pleasures had nothing with him to help the poor and the needy. He thought, "I am myself a poor man. How can a poor man help another poor man? Why did Lord Siva send him to me?"

Suddenly, he recalled that a long time back, he was strolling near the river Yamuna. He had stumbled over a Paras Mani (if iron is brought into contact with a Paras Mani, the former turns into gold). He thought that wealth breeds greed and is a great obstacle to Bhakti (Love of God). He, therefore, had wanted to throw the Paras Mani into the river Yamuna. Later on it had occurred to him that the Paras Mani might help some poor man; so he had hidden it at a safe place.

He told Jeevan Thakur about the place where the Paras Mani was lying hidden. Jeevan Thakur went there. On finding the Paras Mani, he was overjoyed at the thought that he would possess a lot of wealth and even the kings would be jealous of him. All of a sudden, his thoughts turned to Sanatan Goswami—But,

this Goswami! He is not allured in the least by the Paras Mani. He has, as it were, kicked it out of his mind. He is not at all tormented by the greed for wealth. He surely possesses some supreme wealth which is more valuable than the Paras Mani. Look at me! I am mad after worldly wealth and am so delighted at finding the Paras Mani. I should ask him about that wealth which seems to him greater than this worldly wealth.

The Paras Mani, which was a little while ago a source of joy for him, became a source of anguish. He thought for a long while about his attitude towards worldly wealth in comparison with Sanatan Goswami's and then he took a decision. He threw the Paras Mani into the Yamuna. He rushed to Sanatan Goswami immediately and said to him, "I do not want the wealth you gave me. I wish to possess that very wealth having got which you attach no importance to the worldly wealth."

On hearing this, Sanatan Goswami was very pleased with him and said, "God is our supreme and the greatest wealth. If you get this wealth, no other wealth will you require."

Dear children, do you also think of wealth in the same way as Jeevan Thakur thought before he met Sanatan Goswami? Worldly wealth should not be everything to us. It is the Supreme Wealth Who is everything to us, the be-all and end-all of our existence. We call Him God. From that Supreme Wealth originate the world, the worldly beings and all the worldly things including worldly wealth.

God is Supreme. On attaining Him, we attain everything and all worldly wealth becomes insignificant to us. Why should we not, then, try to attain Him—the Supreme Wealth?

NEWS AND REPORTS

NEWS FROM THE HEADQUARTERS

SEVA THROUGH SIVANANDA HOME

Sivananda Home has been started by the Divine Life Society Headquarters to humbly serve the needy and the poor people, those who require medical aid, but have no resources, no human help, no shelter, no attendant, and those who are suffering from contagious diseases.

A couple of new patients were admitted this month in the Home. Most of them were wandering Sadhus, who had become sick and did not have anybody to attend on them in the hour of trials and tribulation, guarded with the Name of the Lord on their lips and armed with faith in His Divine Provision. Soldiers of Surrender.

One of them was an elderly Babaji, dehydrated due to a severe gastro-intestinal infection and additional suffering from AFB positive pulmonary tuberculosis. At the time of admission he was on the verge of collapsing, being without food for almost four weeks and carrying in his meagre bag a small pouch of rehydration salts only. What power of endurance, what faith, patience and hope this patient personified, still being able to show a silent smile on his trembling lips! Steadily he recuperated from his intestinal illness, started eating light meals, and is under treatment for TB, which consists of a long-term course of diet and supervised medication; he is doing

very well. The other Sadhu is suffering from a chronic ulcer on his foot and is also recovering gradually.

Leprosy patients were admitted for a short while, treated for bronchitis, abdominal pain, infected ulcers and age-related problems. They were discharged after treatment. One female leprosy patient was referred to a general hospital, where she was diagnosed with acute appendicitis and gallstones. By the Grace of Sri Gurudev, she could be admitted for surgery immediately and was accordingly successfully operated upon. May he shower his blessings and light upon each one of us, who are all His ailing patients under critical care and continuous observation. Om Sri Sadgurudevaya Namah.

“Come, Come, benighted, fatigued, worn-out wayfarer! Come, come, ailing, sorrowing, sinning, repining humanity! Come, come, dunce and savant, highest-born and lowest-born! Come running on to the cool shade of My Name. Doing away with all your pain, I’ll keep you nestled in My Bosom. Asleep, awake and in dream, in life and in death, you all will play, full of bliss, in My Bosom. Say the Name, say the Name. Fear not. Fear not. Fear not.” (Sri Sri Sitaramdas Omkarnath).

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

ASHRAM CELEBRATES MAHA SIVARATRI

For spiritual seekers, spiritual life is not just one of the aspects of life, but it is the life. A spiritual seeker cannot afford to set apart a few hours for spiritual living and spend the rest of his time in 'unspiritual' activities. He cannot afford to be spiritual for a part of the day only and expect to be happy always. All activities have necessarily to be spiritual by an act of the recognition of the fact that man in essence is Spirit.

Our ancients have instituted various celebrations spread over the year in order to effectively implement this. One such celebration is the Maha Sivaratri Vrata, the observance of which reminds one of the needs for spiritualising all of one's activities.

The Divine Life Society Headquarters celebrated Maha Sivaratri on the 23rd February 2009. The programme of the day started at 5.00 a.m. with the chanting of opening prayer "Jaya Ganesh" Kirtan, Shanti

Mantras, the chanting of Panchakshari Mantra "Om Namah Sivaya" in chorus, and group meditation in the Samadhi Shrine, and simultaneously, morning Abhisheka (sacred bath to the Lord), and worship was performed in the Viswanath Mandir. A Havan to the chanting of 'Om Namah Sivaya' was also performed for world peace.

The consummation of Maha Sivaratri Vrata was a whole-night worship of the Lord in Sri Viswanath Mandir, four worships in the four Praharas, to the non-stop chanting of Rudram and Chamakam within the *sanctum sanctorum* and the sacred "Om Namah Sivaya" Mantra outside the temple premises. Devotees who gathered in the temple sang different hymns of Siva. At 4.00 a.m. on 24th February 2009, the function concluded with Mangala-Arati and distribution of the sacred Prasad at the Annapurna Dining Hall.

AN IMPORTANT REQUEST FOR DEVOTEES

SHARE YOUR MEMORIES ABOUT SRI SWAMI CHIDANANDAJI MAHARAJ!

Following the earnest requests from so many noble souls we have started collecting details regarding any interesting incidents, memories or experiences which anyone has had with our beloved and Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. Those who would like to share any kind of information in this regard may kindly send their narrative, preferably typed, to the Ashram by the end of March 2009. We gratefully appreciate if it could be sent as early as possible. You may also send it as an attachment through e-mail address generalsecretary@sivanandaonline.org by mentioning the subject as "Sharing my memories with Swami Chidananda". Those who prefer to send the matter by post may mention on their envelope "Sharing my memories with Swami Chidananda" and send it to: **The President, The Divine Life Society, Shivanandanagar—249 192, Dist. Tehri-Garhwal, Uttarakhand, India.**

**H.H. SRI SWAMI VIMALANANDAJI MAHARAJ'S SPIRITUAL AND
CULTURAL TOUR TO BIKANER**

His Holiness Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, the President of The Divine Life Society, along with Sri Gopiji and Sri Mahendranji left for Bikaner (Rajasthan) on 6th February 2009, reaching there on 7th February afternoon to participate in the programme arranged by the DLS Bikaner Branch in their Satsanga Hall. Sri Swami Yogavedantanandaji Maharaj, Registrar of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy, reached Bikaner on 6th February evening to oversee the arrangements and also to participate in the Programme. Swamiji Maharaj specially travelled from Jaipur at the specific request of Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, to interpret his talks from English to Hindi to put across to the listeners.

The party stayed at Guru Niwas built by the Branch in their premises, which had been sanctified by the visit and stay of Most Worshipful His Holiness Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. Besides the Pravachans of Revered Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj and Sri Swami Yogavedantanandaji Maharaj from 7th to 11th February, the Branch had also kept the Pravachan of Revered Sri Swami Samvit Somgiriji Maharaj, Head of the Manav Probodhan Trust, Sri Laleshwar Mahadev Mandir, Shiv Math, Shiv Bari, Bikaner and Mahamandaleshwar Revered Sri Swami Vishokanandaji Maharaj, Head of the Dhaninath Giri Math, Panch Mandir, Bikaner. Both the Swamijis also gave their Pravachan on 9th February morning at Tulsi Mandir. The entire programme was nicely arranged and well attended by the devotees.

Besides Pravachans, the D.L.S Branch had arranged for the following visits of the Swamijis.

1. Karni Mata Mandir at Deshnuke, about 30 Km from Bikaner.
2. Revered Sri Swami Ramsukhdasji Maharaj's Murli Manohar Dhora on the way.
3. Famous Sri Lakshminath Temple at Bikaner.
4. Manav Probodhan Trust, Sri Laleshwar Mahadev Mandir at Bikaner headed by Revered Sri Swami Samvit Somgiriji Maharaj.
5. Sri Kapil Muni's birth place at Kolait, about 45 Km from Bikaner where Kapil Muniji gave upadesh to His Mother Devahuti.
6. Visit to Junagarh Fort at Bikaner.
7. Visit to Vaishnav Dham, Nangreti Mataji's Mandir, Sai Baba's Temple, ancient Hanuman Mandir, Lalgargh Palace and Dhaninath Giri Math.

Swamiji Maharaj along with his team also paid visit to some of the devotees' houses as per their fervent request to take Bhiksha and to bless them. Swamiji also gave them Upadesh.

The entire programme and the visits were well arranged and all the devotees did Seva as a team. Special mention may be made of devoted Seva rendered by Sushri Puspha Mataji, Vandana Mataji, Neelmaniji, Shimla Narula, Smt. Suman Moolchandani, Smt. Meera Gupta, Sri Subhash Saxenaji, Sri Damodar Sharmaji, Sri Kishore Kathuria and others.

CULTURAL TOUR OF H.H. SRI SWAMI NIRLIPTANANDAJI MAHARAJ

During January-February, 2009, H.H. Sri Swami Nirliptanandaji Maharaj, Vice-President, the Divine Life Society Headquarters undertook a cultural tour.

On 21st January, Swamiji Maharaj reached Hamirgachhi in West Bengal to attend the annual Sadhana Shivar organised by the Divine Life Society, West Bengal. The Sadhana Shivar was inaugurated by Swamiji in the evening on that day and he addressed the Sadhaks present for the occasion. The Shivar was upto 25th January. Swamiji attended the early morning, forenoon and afternoon sessions and gave discourses on various aspects of Sadhana. The night Satsanga, was also attended by him on all days in which he did the concluding prayers. Besides Swamiji Maharaj, the Shivar was also attended by Revered Sri Swami Sevandaji, Sri Swami Sivananda Gurusevandaji, Sri Swami Sivachidanandaji, Sri Swami Vijnananandaji, Sri Swami Devabhaktanandaji, Sri Swami Anandaswarupanandaji, and some others. Devotees from West Bengal, Sikkim, Orissa, Bihar, and some other States took part in the Sadhana Shivar. The Shivar was very well organised by the Divine Life Society West Bengal, under the leadership of Dr. P.K. Samantaray, General Secretary and ably assisted by Sri Chandra Bhushan Sehgal, Convener, Sri Nitul Parekh, Sri Bijoy Swain, Sri Dipak Dasgupta, Sri Dipak Biswas and others who were all working with great inspiration and enthusiasm, and in great harmony and team spirit. It was a grand success and was of great benefit and satisfaction for one and all.

The Divine Life Society Khidderpore Branch had organised a public meeting for the Railway officers and staff at the Railway Officers' Club in Garden Reach on 27th January. Swamiji Maharaj attended the programme and gave a talk on Divine Life

and ways to happiness in life, which was well attended and also very much appreciated by the participants.

Swamiji Maharaj visited Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati Kanya Inter-College at Khiwai near Meerut in Uttar Pradesh, at the invitation of Sri Swami Ramanandaji who is a very great dedicated devotee of Sivanandashram and a disciple of H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. Swamiji was accompanied by Sri S.R. Sharmaji, IAS (Retd.) and some others. Sri Swami Ramanandaji has a sincere wish and is very eager that the holy name of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj is made known throughout that district. Because of his keenness, he has been able to start the Kanya Inter-College in that village in the name of Worshipful Gurudev for the benefit of girls of the surrounding areas as there is no such facility there. With the help of the villagers and other noble people a building is also being constructed by him for the College, where the work is in progress. There was a Satsanga in the College organised on the occasion of Swamiji Maharaj's visit which was attended by the students and teachers of the college including the Principal, and some people of the area. Swamiji gave a talk for the College students which was of immense benefit to them and was very much liked by them and all were very happy. The noble and sincere efforts of Sri Swami Ramanandaji deserve appreciation and support from all quarters. There itself, some noble persons expressed their assurance for rendering some financial help for the College which was welcomed with joy.

On 31st January, at Delhi, Swamiji attended the Trust Board Meeting of Swami Sivananda Memorial Institute of which he is the Chairman.

REPORT FROM THE DLS BRANCHES

INLAND BRANCHES

Ahmedabad (Gujarat): As a part of celebration of the Mahasamadhi of Brahmaleen H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, special Annadanam was arranged by the Branch for 300 physically challenged school boys at their residential hostel with teachers and office staff, at Uvasad, near Gandhinagar (Gujarat) on 12th September 2008. On 9th November, 2008 H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj gave a discourse at the 'Kerala Samaj Vasna' on "How to Live Religious Life". On 13th November H.H. Sri Swami Nirliptanandaji Maharaj, Sri Swami Tyagavairagyanandaji Maharaj, Sri Swami Bhaktibhavanandaji and Brahmachari Atmanishtha Chaitanyaji attended the Satsanga arranged at a nearby village Bhadaj, where one thousand villagers were benefited by the spiritual talk of Sri Swami Nirliptanandaji Maharaj and the Bhajan-kirtans, since this was the first time they had the opportunity to be blessed with such Divine company.

Barbil (Orissa): Weekly Satsanga and mobile Satsanga were conducted. Sivananda Charitable Homeo Dispensary served more than 400 patients in November.

Bellary (Karnataka): Daily Puja and weekly Gurupaduka Pujas with Ashtottarashatanama Archana of Gurudev every Sunday were conducted. Special Puja and Satsanga were arranged on 23rd November to commemorate the Mahasamadhi Day of H.H. Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj. All spiritual events were conducted with chanting of Mahamrityunjaya Mantra, Shanti Path and Prayer for World Peace. Prasad was distributed after Arati to all participants.

Chatrapur (Orissa): Four weekly and six special Satsangas were held in November. Special Gurupaduka Pujas and Archanas were conducted on 8th and 24th for Gurudev H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj respectively. On the occa-

sion of the Annual function of the Branch, a special programme was undertaken during holy Kartika month for recitation of Shri Ramcharit Manas daily commencing from 14th October to 13th November. At the time of the Purnahuti, Sri Swami Ramkripanandaji graced the occasion with his Ashirvachan to the large gathering of devotees present.

On the occasion of Bichha Shankranti, Sundarkand Parayana was performed on 16th November.

Gandhinagar (Gujarat): Regular activities of Satsanga and Svadhyaya thrice a week in the evening, daily Yogasana session in the morning and special Yoga classes for women in the evening, Yoga training class from 1st to 10th of every month have been conducted successfully. Swami Sivananda Library and twice-a-month homeopathic medical services by Dr. N.J. Meghani have been continuing. Narayan Seva on 8th and Bal Daridra Narayan Seva in Anganvadi on 24th along with financial support to leprosy and poor patients have also been rendered.

Special Activities: 7 days' Yogasana Shibir was conducted at Vrundavan Ashram, Varsoda from 22nd to 28th December. 40 participants of various age groups took part and the camp was conducted by Sri Ashvinibhai Dave, to initiate these Yoga camps as a part of village level programme.

Gumergunda (Chhattisgarh): Regular Puja was offered at Sri Viswanath temple and the Samadhi Shrine of Brahmaleen Shri Sadapremanandaji Maharaj. Early Morning Prayer, meditation and Yogasana sessions and night satsangas are continuing. Chanting of Shiva Chalisa on Mondays, Sri Durga Chalisa on Fridays and Sri Hanuman Chalisa on Saturdays along with Gurupaduka Puja every Thursday has been performed.

Special Activities: (1) Chanting of Srimad Bhagavad Gita, Vishnusahasranam, special Puja

and Archanas were conducted on 8th December on the occasion of Gita Jayanti Celebration.

(2) Punyatithi Celebration of Brahmaleen Sri Swami Sadapremanandaji Maharaj was conducted from 30th December, 2008 to 1st January, 2009 culminating with special Bhandara on 2nd January.

Jagdalpur (Chhattisgarh): Regular activities like early morning prayers, meditation, reading of Sri Ramcharit Manas, Sri Hanuman Chalisa, Hanuman Ashtak, Shiva Chalisa, Yogasan classes, chanting of Om Namah Shivaya and evening Satsanga have been performed. Gurupaduka Puja on Thursdays and Sundarakand Path on Saturdays have been continued.

Special activities: Chanting of Bhagavad Gita, Vishnusahasranam and Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya Mantra Japa for an hour marked the celebration of Gita Jayanti.

Jaipur-Rajapark (Rajasthan): Regular activities: (1) Daily talks on Srimad Devi Bhagavatam by Pt. Radhamohanji in the morning. (2) Evening Satsanga from Monday to Friday. (3) Chanting of Sundarakand every Saturday. (4) Sunday Satsanga and Matri Satsanga every Monday at Siddheshwar Mandir. (5) Special Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Japa every Thursday for the well-being of all. (6) Health Services: Swami Sivananda Homeopathic Dharmartha Chikitsalaya served 1354 patients with two doctors, six days a week. (7) Daily Yoga classes for one hour in the morning. (8) Swami Sivananda Spiritual Library catering to the needs of Jijnasus and Mumukshus with the inspiring books of Gurudev and other publications. (9) Daily Annkshetra for Narayana Seva at Siddheshwar Temple for over 300 people. The Branch provided rations for the Leprosy patients at Garibdas Kustha Ashram. Financial help for more than 25 widows was provided. 80 students were provided scholarships under the Sivananda Chhatravritti Yojana for students between standards sixth to

tenth. (10) A drinking water cooler has been installed for the general public.

Special Programmes: (1) Culmination of the Kartika Month was marked with special Puja and Satyanarayana Katha on 13th November. (2) A two-day spiritual tour was undertaken to Vrindavan and Braja Kshetra for 35 devotees.

Jaipur-Malviya Nagar (Rajasthan): Special Programmes: (1) Sri Swami Dharmarishthanandaji Maharaj delivered a talk on Yoga and Pt. Brajesh Pathak Ramayaniji (Bareilly Waale) spoke on Ramayan at a special programme on 19th October for a gathering of around 300 people. (2) H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, President, DLS (HQ), Sri Swami Dharmarishthanandaji Maharaj, Rev. Sri Swami Yogavedantanandaji Maharaj and other saints from the Ashram arrived here for a Satsanga, where all the saints delivered lectures and the devotees were elevated spiritually by their presence. The Swamis were happy at the presence of a big crowd and appreciated the development of the Branch activities. (3) Annakoot festival was celebrated on 29th October, where more than 500 people participated. (4) Regular free homeopathic medical Seva is provided for the general public.

Jeypore (Orissa): Regular Puja, weekly (Sunday) and mobile (Thursday) Satsangas were conducted. Special Activities: (1) Gita Yajna was organised on 2nd November with oblations offered for each Sloka. (2) 8th November was celebrated as Sivananda Day with special Puja and Havan.

Kothavalasa (Andhra Pradesh): Weekly Satsangas were conducted on Mondays. Special Satsanga was held on 12th December to commemorate the birthday of Brahmaleen Pujya Sri Akshayanandaji Maharaj, which was presided over by Sri Swami Ramayogi of Layidam and a discourse was delivered by Sri Siddhanthi Garuji. Nearly 200 devotees participated and special Jnana Prasad was also distributed on this occasion.

Nalgonda (Andhra Pradesh): Other than weekly Satsangas, special mobile Satsangas were conducted at the residences of various devotees all through the month. Special Satsangas on 8th and 24th of each month and Navaratri Satsangas in October month were held.

Phulbani (Orissa): Daily Puja and weekly satsanga on Sundays were held. Special Activities—Paduka Puja was conducted on 6th November Punyatithi of Brahmaleen H.H. Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj, as also on 8th, 9th, 24th and 28th December. Bhagavat Saptah was organised from 6th to 12th November. Gita Jayanti Utsav was marked with Havan and Annadanam.

Vadodara (Gujarat): Paduka Puja on 8th and 24th of each month was performed. homeopathic and Ayurvedic medical services are provided for 6 days a week. Special Navaratri programmes and group discussions on Ishavasya

Upanishad were conducted in October. Guided meditation sessions and spiritual discourses were organised in November.

Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh): Mobile Satsanga at the residence of devotees was conducted on the 7th December. Special Satsangas were conducted at Vriddhashram on 14th and 28th December.

OVERSEAS BRANCH

Mauritius: Special 3-day celebration to mark the 87th Birth Anniversary of Pujya Swami Venkatesanandaji Maharaj was organised from 27th to 29th December. Special Venkatesa Puja, Guru Paduka Puja, discourses, Mahamantra chanting, children's Satsanga, Narayana Annaseva and blood donation camps were conducted on this occasion.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

As a need of the time and as required by the Government Agencies we are compelled to adopt certain measures in respect of receiving Guests and Visitors to Sivananda Ashram, The Divine Life Society Headquarters at Rishikesh.

Sivananda Ashram is basically a monastic set-up where inmates are Sanyasis, Brahmacharies and Sadhaks pursuing their spiritual practices. They do selfless service and try to maintain the serenity of the Ashram and a spiritually vibrant environment by their Sadhana and collective participation in day-to-day programmes.

Guests and visitors of the Ashram who stay for a few days are expected to spiritualize their days of stay by tuning themselves to the Ashram's atmosphere. Tourists, week-end holidayers and fun seekers are not expected to seek accommodation in the Ashram. They may stay elsewhere and visit the Ashram for prayer, Yoga and meditation, etc.

Guidelines to Guests and Visitors

1. Guests/visitors must write to the General Secretary by letter, E-mail, etc, seeking permission for accommodation, well in advance so that the permission reply letter can be sent. Request for accommodation should be in the following format:

- i. Name:
- ii. Gender and Age:
- iii. Nationality:
- iv. Full Residential Address:

-
- v. E-mail Address:
 - vi. Telephone/Cell No. with Code:
 - vii. Passport/Photo Id type and number * :
 - viii. Reference of your known person in the Ashram:
 - ix. Profession and Brief Spiritual Background:
 - x. Are you Associated with Divine Life Society? & How?:
 - xi. Purpose of Visit:
 - xii. No. of Persons Accompanying (Indicate Name, Gender and Age of each):
 - xiii. Date of Arrival:
 - xiv. Date of Departure:
2. Request for accommodation over phone will not be accepted.
 3. Guests and visitors are expected to co-operate and adjust with the available accommodation allotted by Reception Office.
 4. Guests are expected to attend all the programmes of the Ashram during their stay, especially the Morning Prayer and Night Satsang.
 5. Guests and visitors are expected to take care of their valuables and belongings. The Ashram Management will not be responsible for any loss.
 6. Working hours of the Reception Office will be from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.. The Reception Office will remain closed from 10.00 p.m. to 6.00 a.m. Therefore guests and visitors are requested to plan their travel accordingly to reach the Ashram during the working hours.
 7. Guests/visitors seeking accommodation in the Ashram without prior intimation and permission will not be entertained.

Information to The Divine Life Society Branches

Branches recommending guests and visitors to Sivananda Ashram, The Divine Life Society Headquarters, Rishikesh for accommodation are requested to comply with the above guidelines.

The Branches can always recommend the members/devotees to Headquarters for accommodation but they should ensure that the intimation is sent well in advance and confirmation obtained.

Members, devotees, guests and visitors approaching Headquarters for accommodation with recommendation letters from Branches without prior intimation and permission will not be entertained.

—The Divine Life Society

* The passport or any photo Identity must be presented at our Reception desk on your arrival at Reception.
This is a requirement as per Govt. Rules.