

THE GLORY OF SPIRITUAL LIFE

GLORIOUS ASPIRANTS!

Blessedness be yours! You are *adhyatmika dhiras*, spiritual heroes. Live ever in the Spirit! Spiritual life is neither life merely inside the world nor life simply outside it. It is life in the transcendental Being, the Spirit which is immanent in all beings, the Self which is the Supreme Lord of everything, inside and outside. Spiritual life can be lived "in" the world, but it is "beyond" the world, for it is not of the world. Live this eternal life! O *mumukshus*, live this glorious life!

The *Atman* is the Light of the universe. Live in it. It is, and therefore, all are. It shines, and therefore, everything shines. It is free, and therefore, all strive for freedom. Know this source of freedom, the root of bliss, and be free!

Towards this end, strive. Dedicate your life to this one supreme goal, the only meaningful purpose. The world is chaff to this majestic essence which is the great goal of yours; it is darkness before the splendour of the Divine Being; it is ignorance in relation to the knowledge of God. It is death in the light of that real life in the Truth of all truths. March on with the help of this light and be free.

The experience of the glory of spiritual life is preceded by the negation of the narrow life in the body and the mind. Therefore, transform yourselves completely, transfigure your entire being through service, through devotion, through meditation, through knowledge. Pierce the veil of delusion, go beyond the dark picture of Maya, through

recognising in all the resplendent basis of Brahman upon which the drama of the universe is staged.

Service breaks the ego, opens the heart, expands the consciousness and deepens the spirit. Love softens the hard personality, melts the mind and takes you to God. Dhyana burnishes you, exalts you to the *amanava sthiti*, the superhuman nature, and reveals to you the treasure of wisdom within, the wisdom that is not given to the worldly, the wisdom that transcends the intellect, the wisdom that man cannot hope to attain until he casts off the shell of his individual ego by surrendering himself to the infinite light, the wondrous light which the spiritually blind do not behold.

Therefore, put forth effort. *Sadhana* is spiritual movement consciously systematized. To restrain the senses, to withdraw the mind, to be aware of the divine presence is the essence of *sadhana*. To speak the truth at all cost, to love all as one's own self, to be thoroughly dispassionate, to be pure in thought, word and deed, to be contented and cheerful, and above all, to be undeluded, to be ever vigilant and to remember God, the *Atman* ceaselessly, is the gist of spiritual practice. Follow these methods and realise the highest perfection.

Spiritual life is the only glorious life! Forget not this great message, O man of the earth! Nations are formed. Sections are raised. Wars are waged. Humanity is eager for any competitive race. Parties rival each

other. But this is not in conformity with Truth. O unifying bonds of love! Remember the essential unity of the spirit, the oneness of life in all. Your real glory is in the life of unity and peace. Break down separations. Build up unity. This is glory! There is no glory in this mundane region, in this joyless world which is infected by change, decay and death. Destruction and sorrow leave not a single being untouched. Everything shall pass away. Nothing shall remain. The only substance, the *vastu*, the reality, that endures forever, is God or Brahman —you may call

Him by any name —for He is the sole Existence. Resort to Him; take refuge in Him; realise Him and be free.

May you all be triumphant in your *sadhana* and attain *kaivalya moksha* or absolute independence!

OM TAT SAT

Swami Sivananda

INEFFABLE NATURE OF THE HIGHEST SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

Spiritual experiences cannot be described in words. Language is imperfect. They are to be felt and realised by the aspirants. Experiences vary. A devotee, a Yogi and a sage have different spiritual experiences in the beginning. Ultimately, the highest experience is one and invariable. The highest experience is that in which you become identical with the Absolute.

There is neither darkness nor void in this experience. It is all-light. You become a Sarvavit or all-knower. You know the mystery of creation. You get immortality, higher knowledge, and eternal bliss.

In meditation, new grooves are formed in the brain, and the mind moves upwards in the new spiritual grooves. When the mind becomes steady in meditation, the eyeballs also become steady. A Yogi whose mind is calm will have a steady eye. There will be no winking at all. The eyes will be lustrous, red or pure white.

When you enter into very deep, silent meditation, the breath will not come out of the nostrils. There may be occasional, slow movement of the lungs and the abdomen.

In profound and continued meditation, thinking ceases. There is only one idea of "I am the Infinite", "Aham Brahmasmi". When this idea also is given up, Nirvikalpa Samadhi ensues. Just as salt melts in water, the Sattvic mind melts in the Brahman, its Substratum.

—**Swami Sivananda**

MAKE RENUNCIATION THE BASIS OF YOUR LIFE AND ACTIONS

BLESSED ATMASWAROOP:

Om Namō Narayanaya! Greetings to you from this Holy Abode of Sri Sadguru Bhagawan Sivananda Maharaj. May this letter find you all in good health, peace and joy! Let Guru Kripa bring into your life the light of discrimination, the strength of Self-control, the joy of selflessness and the loftiness of loving service and spontaneous goodness or *paropakara*.

This month holds for us a message of significant importance. It brings to memory an event that resulted in immeasurable good and great blessing to countless souls in this troubled century. On 1st of June 1924, Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji renounced his secular career to embrace a life of *sannyasa*. He entered into the glorious path of *nivritti*, plunged into a period of asceticism, seclusion, intense *sadhana* and deep meditation. Thus he attained realisation and launched his great mission of spiritual awakening to inspire mankind and guide the seekers along the path of Divine Life and God-attainment. His renunciation resulted in world welfare.

We celebrate the auspicious and holy anniversary of Gurudev's renunciation and *sannyasa* this month. I would urge you all to reflect upon this great ideal of *tyaga*. What is the role of *tyaga* in your life? Is renunciation a negative movement? Does renunciation imply denial of the world and your relation to it? Is *tyaga* a virtue for *sannyasins* alone? What is the true inner meaning of *tyaga*?

Dispassion and renunciation comprise the key to inner peace. This peace alone makes

happiness possible. Without peace there is no happiness. Thus it is clear, that anyone who wants peace and happiness must cultivate *vairagya* and *tyaga*. Attachment and selfishness constitute terrible bondage. *Vairagya* eradicates attachment. *Tyaga* cuts at the root of selfishness. They make you free and bring you peace and joy.

Life is a great and sublime *yajna*. *Yajna* means self-offering, a noble giving of oneself for the good and the benefit of others. *Paropakara* is the overall governing principle of man's life. You can engage yourself in doing good to others, in bringing happiness into the lives of others, only when you shed your selfishness. This is real renunciation. The secret of renunciation is the renunciation of selfishness, egoism and personal desires. Renounce personal selfishness and live in the world, enjoying what providence brings to you as your due. This is an admonition of the Seer of the Isopanishad.

We now see that renunciation is a virtue and a noble quality to be cultivated by every individual in human society. By this alone will the principles of *yajna* and *paropakara* be fulfilled. *Tyaga* is not the monopoly or the exclusive duty of the *sannyasins*. It is a virtue that is to permeate and penetrate into every moment of your daily life. Then alone will your life flower forth into a thing of countless blessings unto your neighbour and the society.

The loving mother is a true *tyagi*. She renounces personal comfort, conveniences and happiness for the sake of her children and

their welfare. The father of a family denies himself and renounces personal pleasure and profit to serve his family.

The devout wife renounces all personal considerations to care for her Lord and Master. The faithful servant renounces personal happiness and comfort to serve his master and carry out his behests in loyalty and devotion. The doctors and nurses renounce sleep and rest and even forego food at times to look after the sick and the suffering. A brave patriot and soldier stands ready even to renounce his life for the sake of his country's safety and welfare. A true social worker and leader renounces everything and dedicates his life for his people's welfare. A true teacher renounces his personal ambitions and desires and brings the light of learning, knowledge and wisdom to the young people who pass under his care. A saint renounces the whole world and everything in it to worship God and to serve mankind. It is this quality alone that ennobles human nature and makes it beautiful. Renunciation in the individual renders sweet all relationships he has with the rest of mankind. Yes, renunciation is to be understood as a pervasive virtue which rises *vyavahar* to pure heights and adds to the joy, welfare and unity amongst mankind.

Beloved seeker, reflect well over this universal aspect of *tyaga*. Renunciation alone enables you to become selfless. Selflessness is the soul of life. Selfishness is the bane of mankind and the root of all conflicts, problems and unhappiness. By renunciation, rout out selfishness and become a blessing unto others. Diligently cultivate renunciation in your everyday life.

Practise renunciation day after day at home, in your family, with your neighbours, plying your profession, walking the streets, in the market place—everywhere act with renunciation. Grow in this great quality day by day. Never allow selfishness to make your life

ugly. Permit not pernicious desire and personal avarice to poison your life. Shine with the radiance of true renunciation. Be rooted in true *tyaga*. In thought, word and deed be egoless and selfless. Renounce desire and be filled with peace. Renounce petty selfishness. Become a personification of *paropakara*. Renounce egoism; become an embodiment of egoless simplicity, humility and purity. Such a life is even greater than the life of a more external *sannyasi*, which may not be filled with this spirit of real renunciation.

Thus has Sri Sadgurudev taught this servant of His. Even so do I speak this unto you in the name of Sri Gurudev through these pages that bring the Light of His Wisdom to you, who are dear to Him. Beloved brother in the spirit: Live to uphold this noble ideal of our great culture. Become a *tyagamurti* in all walks of life. Even the care that you bestow upon yourself and your personal welfare, let it be based upon *tyaga*. Look after yourself that you may preserve and keep fit this body to make it an effective instrument for service unto others and to achieve their maximum good and to bring happiness into the lives of all. May your life be a witness to this great virtue. Let all that you do be a demonstration of what this noble principle of *tyaga* truly means.

I close now with my best regards and Prem. May you all dwell in the abiding peace and bliss of divine grace and blessings. Jai Gurudev.

With regards and love,

Yours in Guru Maharaj

Swami Bhidana

1st June 1964

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THE ULTIMATE EXPERIENCE OF SAMADHI

(Sri Swami Krishnananda)

That all things in the world are very strange phenomena, and are really something different from what they appear to be to normal perception, is something that we have noticed in great detail. Also, we came to the conclusion that even if there is an inch of distance between the aspiring consciousness and that which the consciousness is longing for, that longing cannot be fulfilled. It is like an electrical connection. Even if there is a little gap, though very minute, in the fixing of the plug for allowing current to pass, there will be no performance. It will be as if nothing is happening.

This is the case with everything. The difficulty before everyone is that we cannot think anything without some distance. Again we are coming to the same old doctrine of spatiality and temporality, which conditions our mind to such an extent that we cannot think anything—even God Himself—except as being somewhere in high heaven, in vast space, and some at time before creation. If we feel God existed before creation, we are bringing the time factor into it; and if He is very far, in heaven, we bring the spatial aspect. This is a metamorphosis and emphasis in a transcendental manner of a defect in the very thinking process itself.

Patanjali's great point in the exposition of the Samadhis and Samapattis is herein. All achievement is perfect union. Even a little conceptual distance between two things—consciousness and its content—will not permit the implementation or the fulfilment of the achievement. Even if it is God Almighty

Himself, if He is half a foot away from us, we can expect nothing from Him because there is a communication gap between the Almighty and ourselves as the seeking soul. A mighty thing is before us, but there is no connection of an intelligible manner between that which is before us and ourselves.

This is the reason why many of our longings are not fulfilled. Almost all our desires are frustrated. Everywhere there is defeat of any kind of desire whatsoever. People are defeated completely. They get nothing out of what they actually expected. There is bereavement always. No one has come to stay forever. That which comes, also goes. Why should this happen? This is the picture of mortal existence, the picture of the passing of things. Everything is phenomenal, nothing is really existing. Everything is transient and, like a wisp of wind, everything blows in whatever direction it wills.

But the seeker of Immortality—Kaivalya Moksha, Eternity, where rebirth of any kind is stopped completely—aspires for that which is inseparable from the aspiring consciousness. The content of consciousness should not stand outside consciousness. It may be physical, visual or conceptual, but when we think a thing, that thing which we are thinking should not stand outside the thinking process. It should be immersed in the thinking process, so that in thinking a thing, the thinking gets enhanced in its quantum and intensity because of the entry of the thing which appeared to be external to the thinking process. Thinking a thought or an object is

not of any benefit. The object of thought has to increase the potentiality, content, dimension and intensity of the thought itself so that in thinking a thing, the mind becomes filled with a completeness of itself. It becomes a plenum. Instead of a bare thinking abstract process, it becomes a completeness in itself because the thought has become one with that which it thinks. This is Samadhi.

When we were dealing with the Samadhis—Savitarka, Nirvitarka, Savichara, Nirvichara etc.—it was mentioned that the final thing that we have to encounter is space-time. There is no other obstacle except that. Space-time keeps everything away from us. This is the whole difficulty. So, in the higher forms of Samapatti, Samadhi, the externality imposed upon consciousness by the intervention of space-time—the so-called externality that keeps us out from that which we are aspiring for—is also made an object of meditation itself. The devil himself becomes a god, we may say. That devilish nature of things is due to the outsideness of things. If we make that thing our own, we ourselves become the so-called devil; and as we cannot be a devil, we become a god immediately.

The condemnation of things is due to the keeping of things away from us as either desirable objects or undesirable objects. The most difficult thing in meditation is the identification of space-time itself as the object of meditation. We are uniting ourselves not with something, but with space-time itself. Then the question of separation, isolation, distance, temporality, will not be there.

How is it possible for the mind to include space and time in its thinking process, as it is well known that they condition the thinking process? Here is a transcendental feat that the Yogi has to perform, which no philosopher can understand. The feat of yoga is transcendental, super-philosophical, and no argument touches here. When all the great thinkers and philosophers have told us that we cannot think without space and time, how dare we? To overcome this limitation itself, we are trying to step over the very condition of our existence. We are trying to go beyond that which has made us. Is it possible?

We are space-time stuff. We are not solid objects. It is a peculiar apparition that seems to be in the form of this physical body—an apparent condensation, though indescribable, of the peculiar structure of space-time itself. We have heard it said that all matter is puckered space; a dent in space looks like matter. We cannot understand how it is possible. Space is bent where there are large bodies of matter. Experiments have shown that when light passes through large bodies it dents a little, and the straight line is a bit changed; it looks as if light itself is bending in a semi-curvature form because of the tremendous gravitational force of the large body which is the Sun. How can anybody imagine that light can bend into a semi-curvature? Who can imagine that solid Earth, like brick and mortar and iron and steel, is only a peculiar adjustment of space-time within itself?

(To be continued)

To worship God is to worship the whole world and to serve God is to serve humanity, and vice versa.

—*Swami Krishnananda*

WHY DON'T WE SEE TI?

(Sri Swami Atmaswarupananda)

The fundamental declaration of Vedanta is that Brahman alone is without a second. Why do they add the phrase, without a second? If Brahman alone is, there is no need to add, without a second. It is logical, understood. There cannot be a second if Brahman alone is. But then, that is not the way our minds work. We hear the words, Brahman alone is, and immediately continue to see seconds everywhere.

They say that Brahman is omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient. He is present everywhere, is all power and all knowledge. We hear the words, nod our head in acknowledgement, and see everything except Brahman wherever we look. Why is it hidden from our sight? Lord Krishna told Arjuna that he needed a Divine eye.

What then is a Divine eye? Can it be anything else except our own understanding

in which the truth has become obvious? And why isn't it obvious? Because we don't want to give up our conviction of separation, our feeling that we are the centre of the universe. We are comfortable the way we are, even if it causes us endless suffering. We simply don't want to let go of our present situation. It is that that binds us. Our unwillingness to let go.

All our spiritual practices are meant to help us to profoundly understand the need of letting go. Lord Krishna says, Abandoning all *dharmas*—that means everything we rely upon—take refuge in Me alone. We have to do it. Not just keep talking about it and thinking about it, but actually, each day, walk out into the darkness taking refuge in Brahman alone, taking refuge in the truth of the scriptures that we are That now.

LISTEN TO THE SILENCE

There is a saying: Listen to the silence. The scriptures declare that our fundamental error is wrong identification. It means, so to speak, that we have left the silence and been caught up in the noise.

When noise is there, it distracts us. We lose our peace. We search for the peace here, there, everywhere. But our searching itself is noise. Underneath the noise, the silence always is. The noise is caused by desire, wanting things, wanting to be someone. As long as we want things, want to be someone, we can never find the silence.

The silence is there when the noise stops. Therefore, we should believe the scriptures and believe our gurus when they tell us that our fundamental problem is desire, the desire for possessions, the desire to be someone important. Whatever we get of a material sense or of an ego sense, has to be, by definition, impermanent, a little satisfaction and then it goes. And we feel less than we did before. But if we leave behind the desires, the desire to be someone and to have things, then the silence is always waiting for us.

The silence is full. It is total satisfaction. It is ever there, our true identification. We have to understand it, we have to want it, and we need to practise it.

—Swami Atmaswarupananda

BRAHMACHARYA FOR WOMEN

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

[Continued from the previous issue]

BRAHMACHARINIS—ANCIENT AND MODERN

In olden days, there were Brahmacharinis in India. They were Brahmavadinis; they discoursed on Brahman. They did not wish to lead the life of Grihastha-Dharminis devoted to a householder's duties. They served the Rishis and sages in their hermitages and did Brahma-Vichara or enquiry of Brahman. King Janasruti placed his daughter at the service of Rishi Raikva. You will find this in the Chhandogya Upanishad.

Sulabha was a very learned lady. She was born in a royal family. She was a Brahmacharini. She was instructed in the religion of emancipation. She observed the practice of asceticism. She was firm in the practices that belonged to the mode of life she led. She was steady in her vows. She never uttered a word without reflecting on its propriety. She was a Yogini. She led the life of a Sannyasini. She appeared before Janaka in his court and had a great discussion with him on Brahma-Vidya or the Science of the Self.

Gargi was also a Brahmacharini. She also was a highly cultured lady. She also had a lengthy discussion with Yajnavalkya on Brahma-Vidya. The dialogue between them comes in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.

In Europe also there are many women who are celibate and who dedicate their lives entirely to severe austerity, prayer and meditation. They have their own hermitages. In India there are educated women who lead the life of Brahmacharinis. They do not wish to

marry. This is due to the force of good Samskaras of previous births. They give education to the girls in schools. They give free tuition privately to poor girls and train them in sewing and other household works. They study religious books and practise meditation in the morning and in the evening. They do Kirtan. They keep a daily spiritual diary. They conduct Satsanga classes and Kirtan among women. They train girls in the practice of Asanas and Pranayama. They give discourses on the Gita and the Upanishads. They deliver lectures on the religious subjects. During holidays and on important occasions, they hold religious conferences for ladies on a grand scale for mass spiritual awakening.

Sometimes they visit nearby villages and distribute medicines freely to the poor. They are equipped with the knowledge of first-aid, homoeopathy, allopathy and the bio-chemical system of medicine. They are trained in nursing the sick. There is a highly educated Brahmacharini, who is well-versed in Sanskrit, English and Hindi, who is the head of an institution for girls. She maintains a free private school also for poor girls at her own expense. This is a very noble service indeed.

Such girls and women are really a blessing to the world. They lead a life of purity and self-sacrifice. They enjoy bliss, prosperity and renown here and will also attain the immortal abode of supreme peace hereafter. The world is in need of more Brahmacharinis of this description who can dedicate their lives to service, meditation and prayer.

There was a Maharani in the erstwhile United Provinces who wore simple dress, ate simple food, served Sadhus and poor people and always lived amongst Sannyasins. She had a sound knowledge of the scriptures and she did regular meditation and prayer. She observed Mauna or the vow of silence for months together and spent some time in seclusion and ruled her state also.

There was an educated woman who was an M.B.B.S. Her husband was holding a good position. She used to treat the patients freely. She did not charge any fees for visiting. She did very good service to the society. She was not a job hunter. She was free from greed. She did medical service for the purification of her heart. She regarded medical service of the poor people as worship of God. She looked after the house and served her husband. She studied religious books and spent sometime in meditation, worship and prayer. She was an ideal woman who lead a glorious and pious life.

LOOSE LIFE IS NOT FREEDOM

The world is in dire need of such ideal women. I wish that the world may abound with such glorious women. I do not condemn women. I do not oppose giving them education and freedom. I have the highest veneration for women. I adore them as Devis or goddesses. But, I am not in favour of such freedom for women as will ruin them. I am in favour of such education and culture as will make them immortal and glorious, as will make them ideal women like Sulabha, Mira and Maitreyi, like Savitri and Damayanti. This is what I want. This is what everybody would like.

Loose life is not perfect freedom. Some women of India have ruined themselves by taking advantage of this false freedom. There is no limit to the freedom which the so-called educated woman enjoys now. This freedom has caused many homes to be wrecked. It has created disorders in society. It has brought

shame on many respectable families. The girls, in their insatiable craving for freedom, have overstepped the limit and lost that priceless possession which the women of the past could keep untarnished.

By mixing with men freely, woman loses her dignity, modesty, feminine grace, and the sanctity of her person and character. There can be, and there have been, exceptions. A woman who mixes with men freely in public life and yet remains pure must be certainly superhuman. An ordinary woman with her natural passion will soon succumb. Human nature will fulfil itself.

What is there in a woman's life if her purity is lost? She is only a living corpse if there is no purity, although she may be rolling in wealth and moving in high circles in society. Promiscuous mixing will lead to disastrous results. Even Rishis and Yogins who are clad in rags, who live on roots in seclusion, will be pulled down by the dark forces of nature if they are careless. Then what to speak of women who eat daily dainties and sweetmeats, who are clad in perfumed velvet and silk with lace borders, who are given to too much mixing, who do not lead a life of self-control, who have no religious training and discipline, who have no idea of the inner life and the religion of emancipation? O wise reader! I leave this for your own consideration, reflection, cogitation and deliberation.

Women should not do anything that can bring dishonour or infamy on them and their family, and a blot on their character. Without character, a man or a woman is considered as dead while living. Women should be very careful and cautious when they move in society. They should avoid too much talking, too much mixing, guffaw and giggling. They should always walk in a dignified manner. They should never look at men with a flitting gesture. Clothes should not be too tight or revealing. Abandon make-up.

(To be continued)

Yoga in Daily Life

JNANA YOGA

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

[Continued from the previous issue]

MEDITATION

1. Meditate on the all-pervading air, ether, light, expansive sky, expansive ocean in the beginning to render the mind subtle and fit for abstract meditation.

2. Meditate on abstract virtues, viz., mercy, generosity, magnanimity, courage, patience, peace, balance, poise, etc. Possess these virtues also to the maximum degree. Become an embodiment of these virtues. Have the mental image 'Om Courage, Om Mercy.' Repeat these formulae several times daily.

3. Meditate on the following. Take up one formula every month. Repeat the formula several times daily.

Vedantic Formulae

- (a) Nothing exists (names and forms).
- (b) The world is a long dream.
- (c) Nothing belongs to me (Whenever anybody dies in your house, whenever you lose anything, repeat this formula several times daily. You will have real peace of mind).
- (d) I am not the body (I am distinct from body). I am not the mind (I am distinct from the mind).
I am not Prana (I am distinct from Prana).

I am not Indriyas (I am distinct from Indriyas).

I am Immortal Atman. (Body idea will disappear).

- (e) I am Sakshi OM OM OM
I am Sakshi of mind OM OM OM
I am Akarta OM OM OM
I am Asanga OM OM OM
- (f) I am Immortal Atman OM OM OM
- (g) I am Satchidananda Brahman
OM OM OM
- (h) I am Brahman OM OM OM

Those who meditate on the above ideas and formulae will become changed. They will become veritable Gods on earth, radiating joy and peace everywhere. After doing some practice, stick to one idea only. This one idea will die by itself when you get established in Brahman, in pure Nirvikalpa Samadhi. Take any triplet which you like best and meditate on that seriously in right earnest.

4. Meditate on the following. Feel and identify yourself with the whole world.

Formulae for Meditation

- (a) The whole world is my body.
- (b) The whole world is my home.
- (c) I suffer and enjoy in all bodies.
- (d) I work through all hands.
- (e) I eat through all tongues.

(f) I see through all eyes.

(g) I hear through all ears.

This will result in Cosmic Consciousness and oneness of life. All sorts of Ghrina, hatred, envy, jealousy, will vanish. You will become one with the Virat and Hiranyagarbha.

5. Meditate on these ideas:

(a) All is good.

(b) All is sacred.

(c) All is one.

(d) All is God (Brahman).

(e) All bodies are mine.

6. Positive Nirguna Meditation

(a) I am the All.

(b) I am all-in-all.

(c) I am the Immortal Self in all.

Feel this. Feel this.

VEDANTIC ASSERTIONS

(For Self-Realisation)

1. Enquire "Who am I?"
2. Find out the "Seer" of sight.

3. Thou art neither body nor mind, O Sushil! Thou art the Immortal Atman. Feel this. Feel this.

4. Deny body, deny world. Assert. Recognise. Realise. "I am the living Truth. I am the living Reality. I am Satchidananda Brahman. "Aham Brahma Asmi"—"I am the Immortal Self."

5. Roar: OM OM OM, Soham, Soham, Soham, Sivoham, Sivoham, Sivoham, like a lion of Vedanta and come out of this cage of flesh, my dear Sushil, "Tat Tvam Asi!"

SOHAM DHYANA

Soham and OM are one and the same. Soham Dhyana is Nirguna, Nirakara meditation only. Soham means "I am he." This is associated with the breath. Repeat "So" when you inhale and "Ham" when you exhale. This is easy for some. This is known as 'Ajapa Japa'. Feel that you are the all-pervading pure consciousness when you think of Soham. The source for this breath is Brahman or Atman. You are identical with that source and reality.

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.

You should keep the company of those in whose company your faith increases, your beliefs become confirmed, unshaken, they become firmly established within you, and you become firmly established in what you believe.

—Swami Chidananda

Children's Page

LOVE

(Sri Swami Ramarajyam)

Once a man was going on a road. On the way he met a beggar. "Will you give me something, sir?" the beggar implored.

That man searched his pocket. He had forgot his purse at home. He thought for a little while and then moving forward, he held the hands of the beggar in his own and said with great affection, "I am very sorry, I left my purse at home. What can I give now?" The beggar's sad eyes began to gleam with happiness. He said, "Sir, even after giving me so much you think that you have not given me anything!"

That man could not follow what the beggar meant. He wondered what he had given to the beggar.

The beggar said, "How much love you have bestowed on me by holding my hands,

you do not know. No one has ever given me such invaluable alms. I make a request, sir. Whenever you happen to pass this path, please do oblige me by holding my hands in yours at least for some time. I need nothing else."

Dear children, what you give others is not what matters. What matters is how much love you bestow on them. Whenever you get an opportunity to express your feelings of love to others, you should not miss it. It is not obligatory to give any material thing to express your love. To do so, you can, at least, look at them with love, console them and hold their hands in yours. The more you share your love with them, the more it will grow.

God is One. God and His law are one. God is pure Spirit. God is the path and the goal. Realise God here and now and be happy for ever.

Wake up now. Understand life. Live divinely. Seek good company. Fear not. Waste not time. March on. O hero!

Renunciation is the essence of spirituality and the secret of Self-realisation. It leads to the complete unification with the Supreme.

—Swami Sivananda

Sivananda's Gospel of Divine Life

FAITH AND PRAYER

DEVELOPING THE WILL

Another student presented his difficulty to the Master.

"When I commence doing something and there is some kind of obstruction, I fail in the task."

"Repeat the Mantra, *Om Sri Ganeshaya Namah*. It is the remover of all obstacles. Develop your will. It is not strong. Cultivate firmness, steadiness and courage. Prayer to Lord Ganesha, cultivation of virtues, meditation and Satsanga—all these will help you."

"Sometimes I find it impossible to do anything," the student pleaded.

"Then take rest for some time. Think of some pleasant things before you go to sleep, then in the morning the answer will come. Do Japa and meditation before going to sleep. All this will work on the subconscious mind and you will get strength and the right answer. Have you studied the story of *Bruce and the Spider*? Bruce failed six times but on the seventh attempt he succeeded. Try again and again. Everything will be all right. Sincere prayer will grant you everything."

WORLD—THE BEST TEACHER

One of the students put the question, "Which is better: to lead the life of a householder or to become a recluse?"

The Master replied, "You cannot renounce the world all at once. The world is a vast university. Nature is the best teacher. In

the world you can develop virtues like mercy, love, tolerance and adaptability. You cannot develop these qualities if you remain in a cave. The world is the best teacher. In the world you can learn how to bear insult and injury, you can learn how to face difficulties and dangers, you can learn how to overcome selfishness and anger. Gradually, when you have evolved, you can renounce. Guru Nanak remained in the world with two or three children. There is nothing wrong with the world. Prayer will remove all obstacles."

IDOL WORSHIP

A group of Excise Officers arrived at the Ashram for the Master's Darshan. One of them asked, "Is idol worship good?"

"Yes," said the Master, "everyone is actually an idol worshipper. The Muslim worships the Kaaba, and the Christian worships Jesus on the Cross. The mind wants a prop upon which to lean. In the initial stages, without the help of some external aid, the mind cannot be made one-pointed."

Another officer asked, "Is idol worship intelligent?"

"Yes. The whole of the *Srimad Bhagavata* speaks of meditation on Lord Krishna. For a beginner meditation on a form is necessary. If you are an advanced student you can meditate on the attributeless Brahman. Meditation on a form is also very efficacious. The mind is purified when you meditate on the Lord's form. When purity increases then knowledge dawns."

ON A GOD-REALISED PERSON

“How to know that a man is a God-realised person?” put in a third officer.

The Master replied, “You yourself must first get God-realisation, then alone will you know whether another has realized God or not. Only a Shakespeare can really know a Shakespeare. Only a Jesus can know a Jesus. A scientist alone can understand the work of another scientist. A bullock-cart driver cannot know anything about protons and electrons.”

Another officer asked, “How to know that a Guru is perfect Guru?”

“The same applies to your question also. You cannot know whether a Guru is perfect or not until you yourself have become perfect, until you yourself have attained God-realisation.

PURITY OF FOOD

The next question put to the Master was: “Does purity of food lead to purity of mind?”

“Yes,” replied the Master, “purity of food leads to purity of mind. Take a dose of champagne and sit for meditation, or take a glass of orange juice and sit for the practice. You will know the difference. Different foods exercise different influences on different compartments of the brain. By taking liquor, meat and garlic, the mind gets confused and restless when you sit for meditation. By taking milk and fruit you get good concentration. Our Rishis lived on fruit and

milk. The *Chhandogya Upanishad* says: ‘Purity of food leads to purity of mind; then one attains liberation’.”

“Is non-vegetarian food not Sattvic?” the officer further questioned.

“Non-vegetarian food is not Sattvic. It is not good for a seeker.”

“We have in the *Mahabharata* instances of people taking the meat of goats sacrificed to the Lord,” said the officer.

“Live for a month on milk and fruit and see,” advised the Master. “Give up meat for a month and note the difference. Let us be practical. Practical experience will tell you that eating meat is bad for the mind.”

DIVULGING SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES

After the excise Officers had gone, Sri Chawla raised a doubt.

“Swamiji, it is said that one’s experience of the vision of the Lord should not be divulged to the Guru. Is this true?”

“How can it be?” replied the Master. “Even if you do not tell, the Guru will know. You need not tell it to other people, but you can tell the Guru your spiritual experiences. Lord Krishna says in the Gita: ‘Do not impart this teaching to those who are deluded, who cavil at Me, who do not want to listen, who have no devotion, who speak ill of saints and scriptures’. But He also goes on to say: ‘He who will teach this supreme secret to My devotees will certainly come to Me’. You can reveal your spiritual experiences to sincere aspirants.”

When one realises this ground truth that association with all temporary things are fraught with sorrow—then only our journey to the Eternal begins. Sorrow, therefore, seems to have a purpose. Pain was declared by Gurudev to be an eye-opener. It can lead to the discovery and the rectification of error as well as the cause of sorrow.

—Swami Chidananda

NEWS AND REPORTS

NEWS FROM THE HEADQUARTERS

SEVA THROUGH SIVANANDA HOME

By the profound blessings of Sri Gurudev, the Divine Life Society Headquarters continues rendering its humble service through Sivananda home, situated in Tapovan near Laxman Jhula. It provides medical facilities for homeless people who have become ill and are in need of in-patient treatment.

These homeless people are in essence just the same as all of us, though their habits and behaviour often are a little different, due to lack of social skills, and due to being forced to adopt an attitude of the survival of the fittest in their struggle for existence. Except the ones who have chosen to lead a wandering life, nobody likes to stay on the street, away from family, relatives, social surroundings, to be literally "out placed", "non-existent", "non-traceable", and not being in anybody's knowledge whether alive or gone. This picture though of a destitute person can also be of a temporary nature. Once a destitute, always a destitute, does not reflect the true situation at all. For example, let us think of the gentleman who got admitted this month in Sivananda Home, when he was brought from the street, where he was lying down, not able to get up by himself, with bleeding wounds in the face and on the extremities. He was an elderly person, around sixty years of age, and was not able to talk, seemingly due to an earlier stroke. A

couple of weeks ahead, and under medical treatment and extra feedings, he recovered from his malnourished state and expressed by gestures that he wanted to go to his house. Still not able to speak, but with a trembling hand he could write down the name of a village close by. When he was made to sit in the ambulance, he was able to guide the driver to his home, where he arrived happy and healthy. Jai Prabhu. Jai Gurudev!

Other new patients were brought in this month, one of them was a person with severe kidney failure, in addition to Pulmonary TB. His treatment course will be of a long duration, but already he improves slowly, by the grace of the Almighty Lord, under whose protecting wings we all have come for shelter, solace and support. Prayers from the heart, in whatever language, with or without words, in complete surrender, are certainly reaching His Compassionate Being and Outstretched Arms. A destitute condition humbles a person's heart at large, making him feel and experience up to the very bones that the only Saviour, Redeemer, the only Helper, nay the only Doer is He alone and that only He should be remembered, waited for, prayed for, and hoped for.

"God, if you want me to live, you have to do something, because I cannot."

(prayer heard in the Home)

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

**SRI GURU PURNIMA, SADHANA WEEK AND THE SACRED PUNYATITHI
ARADHANA OF GURUDEV SRI SWAMI SIVANANDAJI MAHARAJ**

The Holy Sri Guru Purnima will be observed at the Headquarters Ashram on the 15th of July, 2011. The 48th Anniversary of the Punyatithi Aradhana of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj will be celebrated on the 24th of July 2011.

In between the above two sacred functions, there will be a Spiritual Conference, known as *Sadhana Week*, for seven days continuously, with programmes every day.

Devotees who intend to participate in the above programmes, are requested to write to us, giving full details of the number of persons arriving so that the information may reach us not later than the 25th of June, 2011.

Persons with any kind of physical handicap, or serious health problem, may consider to avoid the strain of this concentrated programme and visit the Ashram at some other time. Further, being Shravan month there will be large floating pilgrim population in the whole of Uttarakhand, disrupting traffic.

The period will be in the monsoon season when there is likely to be heavy rains in this area. As such, devotees who are coming for the celebrations may kindly bring with them necessary requirements befitting the season, such as an umbrella, a torch and the like.

Due to difficulty in accommodating large number of persons, the Ashram has to request for rooms from neighbouring Ashrams. Guests may kindly bear these difficulties and adjust themselves, lovingly. Devotees are kindly requested to come one or two days earlier only and also not to extend their period of stay in the Ashram beyond one or two days after the function is over.

May Sri Gurudev's Blessings be upon all!

Shivanandanagar
15th May, 2011

—*The Divine Life Society*

* * *

**SRI ADI SANKARACHARYA JAYANTI CELEBRATION
AT THE HEADQUARTERS ASHRAM**

*'Sruti Smriti Purananamalayam Karunalayam
Namami Bhagavatpadam Sankaram Lokasankaram'*

(I offer my salutations to Bhagavatpada Sankara, who is the treasure trove of the wisdom of Shrutis, Smritis and Puranas, an abode of compassion and a world benefactor).

The sacred Jayanti of Jagadguru Sri Adi Sankaracharya was celebrated with due sanctity and deep devotion at the Headquarters Ashram on 8th May 2011. The programme commenced at 9 a.m. with the singing of Jaya Ganesh prayer, *bhajans* and *kirtans* in the divine presence of Adiguru Sri Sankaracharya at Sri Vishwanath Mandir. Sri Swami Advaitanandaji Maharaj, Sri Swami Yogavedantanandaji Maharaj and Sri Harihar Singhji spoke on the inspiring life and the sublime teachings of the great Acharya.

Thereafter, floral *archana* to the chanting of *ashtottarashata namavali* was offered to the Jagadguru. The celebration concluded at 11 a.m. with *arati* and distribution of holy *prasad*.

May the Advaita Acharya Sankaracharya and Sadgurudev bless us all with the awareness of our Eternal Divine Identity.

GOD'S OWN CHILDREN IN THE ASHRAM

A group of 34 children from an orphanage in Neesakarangal of Salem district of Tamil Nadu paid a visit to the Ashram from 23rd May 2011 to 26th May 2011. The group consisted of 12 boys and 22 girls; aged between 12 and 20 years. The group was led by Swami Krishnathmanandaji Maharaj of Chinmaya Mission, Salem. There were 6 Sevaks also to take care of these children. The group arrived on the night of May 23 and, having made the most of their visit, left for Delhi in the early hours of May 26.



This was not a mere educational tour for these students but a rather special mission undertaken in response to an inner call. We hope this visit puts them on their way to higher and loftier things in life. The itinerary was elaborate and suggestive of the spiritual tone of this tour. They visited Mathura, Vrindavan, Haridwar before visiting Rishikesh and Dehradun.

These children felt thoroughly at home in the Ashram and enjoyed themselves to the hilt. They attended worship and Arati at Sri Viswanath Temple, Paduka Puja at Samadhi Shrine of Sri Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. They also had the privilege of a Satsanga with our President Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj. They were taken around the Ashram and visited all the holy spots sanctified by Gurudev's Holy Feet. They also had a gala time having Ganga Snan for an extended period of one hour. Making the most of this opportunity, they took time out from their busy schedule to visit Laxman Jhula and some of the Ashrams in the area.

Swami Krishnathmanandaji Maharaj and the dedicated team of Sevaks left no stone unturned to see that the children were comfortable.

May the abundant blessings of Worshipful Gurudev be ever upon these blessed children, Swami Krishnathmanandaji and the Sevaks who accompanied them!

**VALEDICTORY FUNCTION OF THE 67TH BASIC YOGA-VEDANTA COURSE
[MARCH-APRIL 2011]**

The Valedictory Function of the 67th Yoga Vedanta Course was held on Friday, the 28th of April 2011, in the Academy's Lecture Hall. After the invocatory prayers Sri Swami Yogavedantanandaji Maharaj, Registrar of the Academy, welcomed all those present on the occasion. His Holiness Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, President and His Holiness Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj, Vice-President of the Divine Life Society Head Quarters, graced the function.

Thereafter, Sri Swami Akhilanandaji Maharaj read the report of the Course and some of the students expressed their impressions about the Course which they had undergone. This was followed by distribution of certificates and Jnana Prasad to the students and honouring of the faculty members.

His Holiness Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj began his blessings message by congratulating Registrar Swamiji and told the students that their meritorious deeds only brought them here in the sacred Sivananda Ashram and now after completing the Course they would go back as representatives of Gurudev. Therefore they should share whatever positive they have received from this place with humility, as real knowledge should make a person humble.

Swamiji advised the students to live Gurudev's teachings and to try to maintain God's remembrance throughout the day.

His Holiness Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj in his Valedictory address expressed great satisfaction for the 'Seva' done by the students during the period of their Course in cleaning the open spaces in the Ashram, participating in the Eco-friendly programme for cleaning the banks of Mother Ganga, and for doing Seva in Annakshetra of the Ashram

He told that Ramana Maharishi, though established in the highest state of illumination used to cut vegetables in the Annakshetra and Gurudev Sivananda himself cleaned a filthy drain by putting his both hands in the drain without any hesitation and he did it in a manner as if he was worshipping the Lord.

Swamiji advised the students to surrender to God on waking up from sleep in the morning and thank Him for giving them another day for doing something good, and before doing anything to say mentally "I do it for Thee." In the end, Swamiji invoked the blessings of Gurudev upon all those present.

The function came to a close after Saraswati Puja and Prasad distribution.

**INAUGURAL FUNCTION OF THE 68TH BASIC YOGA-VEDANTA COURSE
[MAY-JUNE 2011]**

The 68th Yoga-Vedanta Course of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy was inaugurated on Tuesday, the 3rd of May 2011. Forty students from all over India joined the course.

After Pooja at Durga and Dattatreya Mandirs and chanting of Jaya Ganesha Prayer and Guru Stotras in the Academy Lecture Hall, Sri Swami Yogavedantanandaji Maharaj, Registrar of the Academy,

welcomed the revered Swamiji's, Faculty Members, Guests, Students and all those present on the occasion.

His Holiness Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, President and His Holiness Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj, Vice-President of the Divine Life Society Headquarters, graced the function. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj lighted the 'Deepa' in token of the auspicious commencement of the Course. Thereafter, Sri Swami Akhilanandaji Maharaj introduced the students, one by one, to the audience.

His Holiness Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj commenced his inaugural address by paying obeisance to worshipful Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj at whose feet he sat for more than forty years and drew much inspiration and guidance in his spiritual path. Swamiji quoted Gurudev that instruction ends with college studies but education continues throughout one's life.

Sri Swamiji explained that suspended between birth and death human life undergoes six changes and is full of pain, sorrow and suffering. Our Ancients, who were men of wisdom, pondered over this, delved deep within themselves after leaving behind the hustle and bustle of life and attained illumination. They then declared to mankind, "O man, you have not come here for weeping and wailing. Gain Transcendental experience and go beyond sorrow." They then explained the methodology to go beyond sorrow by practising one of the four classical Yogas,

Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Dhyana Yoga and Jnana Yoga. But Gurudev gave us Yoga of Synthesis which is a harmonious blend of all these Yogas and would be taught here to the students.

Sri Swamiji advised the students to listen attentively by focusing their full mind so that they may go back as transformed beings.

His Holiness Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj began his blessings message by welcoming the students to the holy abode of worshipful Gurudev. He advised the students to be attentive in class room, to take notes and to attend all the classes including Yogasana class. He also warned the students not to go for bath in River Ganges alone and also not to swim in the Ganges.

Sri Swamiji advised the students to leave anxiety as they would be very well looked after here and to be simple and relaxed. He also advised them to sit straight with spine, neck and head in one straight line in the class room.

Sri Swamiji further advised the students to adapt, adjust and accommodate and to Be Good. If attention is paid on Being Good then goodness alone will flow out of them. Sri Swamiji told that time flies away and, therefore, the students should make the best use of their stay in the Academy and go back as transformed beings. In the end Swamiji invoked the blessings of Gurudev upon the students.

The function came to a close after Saraswati Puja and Prasad distribution.

O Man! Take refuge in the Supreme Name. Sing the Lord's Name incessantly. Namasmarana is the easiest, safest, quickest and surest way to reach God and attain perennial Joy.

—Swami Sivananda

CULTURAL TOUR OF H.H. SRI SWAMI NIRLIPTANANDAJI MAHARAJ

H.H. Sri Swami Nirliptanandaji Maharaj, Vice-President, the DLS Headquarters went on a cultural tour in March, 2011.

Swamiji Maharaj visited Sivananda Centenary Boys' High School, Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar, in Orissa on 21st March. On 22nd Swamiji had discussion with School officials on matters relating to the School. Some devotees also met Swamiji Maharaj.

Sri Swamiji attended the Morning Prayer class on the 24th. Students of class-X alone were in the School at that time and their final Board Exams were going on. Swamiji Maharaj addressed them and gave them some guidance and blessings for their Exams. On 29th, after their exams, Swamiji also met them and joined in giving them farewell and also blessed them.

The DLS Ladies Branch, Sunabeda, had organised a 3-day Spiritual Conference from 25th to 27th March at Sunabeda and had requested Swamiji Maharaj's presence for it. Swamiji visited Sunabeda for the purpose and took part in all the programmes on those three days. On 25th in the forenoon Sri Swamiji visited the Branch and met the devotees in a brief Satsanga.

The main and most important programme of the Branch was the Public Satsanga arranged at Bhanja Mandap of the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) on all the three days in the evening. A large number of devotees including Senior Officers of HAL, other employees, their family members, devotees from the different nearby DLS Branches, and the local public had attended. There was a very good, attentive and disciplined gathering. Swamiji Maharaj attended this on all the days and gave

discourses. Swamiji spoke on topics useful to the common man, like the Goal of Life, the four Purusharthas, way to God-realisation, the Yoga of Synthesis, and the teachings of Worshipful Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj.

Sri Swamiji also participated in the programme organised by the Branch for the Bal Vikas Children on 27th March. The children were very enthusiastic and happy. Swamiji addressed them with a small talk. On three days, i.e., 26th, 27th and 28th Swamiji Maharaj also gave talks to the Branch devotees in the early morning meditation class, primarily on Sadhana and meditation. On 28th Swamiji also attended the Paduka Puja and Satsanga with the Sivananda Parivar in the Branch premises and gave a discourse.

On the whole the programmes at Sunabeda were very well organised by the Ladies Branch, were very successful and were inspiring and beneficial to the devotees of the Divine Life Society as also the general public. This was also of great help to the Branch.

From 29th March Swamiji visited Chidananda Hermitage Shanti Ashram, Baliguali which is a part of DLS Headquarters and looked into its affairs and running.

The Bhagavat Jnana Yajna Mahotsava Ayojan Samiti of Cuttack had organised a Bhagavat Katha from 24th March to 3rd April, 2011. The Kathakar was Bhagavatacharya Pandit Sri Viswanath Bhai Kashyapji, the foremost disciple of the famous Bhagavat exponent late revered Sri Ram Chandra Dongreji Maharaj. Upon their invitation and earnest request Swamiji attended the

Bhagavat Katha on 1st April. Swamiji also gave a brief discourse on the occasion.

Swamiji Maharaj also launched the Jalseva set up by the Cuttack Branch of Akhil Bharatiya Marwari Mahila Sammelan on that day, and also the Netradan Yajna started by that Sammelan, for gift of eye to the National Eye Bank. Swamiji briefly addressed the gathering on the occasion. This is a very noble service to the people and to the Nation at large which deserves admiration and appreciation.

On 7th April Sri Swamiji attended the Managing Committee meeting of Sivananda Centenary Boys' High School, Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar, of which he is the President.

A Bhagavata Dharma Sammilani was held at Sri Chaitanya Math in Kanpur near Narasinghpur of Cuttack district from 8th to 10th April, under the patronage of Revered Babaji Sri Chaitanya Charan Das, Bhagavat Ashram, Puri. Upon invitation Swamiji Maharaj attended the Conference. Swamiji inaugurated the Conference and participated in all the sessions on all days. Sri Swamiji gave discourses on the topics, "The Supreme goal of Human Life is God-realisation", "The Nature of Srimad Bhagavat Dharma and Its Speciality", "Shabda Brahma Bhagavata and Daru Brahma Sri Jagannath", "The secret of Sadhya Sadhana Siddhanta in Srimad Bhagavata" and "Srimad Bhagavata is unique for establishment of World Fraternity". The Conference was attended by Revered Baba Sri Chaitanya Charan Dasji Maharaj, Revered Gajapati Maharaj Sri Dibya Singha Debji, Hon'ble Minister of Odisha Sri Debi Prasad Mishra, and many other saints and dignitaries. There was a very good assemblage of devotees in the Conference and it was a grand success in all respects.

Vidivelli Homeopathy Hospital has been set up by Dr. K. Chandrasekhar at Taruvai near Pattamadai in Tirunelveli District of Tamil Nadu. His objective is to spread the message, advantages and efficacy of Homeopathy and also to serve the rural poor through it. Hitherto it has been working as a Dispensary only. They have now constructed the Inpatient Block and Dr. Chandrasekhar earnestly wished that this should be inaugurated by Swamiji Maharaj. On their sincere request Swamiji visited Vidivelli Homeopathy Hospital and inaugurated the Inpatient Block on 17th April. There was a good gathering of many Homeopathic and other Doctors and also other eminent persons. Swamiji Maharaj addressed the gathering on the occasion. He also participated in the function organized to celebrate the Birthday of Samuel Hahnemann, the Founder of homeopathy, and briefly spoke and gave blessings. The effort of Dr. Chandrasekhar in setting up Vidivelli Homeopathy Hospital is laudable and deserves appreciation, support, help and cooperation.

Swamiji Maharaj also visited Swami Sivananda Centenary Charitable Hospital at Pattamadai. On 16th April Swamiji met the staff and blessed them. He also gave a discourse at the Public Satsanga organized by DLS Pattamadai Branch wherein devotees from the nearby DLS Branches and local devotees had participated. Sri Swamiji also paid a visit to DLS Gopal Samudram Branch on 17th April and met the devotees.

At Delhi on 28th April Swamiji Maharaj attended the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Swami Sivananda Memorial Institute, East Punjabi Bagh, as the Chairman.

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REPORTS FROM THE DLS BRANCHES

CORRIGENDUM

We regret an inadvertent error in 'Divine Life' April 2011, under Reports from the D.L.S. Branches on page 23. Please read the last sentence in Bellary (Karnataka) activities as follows.

"Special prayer meetings were arranged to pray for the departed souls of **Sri Pola Venkaiah Setty**, past President of the Branch and father of Sri Pola Basavaraj on 30th January, and of **Sri Channamallapa**, past Treasurer on 9th January.

We earnestly pray for good health and a very long life to Sri Pola Basavaraj, the Revered son of Sri Pola Venkaiah Setty."

Agra (U.P.): During the month of April 2011, in addition to the daily Yogasana class, the Branch held the weekly Satsanga with Japa on Sundays, and Havan and spiritual talks on Tuesdays. It arranged special programmes including Havan on the Lunar New Year Day and Bhandara (free meals) as Devi Prasad in Sivananda Yogashram during Sri Vasanta Navaratra.

Bangalore (Karnataka): The Branch continued its regular activities of weekly Satsanga with Paduka Puja, Svadhyaya and recitation, Friday Satsanga with Devi Puja, Sri Vishnu-sahasranama and Sri Lalita-sahasranama Stotra Parayana, grand Abhishekam of Sri Dandayudhapani Swami and Svadhyaya of Gurudev's writings in Tamil on the first Sunday, Akhanda Kirtan on the third Sunday, and divine music on the fourth Sunday.

Bellary (Karnataka): In addition to the regular activities of daily Puja and Satsanga with Paduka Puja on Sundays, the Branch held the following special activities: (1) Yogasana classes: March 22-26 and April

6-11. (2) Yugadi—Lunar New Year Day: special procession of Vinayaka Vighraha (Idol) and special Puja. (3) Sri Vasanta Navaratra: daily Sri Sundarakanda Parayanam (4) H.H. Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj's birth anniversary: Special Puja.

Bhongir (A.P.): The Branch conducted daily Satsanga with Samuhik (collective) Parayanam of Sri Vishnu-sahasranama, Bhajan-Kirtan and Arati.

Bhubaneswar (Odisha): Besides the daily Paduka Puja, the Branch conducted weekly Satsanga on Thursdays, and on Chidananda Day, 3-hour Akhanda Sankirtan followed by Harihat (musical Parayana of Srimad Bhagavatam—64 participants). In the mobile Satsanga on 17th March, Revered Swami Sivaswarupanandaji gave an illuminating talk on Sadhana. On 26th March, seven saints graced the mobile Satsanga in which Sri Rabinarayan Mishra, former Administrator of Sri Jagannath Temple, gave a talk on 'Lilas of Lord Jagannath, and Revered Swami Dharmaprakashanandaji also gave a talk. Sri Maha Sivaratri

programmes included 24-hour Akhanda Kirtan of 'Om Namah Sivaya' Mantra, special Puja-Abhisheka-Archana, Havan, etc.

Bikaner (Rajasthan): In addition to the daily 2-time Puja, and weekly Satsanga with Svadhyaya on Sundays, the Branch had Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on Sri Rama Navami, Sukhamani Sahib Path on 30th April and Sri Gayatri Mantra and Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Havan in the forenoon and a special evening Satsanga on Chidananda Day. 9-day Parayana of Sri Ramacharita-Manas was done during Sri Vasanta Navaratri with special celebration, Puja and decoration on Sri Rama Navami. On Sri Hanuman Jayanti 108 Avartana of Sri Hanuman Chalisa was performed, followed by distribution of fruits, biscuits and food to the poor. The Branch continued its social service activities of Sivananda Library, financial help to the students and Yogasana class.

Chatrapur (Odisha): In addition to the daily evening Satsanga, the Branch had weekly Satsanga on Thursdays, eight special mobile Satsangas, and Paduka Puja on Sivananda Day and Chidananda Day. It organized 9-day (Navahna) Parayana of Sri Ramacharita Manas from April 11 to 19. On Sri Rama Navami special Puja of Lord Rama was performed with one lakh Archana. On Sri Hanuman Jayanti, Sri Sundarakanda Parayana and 108 Avartana of Sri Hanuman Chalisa were done. On the concluding day of Navahna Parayana, Revered Swami Sraddhaswarupanandaji gave the benedictory talk to the large gathering.

Chennai, Washermenpet (Tamil Nadu): The Branch organised Sri Rama Navami Festival. After Puja of Guru, Sri Sita, Lord Rama and Sri Hanuman, Sri Hanuman Chalisa was recited in different ragas 40 times, followed by Bhajans and Mahaprasad.

Digpahandi (Odisha): Regular Activities are: 2-time Puja, biweekly Satsanga on Thursdays and Sundays; Paduka Puja on Sivananda Day and Chidananda Day.

Special Activities: (1) New Year Eve: special mobile Sadhana Day—Paduka Puja, Gita Parayana, Havan, 108 Avartana of Sri Hanuman Chalisa. (2) Sri Rama Navami: Paduka Puja, Lord Rama Puja, Ramayana Path, Arati, etc. (3) Mesha Sankranti: Paduka Puja, 108 Avartana of Sri Hanuman Chalisa, Havan, etc., in the forenoon and a special Satsanga in the evening.

Ferozpur City (Punjab): The newly constructed Satsanga Hall of the Branch was inaugurated by Revered Swami Sivachidanandaji and Sri Swami Vaikunthanandaji on 8th May. There was Paduka Puja followed by benedictory speeches of the Swamijis, Sankirtan by the devotees of Jalandhar Branch, and Bhandara.

Jaipur, Malaviya Nagar (Rajasthan): In addition to the daily activities of morning meditation and Yogasana class and study group Svadhyaya in the evening, the Branch conducted weekly Satsanga and Havan on Sundays, Matri-Satsanga on Fridays and distribution of food to the destitute on Tuesdays. Matri-Satsanga had daily Devi

Bhajan-kirtan during Vasanta Navaratra, and Prasad Sevan and Bhandara on Ashtami.

Jaipur, Raja Park (Rajasthan): Regular Activities: Daily morning Devi Bhagavat Katha, daily evening Satsanga with Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotra Parayana on Thursdays, Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on Saturdays, Chanting of hymns of deities on other days, Svadhyaya, etc.; Weekly Satsanga on Sunday morning—Gayatri Mantra and Mahamrityunjaya Mantra havan, Svadhyaya, etc.; Matri-satsanga on Monday afternoons; Swami Sivananda Charitable Homoeopathy Clinic—2189 patients treated free by Dr. S.S. Dalela in 3 months, daily Yogasanas training by Smt. Sarala Singhvi; Rs. 4200/- per month distributed among 28 poor widows; monthly quota of dry ration—90 Kg. food-grains, 18 Kg. other food items—supplied to a leprosy colony; distribution of food to about 300 poor persons daily, distributing Rs. 7800/- per month as scholarship to 105 students; Swami Sivananda Library; Katha on Ekadasis; and Satyanarayana Katha on Purnimas.

Special Activities: (1) Sri Maha Sivaratri: early morning special Puja, daylong Abhishekam by devotees, at night 9-hour four Pujas followed by Havan and Arati, Prasad. (2) Vasanta Navaratri: Sri Ramacharita Manas Navahna Parayana, special Puja, (3) Sri Rama Navami: special Puja, Havan, Abhishekam, Bhajans, Arati, Prasad Sevan.

Jeypore (Odisha): The Branch conducted 2-time Puja, biweekly Satsanga on Sundays and Thursdays, and on

Sivananda Day Havan, Puja, Prasad Sevan in the forenoon and a special Satsanga in the evening—50 participants. Sri Maha Sivaratri Programmes were 24-hour Akhanda Chanting of 'Om Namah Sivaya' Mantra, nightlong Puja and Abhishekam by 70 devotees, Arati, Prasad. Sri Swami Narayanapadanandaji graced the Puja. The next day, in mobile Satsanga 50 devotees participated and took the holy Prasad.

Kakinada, Madhavapatnam (A.P.): The Branch conducted weekly Satsanga on Sundays, Bhajan-kirtan, recitation at one Kendra on Fridays, and Parayana of Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotram and Sri Lakshmi Ashtottarashata-namavali on Fridays at another Kendra. It also held two mobile Satsangas.

Kallidaikurichi (Tamil Nadu): The monthly Satsanga of the Branch with spiritual talks is on the last Sunday of every month. Large number of devotees participated.

Kanpur (U.P.): The Branch held monthly Satsanga, weekly Path of Sri Ramayana on Tuesdays and Bhajan-kirtan on Ekadasis. Along with Sri Swami Vaikunthanandaji, devotees went to Chitrakoot Dham and did Akhanda Parayana of Sri Rama-Charita Manas on April 15-16. It also organised Swamiji's talk in an Inter College and five special Satsangas during his stay from April 17 to 19.

Khatiguda (Odisha): The Branch conducted daily 2-time Puja, weekly Satsanga on Thursdays, Ekadasi Satsanga with Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotra Parayana, and the monthly Sadhana Day,

12-hour Akhanda Mahamantra Chanting and Narayana Seva on 3rd April. Paduka Puja was performed on Sri Rama Navami.

Khurja (U.P.): The Branch held weekly Satsanga with Sankirtan and Svadhyaya on Sundays, Matri-Sankirtan on Ekadasis, daily Yogasana class for men in the morning and for women in the evening, and meditation on Sunday morning. Sri Swami Devananda Homoeopathic Aushadhalaya continued to give free medicines to the patients daily.

Manjhiguda (Chhattisgarh): The Branch continued its regular Activities of daily 2-time Puja and evening recitation, Bhajan-kirtan, etc., and weekly Satsanga with Sri Ramayana Path on Saturdays. Vasanta Navaratri programmes were Akhanda Jyoti for 9-days, Sri Devi Sthapana, 3-hour Akhanda Sankirtan and Yajna on 8th April, 12-hour Sankirtan of 'Om Sri Rama Jaya Rama Jaya Rama' mantra on 10th April, 9-Kunda Yajnas on Ashtami, Kanya Puja, Bhandara, Sri Ramayana Path and the concluding rituals.

Nandani Nagar (Chhattisgarh): In addition to the daily activities of Brahma-muhurta meditation-prayer-recitation and evening Satsanga, the Branch held weekly mobile Satsanga on Thursdays, Matri-Satsanga with Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on Saturdays, Ekadasi Matri-Satsanga with recitation of Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotra and Bhagavad Gita, and the monthly 6-hour Akhanda Mahamantra Kirtan on 3rd April. Vasanta Navaratri programmes were 23 Jyoti Kalas, daily Bhajan-kirtan for two hours, Kanya Puja and Bhoj on Sri Rama Navami. In

Branch Revival programmes, special Satsangas were arranged on April 2, 9 and 16 at Bhilai, at Ahiwara on 27th, at Bagbahara on 28th, at Rajim on 30th April, and four Satsangas at Mahasamund City.

Raigarh (Chhattisgarh): The Branch organised the annual programme of Swami Sivananda Samaroha from Sri Rama Navami to Sri Hanuman Jayanti. Besides daily Bhajans the discourses were as under, April 12 on Srimad Bhagavad Gita, Bible, Koran Sheriff and Guru Granth Sahib; April 13, on Sadguru Kabir; April 14, on Sadguru Baba Ghasiram; April 15, on Guru Nanak Dev; April 17, Swami Haridas Sangit; April 18, Akhanda Parayana of Sri Rama-Charita-Manas; April 19, concluding ceremony. This was followed by Srimad Bhagavata Jnana Yajna Saptah, April 19-25.

Raipur (Chhattisgarh): Ekadasi programme of the Branch includes Puja, Tulsi Dal Archana with Sri Vishnu-sahasranama, Kumkum Archana of Devi Lakshmi with Her Ashtottara-shata-nama, Sri Ramayana Sankirtan, etc. Vasanta Navaratri programmes were special Puja and Sringer of Sri Rama Panchayatana, Sri Sita-Rama Kalyanam, 6-hour Akhanda Japa of Mahamantra, etc. The monthly activity of Rudrabhishekam on Siva Chaturdasi is continued.

Rourkela, Steel Township (Odisha): The Branch held two mobile Satsangas and three Sadhana Days during April. Vasanta Navaratri programmes were daily 2-hour evening session of Sri Hanuman Chalisa recitation, Ramayana Path, hymns, etc.;

Sadhana Day on Sri Rama Navami with Paduka Puja, recitation, Ramayana Path, Havan, Prasad Sevan, Bhandara and Narayana Seva. The Branch organized free Medical Camp on 3rd April—3 doctors examined 170 patients and gave medicines free.

Salipur (Odisha): Regular Activities: Puja followed by prayer-meditation in the morning, and Satsanga—Svadhya- meditation in the evening; monthly special Satsanga on 27th March (fourth Sunday); Sadhana Day on the third Sunday; Srimad Bhagavad Gita Parayana on the first Sunday; Paduka Puja on Sivananda Day; Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on the second Saturday; daily evening Yogasana and Yogasana-meditation class on the second Sunday; and Health-Service—109 patients treated free.

Special Activities: (1) Yogasana Training: 31 students participated. (2) Maha Sivaratri: 6-hour Akhanda Japa. (3) Mahamantra: 6-hour Akhanda Japa on 27th March.

South Balanda (Odisha): In addition to the regular activities of 2-time Puja, weekly Satsanga on Fridays, Paduka Puja in the morning and special Satsanga in the evening on Sivananda Day and Chidananda Day, and 3-hour Akhanda Sankirtan of Mahamantra on 30th April.

Sunabeda (Odisha): Besides daily Satsanga with Puja, Svadhya of our books, Bhajan-kirtan, etc., the Branch had biweekly

Satsanga on Thursdays and Sundays. On Sri Maha Sivaratri Paduka Puja, Havan, Puja, Arati, meditation, Bhajan-kirtan in the morning, and 12-hour night Puja along with Japa and recitations were the highlights. Revered Swami Sivachidanandaji visited the local Ashram and blessed the devotees on 26th March.

Surendranagar (Gujarat): The Branch had daily Satsanga at the Branch office, as well as daily Matri-Satsanga and Paduka Puja at the site of Sivananda Ashram. Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on Saturdays and discourses on Sri Ramayana on Sundays were other regular activities. On Sri Rama Navami, 100 devotees participated in Sri Rama-Sahasranama Archana and took Prasad. The Branch continued feeding ants with flour in nearby places and villages.

Varanasi (U.P.): The Branch had its fortnightly Satsanga on March 13, 27 and April 10, 24 (even Sundays). It included recitation, Japa, Svadhya, Arati, Prasad, etc.

Visakhapatnam (A.P.): Besides daily one hour Bhajan-kirtan, the Branch held 2-hour weekly Satsangas on Mondays followed by free medical check-up, and daily Yogasana class. On Sri Maha Sivaratri, after 2-hour Akhanda Mantra Japa, Puja -Abhisheka, Bhajan-kirtan and Arati, Prasad was distributed. It also distributed food items in 'Nirmal Hriday, Home for charity.' Devotees joined in planting trees and shrubs at the site of Sri Visvanatha Temple.