



THE DIVINE LIFE

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CHAPTER II

VALLI ii

अग्निर्यथैको भुवनं प्रविष्टो रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बभूव ।
एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बहिश्च ॥९॥

9. As the one fire, after it has entered the world, though one, takes different forms according to whatever it burns, so does the internal Atman of all living beings, though one, takes a form according to whatever He enters, and is outside all forms.

शिवानन्द स्तोत्रम् SIVANANDA STOTRAM

(Sri Swami Jnanananda Saraswati, Sivanandanagar)

(Continued from the previous issue)

अमितगुणाकर कारणपूरुषनामजपोत्सुक वन्द्य विभो
शमितभवामय भव्यमहाशय सर्वजनाभयदायक भोः।
स्तिमितमनस्क निकाममहस्क नितान्तयशस्क विशिष्टयते।
शिव करुणालय पालय मां श्रितमाश्रितवत्सल लोकगुरो॥१९॥

19. O world-teacher Siva, O incomparable sage and master, thou art radiant with luster, tranquil of mind. Thou art the treasure-house of countless virtues and thy fame is illimitable. Thou art ever enthusiastic in singing the holy name of Lord. Thou settest up high ideals and giving refuge to all, destroyest the disease of rebirths. O ocean of mercy, that art gracious to those who look up to thee for succour, save me thy humble suppliant.

अनिशमशेषजनावनलालस लालितसज्जन शुद्धमते
जनिमृतिनाशन नाशितदुष्कृत दुर्गतिभञ्जक धन्ययते।
मुनिजनमुख्य मनीषिवरेण्य मनोजनिषूदनमग्नमते
शिव करुणालय पालय मां श्रितमाश्रितवत्सल लोकगुरो॥२०॥

20. O world-teacher Siva, thy only delight in life is to save the whole of humanity. Thou destroyest their misery and sins and puttest an end to the afflictions of the cycle of births and deaths. Thou art pure-minded and gladdenest the hearts of the good. O blessed sage, prince of saints, foremost of wise men, thy mind is ever absorbed in the Lord Siva. O ocean of mercy that art gracious to those who look up to thee for succour, save me, thy humble suppliant.

(Concluded)

EDUCATE THE INNER MAN

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

Salutations to the Supreme Lord, the life and goal of Divine Life!

Conditions prevailing throughout the world today unmistakably demonstrate the truth that material advancement does not mean advancement towards peace and harmony. Material welfare does not give us inner contentment, though it might be, to a certain extent, a help to the achievement of it, as it saves us from struggle for our daily bread and consequently provides us with greater opportunities for diving within and for the discovering of the inner peace. But, mankind does not live by bread alone. The secret lies in the fact that man, often unconsciously, strives to achieve God-head, for God has given him the grace of intellect with which to think and find out the way towards the realisation of his God-head; and, even if his mundane ambitions and desires for a time distract his attention from God, ultimately the spirit wins and man resumes his quest of God. Many are the ways which lead us towards Self-realisation. Each individual has his own problems; every nation has its own peculiar characteristics. Wisdom lies in finding this out, and in so educating the people that the nation's civilisation has a clear impress of this fundamental characteristic. The culture of India is rooted in Eternal Values, and this

country is fortunately famous for spirituality and philosophy.

Everything else is changing, transitory. Civilisations based on the shifting sands of materialistic culture are bound to crumble down. Civilisations based on the culture of the spirit alone would endure. Materialism has man's selfishness as its motive power; spirituality has selflessness as its vital force. Selfishness will naturally create discord, disharmony and destruction; selflessness will lead to peace, harmony, progress and happiness. India's culture is essentially spiritual, its civilisation, too, is basically spiritual. This culture has temporarily been hindered in its growth and full manifestation by the predominance of an alien culture during the past few centuries; but it has never been, nor can it ever be, entirely effaced from the land. On the contrary, it has triumphantly survived the onslaught of materialistic culture, and today it has demonstrated to the world the superiority of Spirit over matter.

There is a cry in every Indian heart for religion and God. This desire can never be suppressed or ignored. When we try to ignore this longing of the soul for God, what we get is a lifeless nation with soulless citizens. The Indian's thirst for wisdom, for religion, for a practical spiritual life, ought to be catered for, if

the nation is really to live. If India is spiritually alive, she will have the chance to lead the world towards a better understanding, towards harmony, fraternity and peace. God, in His infinite kindness and limitless wisdom, has helped her time and again to take up courageously the task of opening the eyes of mankind, hypnotised by an illusion into adoring the Golden Calf. He does send His messengers from time to time to lead humanity along the path to peace.

These Godmen give the right lead and revive our ancient culture and civilisation. It is time we learnt our lessons and brought about a complete reorientation of our educational system; for, education makes or mars civilisation. What we find in India today is an educational system in which her unique characteristic is conspicuous by its absence and to which has been grafted the shadow of Western materialistic civilisation. The time has now come for a thorough overhaul of the educational system in this country. Our aim should be to revive the ancient Gurukula method, because it provided the best atmosphere and scope for physical, mental, moral, intellectual and, more than all, spiritual training of young men and women. We should introduce spiritual and moral instruction in the schools. Study of Indian philosophy and of ancient Indian scriptures like the Gita, the Upanishads, the Ramayana, etc. should be made compulsory in high schools and colleges. Even children can be taught these by means of easily assimilable lessons and parables. Spiritual organisations like the

Divine Life Branches can very efficiently and usefully supplement the work of schools and colleges in this respect. It would be ideal, if every Branch had its Youth Section and if the young men of the locality were aggressively given moral and spiritual training, besides being trained in Asanas, Pranayamas, etc.

Every one of the members of the Divine Life Society, every spiritual-minded man, every one who feels that life in the spirit alone is real living, ought to take upon himself the duty of educating in Divine Life the residents of the locality in which he lives. Every street should be a Divine Life Centre and every village should have a Divine Life Branch. Make the people realise that real happiness lies in contentment, real peace is to be had in selfless service and righteous life: then people would gladly follow you. Much more can be achieved through proper education than by the force of law. So long as the inner man is not educated, law will remain a dead letter. If the inner man is educated, then, not only shall we be rendering a great service to the individual, the society and the nation, but educating the entire world. Then will peace reign supreme in the world; then will there be an end to the horrors of war, riot and misery.

May you all lead the Divine Life and take humanity with you! May you all become Jivanmuktas in this very birth! May there be peace and harmony in the world!

May God bless you all!

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THE SPIRIT OF RENUNCIATION

(Sri Swami Chidananda)

Sannyasa is not peculiar to India. The desire to renounce the world and be of service of humanity, the wish to remain in seclusion for the purpose of study and meditation, have been found in other countries too. It is an expression of an inner urge, the urge for individual spiritual uplift. If we examine the history of foreign countries in Europe and England, you will see that there was a monastic movement. Even from the early days of Christianity there was a feeling that a really pious person ought to take himself away from the din and bustle of cities and remain in seclusion, at least for a certain time, to contemplate on God. There was the Benedictine Movement; before the tenth century, a number of men joined the order of Saint Benedict, took up vows of chastity, purity and service and devoted their time to the study of the scriptures and to meditate on God. Then they came out to the world for benefiting mankind. They took up appointments in states as ministers, as ecclesiastical officers, and due to the past spiritual training and discipline they were able to infuse the spirit of piety among the people with whom they came in contact. Later came the orders of the Franciscans and the Cistercians who moved about from place to place. There were so many monastic movements. The wandering monks were given shelter in monasteries, and the monks who went abroad did selfless

service by healing the sick, distributing medicines, and also subjected themselves to various discomforts. As regular Sannyasins they led a life of chastity, poverty, truthfulness, piety, helpfulness and charity. So, then, the monastic spirit is everywhere, not only in our country.

In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad you will find mention of Sannyasa. There is desire in people who are advanced in learning to give up worldly pleasures and devote their time to the contemplation of God.

Within the Buddhist orders are found expressions of the same feeling, viz., that people prefer a life of seclusion so that they may have more leisure, more opportunities and more facilities for contemplation and meditation. Sri Sankara introduced the Dasanami order. There has always been the inner spirit manifesting itself as desire for self-perfection.

If we examine the universe itself, we find the mineral kingdom, plant kingdom, the animal kingdom and the human kingdom, and perhaps so many other kingdoms. In every one of these kingdoms there are Jivas whose individuality is perceived. There is the power of cohesion in the mineral. And if we observe the manifestation of these forces from the lowest stage of evolution

to the highest, we shall notice that there is a desire, however rudimentary it might be, on the part of the spirit in each of these to develop into a higher kind. The same Karana Sarira (causal body) that was in the mineral kingdom comes into the plant kingdom, then into the animal kingdom and then into the human kingdom. According to this way of thinking, it may be deduced that my Karana Sarira as a human being at present is the same Karana Sarira that was before in the animal, in the plant before that and in the mineral before that. Therefore, when I have now become a man, it shows that the Karana Sarira which was in the animal desired to become a human being. The Karana Sarira of the mineral kingdom developed a desire to become a plant. Later on it became desirous of becoming an animal, then a human being. This inner urge to lift itself up from the lower strata in which it is, is seen also in the desire to take Sannyasa.

Now, where does this desire to become a Sannyasin come from? The desire actually means the desire to do away, once for all, with the pleasures of the world and seek for delights which are of a higher kind, which are more expressive of the Satchidananda or the higher Bliss that is vouchsafed to every seeker. The pleasures of this world are merely shadows of the higher happiness of the Satchidananda state. So, a Jiva that is desirous of the higher kind of happiness has become dissatisfied with the pleasures that he can obtain in this world. He is dissatisfied because he recognises consciously or unconsciously the imperfection of worldly pleasures

that are before and around him. If one has Vairagya (dispassion) like that, it shows that the Jiva had in a previous existence experienced the pleasures of the world to the point of satiety and had begun to desire for happiness of a higher kind, the supreme Ananda. It shows that there is always an inner urge for evolution into the higher order of existence.

The Tamas that predominates in the mineral kingdom is lessened in the vegetable or plant life and still more lessened in the animal kingdom; there is a predominance of Rajo-Guna in animals. In the human kingdom there is more of Sattva-Guna; and in the more evolved human being there is suppression of Rajas and Tamas, and the predominance of Sattva makes us understand that we experience only pain, when we are the playthings of Rajas and Tamas. This tendency develops as a consequence of the experience of pain and makes a person yearn for Vairagya for the fleeting pleasures of the world and attain higher happiness. Therefore, we may deduce that anybody who develops Vairagya and sticks to Sannyasa has experienced in the previous births the futility of pursuing worldly pleasures, and at least to a slight extent, the importance of seeking happiness, which is more enduring. He concludes that this is possible only by the suppression of Tamas and Rajas and the improvement of his own Sattva-Guna. And then further progress is possible only by the suppression of even the Sattva-Guna, so that the limitations of the mind in the form of Gunas may be transcended.

There is a glimpse of the higher Ananda, and this enthuses man to develop Vairagya. Hence, when a person has taken to the order of Sannyasa, it shows the inner urge for progress.

Now this inner urge which makes us seek further and further happiness, has been recognised by our ancestors. They divided life into four orders: Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha and Sannyasa, for giving the opportunity for progress. The sages knew very well that Sannyasa would be profitable only if a person develops real Vairagya. What is achieved in the period of Brahmacharya is ethical discipline and study; here the mind in its aspect of intellect and will-power is best developed in the student life. The study of the Vedas and other scriptures which the boy obtains from the preceptor enables him to think correctly. To give proper food to his willpower, he goes through Susrusha (service) and this training enables him to strengthen will-power. When he enters the Grihastha's life, the emotional aspect of the mind is given proper opportunity for developing. It shows itself in the form of love and devotion to his family first, then to the community, to the society, to his country and to the world. The aspect of sympathy, fellow-feeling and all the good qualities that are expressive of the emotional aspect of the mind are given full play in the Grihastha period of life. But our sages knew that it was not enough if the mind was given food in this manner. A person who desires to develop discrimination and dispassion leading to Sannyasa, should be taken beyond the limitations of the mind. Hence the order of Vanaprastha was introduced for those

who have real yearning for Sannyasa. As Vanaprasthis, they deny themselves many things which they could enjoy in the Grihastha state. Why? Because they recognise that these pleasures are fleeting and imperfect and ultimately lead to pain; therefore, they must begin to search for the lasting happiness. Then, out of millions of people who enter into Sannyasa, one rises up to the required height, because this is a long and very arduous process of training. Several births of Sannyasa may have to be gone through before perfection can be reached, before he rises up to a Jivanmukta—after having gone through the preliminary stages of Abhyasa (practice), of Viveka (discrimination) and Vairagya (dispassion) during the course of many births—unless a person is extraordinarily gifted with God's full Grace. Even there he becomes gifted only after a number of lives of selflessness and piety.

The next point that we may have to consider is: why should there be the regular initiation into Sannyasa? Is it not enough if a person has a Guru or remains as Vanaprasthi, without taking formal Sannyasa? Can he not remain in the world and lead a virtuous life? The point we have to remember is that a person has to be given the 'power' of developing his mind, so that he may get beyond its limitations. We take recourse to the use of the word 'power' with emphasis. There is what is called Chit-Sakti (power of consciousness) beyond the reach of the mind, beyond the limitations of causation, time and space. Therefore, you have to get the Sakti completely, which must descend

on the person who is desirous of becoming a Sannyasin. This again is done only through Diksha (initiation) either in the form of expressed Mantras from a realised Guru, by his benign touch or in some other way. This is a very important thing, because this is not generally done in an informal manner. When a Guru gives the Mantra to a Sannyasa- initiate, the power passes from the Guru to the disciple. That Guru has received the initiation in a legitimate way from his Guru and his Guru again from his Guru and so on.

You know what is called 'Brahmopadesa', initiation that is given by the father to the son on the day of the Upanayana ceremony; this Brahmopadesa came from the Rishis and is in an unbroken chain. So also, from Dattatreya onwards the Sannyasa initiation is coming in a line. Hence, whether the person who gives Sannyasa is really a highly qualified man or not, he gives that which he has received. That is why a Sannyasa- initiate must go through all the formalities, if it should be of real benefit. It is in this fashion that the Sannyasa initiation becomes important.

The foregoing is a brief explanation of the point that it is the inner urge for higher evolution in man that goads him to attain Vairagya or dispassion. The Sannyasi desires to achieve the highest ideal. He will succeed in liberating himself from the bondage of human birth, if he does not lose sight of that ideal. Unless he is exceptionally qualified to straightaway enter into Brahmic Consciousness, which is possible by

God's Grace alone and which is very rare, one has to be very vigilant, unsparing and relentless in the spiritual practices. One should follow with all faith the words of the preceptor and the scriptures and exert his utmost to live that life.

It is a supreme good fortune for us Sannyasins who have received initiation directly from Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. He was a Guru, to our knowledge, who was ever in communion with the Lord and had the capacity to transform the inner nature of the disciples and make them fit to rise higher in the scale of spiritual evolution. His love and compassion were not confined to the one field of giving initiation in Sannyasa to the deserving disciples alone, for it extended over the whole world and took shape in innumerable ways. But it must be said that the disciples who have taken Sannyasa Diksha from him became qualified in a special way to receive through him the Divine Grace that was continuously flowing into him.

The 1st of June, the anniversary day of the Sannyasa Diksha of Sri Swami Sivananda, is very important and auspicious for all his disciples, devotees and admirers. Important and auspicious because that sacred day marked not only the occasion of his own initiation into the order of Sannyasa but also a blessing to the numberless disciples, devotees and admirers who were fortunate to have come in contact with the Master.

Crores of Pranams to the great Guru.

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THE SCIENCE OF MANTRA

(Sri Swami Krishnananda)

[Continued from the previous Issue]

Our contact with the gods is through the substance out of which they are made, and incidentally through the substance in us which is akin to their nature. A kinship has to be established between ourselves and the divinities, the angels, the gods, the demigods, the archangels—call them by whatever name we like. The kinship that is possible between ourselves and these higher manifestations is in terms of vibrations. The mind, so to say, is also a concentrated form of vibration. It is a force that is whirling, gyrating in a particular manner. In human beings and in other living beings in the world, it is made to whirl in a particular manner in terms of desire for sense contact and desire for physical maintenance, etc. And the whirl is intensified in terms of its centre of self-affirmation, called the ego, the ego also being a whirl of force. Like the nucleus in an atom, the ego is in the centre of our personality; and the wings, as it were, of this nucleus of the atom of human personality are the processes of thinking, like electronic energy moving towards the nucleus and also moving from it.

The ego is the nucleus of mental power; and the functions of the mind in terms of desire, contact with objects, etc., may be compared to the exterior pattern of the atom, so that the human

individual is atomic in a social sense, in a psychological sense. This very same mind—which is so hard in its core of egoism in the human individual mostly, due to the tremendous pressure of affirmation which characterises it—is supposed to diffuse itself into a larger inclusiveness and dimension as it envisages its connection with its own higher content, which we call the higher mind or the higher reason, through which it is that we are able to contact the higher powers.

The vibrations of the gods and the vibrations of the concentrating mind should be in a state of *en rapport*. We can contact even Brahma, Vishnu and Siva at once, inasmuch as there is no geographical distance between the outer periphery of an atom and its inner nucleus. The distance is logical, not geographical. We may even say it is conceptual, rational, and measurable only in terms of consciousness.

The distance between ourselves and the gods is a distance that is created by consciousness itself. To understand how consciousness can create an apparently geographical distance, we may only have to go back to the analogy of our dream world, where we can see a distant mountain measuring several miles away

from the perceiver thereof, notwithstanding the fact that there is no such physical distance between the perceiving or the dreaming individual and the mountain that is seen. The space is only conceptual, yet it looks like a physical distance.

The gods appear to be very far off from us. We do not know how far the archangels Gabriel and Michael are, or Narayana, Nara, Vasishtha, Vyasa, and the residents of the higher regions of Janaloka, Tapoloka. How far are they? We will be wonderstruck with the astonishment of there being an infinite distance between ourselves and these great beings. Awestruck, indeed! It will seem as though they are as far as the stars in the sky. But they are as far from us as our causal body is from our own selves, or our mind is away from our body.

The world has no physical distance. The whole universe, which is created by God, is not physical in its nature. It is not possible to measure it by a yardstick or a foot ruler, or any other physical means. Tremendous distance it is, and yet it is no distance at all.

THE MANTRA IS THE GOD

The contact through the modes of vibration with the gods in one particular mode of spiritual practice, or sadhana, is done through mantra japa. The gods are supposed to be definable through a mantra. A mantra is the name of a god. It is a name of the very structure of the divinity. Sometimes it is emphasised that the mantra itself is the god. The

recitation of a mantra, the invocation of the inner potential of the mantra through correct pronunciation, is at once the invocation of the divinity because according to Mantra Shastra, the opinion is that the divinity or the god is nothing but the shape or the pattern that the vibration of the mantra takes when it is correctly pronounced. A geometrical pattern may be created when a particular mantra, whether bheja or otherwise, is recited as required. That pattern is the visualisation of the god—the shape that the vibration takes, as it were, in the field of outer perception; and we can see the god as we can see our own self in a dream world. But this vision of the god, the divinity, or the ishta-devata that we worship through the mantra, is basically inseparable from the stuff of the meditating consciousness itself, and the blessing of this god upon the reciter of the mantra is virtually the higher self blessing the lower self.

Various gods have been mentioned in the Mantra Shastras. There is a large compilation called Mantra Maharnava, in which all kinds of mantras are described, along with their mode of application, like we may have mathematical formulae for the manufacture of different kinds of nuclear warheads or weapons. The formulae change according to the requirement on hand. A particular mantra of a god is a formula. It is a mathematical equation, as it were, which conjures up a hidden energy and releases it into action, and the mantra does what we expect it to do.

The mantra japa, therefore, is a sacred act of the spiritual seeker. It is not

merely a verbal, audible utterance of a word or a linguistic formula. It is a preparation for going inward into the very power with which we are able to vocalise or articulate the mantra.

The four stages of sound are perhaps well known to everybody—para, pashyanti, madhyama and vaikhari. Vaikhari is the audible sound that we make when we recite a mantra. But it is connected to the vocal organs which move in that given manner on account of a pressure that is exerted by another thing which is not audible or sensory. That is the background—the tanmtric element that is perhaps there at the back of the physical operation of the sound which is the actual chanting of the mantra. This is what is called madhyama in one particular style of speaking. But there are deeper roots of the very origin of this sound, going to the deeper plexuses of the psychic personality. Pashyanti is the word that is used. And lastly, there is an inaudible sound, amatra. Amatra is a sound that cannot be heard. It, therefore, cannot be called a sound at all.

Just as space is not a solid object—it does not seem to be existing at all, for all practical purposes—yet it is scientifically possible to convert hard matter into liquefied, gaseous and spatial forms, it is possible to conceive of the possibility of an inaudible soundless amatra state of sound that is made vocal and articulate when we chant the mantra. Like high potencies of homeopathic medicine where they say the medicine is not there at all, there is something called vibration which is quite different from the mother tincture.

In a similar manner is the energy that we can invoke in our own selves by a mental cooperation with the actual reciting of the mantra through the vocal organs. It is not necessary for us to struggle hard to understand what kind of god will be there in front of the mantra. The god will manifest itself automatically. When a particular chemical combination is swallowed, its definite action will be palpable. Everybody will know what particular effect will be there through a particular given chemical combination, and we need not theoretically argue about it.

This is also the importance of diksha, or an initiation that is required in the case of the recitation of a mantra, because diksha initiation into the mantra is the actual introduction of the mind of the student into the technique of audition and also mentation, both of which are involved in the chanting of the mantra.

We should not take mantra japa as a light affair. People generally say, “Some japa I do when I walk, some japa I do when I sit, some when I recline, some when I go to bed.” We should not be so very callous in our respect that we give to these mantras. Mantras are like persons. They will stand before us and speak. And, to repeat, a mantra is not a sound. It is a vibration that is created in terms of the shape that it will take and in terms of an action that it will produce, which is actually the work of the god that we think of.

(To be continued)

THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

(Sri Swami Atmaswarupananda)

All the great religions declare the necessity of a foundation of living a life of morality, of the importance of cultivating virtues. Each one will emphasize different virtues as being prime, possibly depending upon the culture that that religion appeared in.

Gurudev, Swami Sivanandaji, emphasized ahimsa, satyam and brahmacharya. They are not only key virtues and part of the culture, but if we understand them correctly, they will lead us past the outer virtue to creating an inner virtue of the mind and attitude, and ultimately convert them into divine virtues. They are thus a direct connection with our goal.

Virtues come in different qualities. They can begin as a quality such as ahimsa or non-injury, then become an attitude of universal good will, and ultimately become an experience and expression of the love of God.

But then, there are other virtues that are meant to take us to an absolute place in a different way. They are meant to lead us to the oneness of all things by negating all differences. And we do that finally by taking everything back to the Source, which is absolutely unknowable. Normally, this is done through enquiry, especially the enquiry of Who am I? If done properly it takes us back ultimately to a conscious presence and finally to the

unanswerable question of What is it that knows this?

The only answer is "I", but we have no idea who or what that "I" is. It is totally beyond the mind. It is from that point beyond the mind that utter humility arises, that total universality arises. When everything arises from an unknown source we cannot differentiate anything or discriminate or judge between different things because of the overriding oneness of it all.

One virtue that takes us to that place in a direct way is the virtue of forgiveness, and perhaps that is why Jesus made it a central part of His prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." In other words, God's forgiveness or God's enlightenment depends upon us taking everyone else with us.

The reason it is necessary is because everything is arising from that which is beyond the mind. When everything is arising from that which is beyond the mind, it equally belongs to that mystery. Therefore, it is our own Self. Everything is seen as part of That, and it utterly changes our attitude to all things. When everything is seen as one, we become a different person.

That is the goal of the spiritual life, a transformation, a transformation that sees all things as one. And one of the paths is the path of total forgiveness.

THE DISTANT INHERITANCE

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

“Your real nature is Sat-Chit-Ananda. You are Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute and Bliss Absolute. You are identical with Brahman. You are the Lord of Nature. You are Kaivalya. You are Kevala. You are Chinmatra. You are Nitya, Suddha, Siddha, Buddha, Mukta. You are Chaitanya. You are Santam, Sivam, Subham, Sundaram, Kantam. Moksha is not something to be achieved. You are already free. It is already achieved. Every being is one with the Absolute. This is your birth-right!” These are, indeed, great and inspired sayings—the sayings of great men of wisdom, god-like men who have been before us; and in the light of the visions they have had, these truths have been bequeathed to the world.

Mere repetition of these sayings will not really help you. We read about God and Soul in books written by individuals who saw them, or hear about them from such persons, until we come under the delusion that we have a real conception of them. This is a wrong understanding of facts which will take us nowhere. You will have to know and experience the truth of these yourself. The taste of an apple can never be made known to one who has not himself tasted it. Similarly the nature of Brahman cannot be known without direct intuition or realisation (Pratyakshata). The Divinity latent in man—as a tree in a seed, as butter in

milk—can be intensely felt and realised only when it fully manifests itself through spiritual unfoldments.

Difficult it is to understand the nature of Brahman or the Eternal. Still more difficult is Sadhana or the practice to attain Brahman. Sharp as the razor’s edge is the path to Truth. Such great ones as Buddha, Bhartrihari, Raja Gopichand, had to renounce their kingdoms and dear ones in search of Truth. Jesus Christ had to shed his blood and allow himself to be crucified on the Cross for the sake of Truth.

Spiritual life is a life of perpetual struggle. One will have to fight with the mind and the senses day and night. The spiritual path is toilsome and demands long perseverance and great patience. He who is steadfast and firm, who is not upset by obstacles and difficulties, will reach the goal.

We are Nitya-Suddha Atman. But if a mosquito bites us we get shivering and have to go to a hospital and take quinine. Yet, it is a fact that we are Satchidananda Atman. This fact is true at all times. But practically it is found to be of no use. We are unable to make use of it, because of our lack of correct understanding, sincere effort and intense longing to know Truth.

Let us suppose, in a certain country there is a man living in utter poverty, and

with great difficulty he is managing to keep himself alive. When he is in this condition, a multi-millionaire from a distant country, who happens to be travelling round the world, accidentally comes in contact with this person and makes his acquaintance. Curiously enough, the man of unlimited wealth leaves later on in his will his entire fortune to the poor man as a legacy, subject to the fulfilment of a few conditions which are: that the inheritor has to go to the place where the rich man was living, establish his identity and claim this fortune. He also states in his will the whereabouts of the man to whom he is leaving the fortune.

Then the rich man dies and his solicitors who have got the will in their hands locate the man concerned and send word to him to the effect that he has got to come to the place and take the wealth. News reaches our poor fellow by cable which reads: "You are the richest man in the world. You have inherited unlimited wealth and property. Come personally, establish your identity and take the wealth." Now, our friend knows that he is a multi-millionaire. So he will have no wants. He can buy anything he likes. But at the moment he is virtually penniless. He has to work hard for livelihood. In his present condition he cannot manage to get even one meal by merely saying that he is the richest man. Yet, undeniably, it is a fact that he is the wealthiest man, though he is not able to make use of his riches.

Now what has he to do? Supposing the place where he has to reach in order to claim the wealth is some fifteen

thousand miles away, it will be certainly impossible for him to arrange the fare for the trip. He has to work very hard to meet the expenses for his travel. Though, in all earnestness, he goes about saying that he is the richest man in the world, nobody will trust him and advance him any money. Under the circumstances the only way open to him to achieve his objective is to work strenuously and earn his passage-money. It may take him six months or even six years. Further he has to undertake the trouble of procuring the ticket and face all the hazards of travel; and when at last he actually reaches the place and proves his identity;—only then,—the fact of his being wealthy becomes turned into a concrete, practical, effective, living truth, and not otherwise. But, theoretically, even before he reached the place where he has to claim the wealth, there is no denying the fact that, as the rightful heir to the property, he has been the richest man.

Similarly, even now, the fact is there that you are the Satchidananda-Atman, 'whom sword cannot pierce, wind cannot dry, water cannot wet'. But if these very same facts have to become a vibrant, thrilling and vital experience, these have to be personally demonstrated and experienced as an actual fact. Therefore, the necessity for doing Sadhana. Sadhana is the claiming of the wealth on the actual spot. Unless this is done, the fact of one's being the possessor of the wealth of all the fourteen worlds is useless to him—only a theoretical fact.

This is exactly the condition of the Jiva, who is in full possession of the

knowledge that he is the Mahakarana (the Source of all things), the Lord of Nature, the Illuminator, the Supreme. Such knowledge is useless to him until the condition of the will is fulfilled. And what is the will? It is that you are deathless, eternal, immortal Atman, the Light of lights, the Para-Brahman. You are That, from which countless universes arise. That is the ultimate will, and God Himself has bequeathed it. And if we have to make this knowledge a vital experience, what are the conditions to be fulfilled? Doing hard labour, earning passage-money, undertaking the journey, reaching on the spot and identifying one's real nature, are the conditions to be fulfilled. What is that?

That is Yoga or Sadhana and everything that Yoga implies,—taking up this in right earnest and practising the fourfold means of Sadhana—Viveka, Vairagya, Shatsampat and Mumukshutva. Those who have realised the Truth have shown us the methods, following which honestly, they say, every one of us can realize that state and find it for ourselves.



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

—**Swami Sivananda**

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THE PIG THAT WAS OFFERED MOKSHA

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

Once Lakshmi complained to her Lord: “O Lord! You do not give liberation to the people of the world. They are undergoing immense suffering.” Lord Hari replied, “My beloved Lakshmi, they do not want Moksha. They are perfectly satisfied with their earthly lot and sensual life. Their minds cannot be weaned from sensual pleasures and they are totally sunk in worldliness.”

Lakshmi said, “This is not true, my Lord.” Lord Hari said, “Then, Lakshmi, find out for yourself. You can visit the earth plane. I shall ask Narada Rishi to accompany you.”

Lakshmi consented and went to the world along with Narada. They both saw a pig revelling in filth along with its partner and several little ones,

Lakshmi said to the pig, “O pig! Why do you lead such a miserable life? Come to Vaikuntha. You will be extremely happy. I will give you Moksha.”

The pig replied, “I shall consult my wife and let you know.” The pig approached his partner and said, “My beloved wife! A beautiful lady has come with a Rishi. She offers us Moksha. Can we go to Vaikuntha along with them?”

His partner replied, "First find out what this Moksha is. What is Vaikuntha?"

The pig asked Lakshmi the nature of Moksha and Vaikuntha. She said, "In Vaikuntha, Lord Narayana dwells. There is neither hunger nor thirst, neither sorrow nor pain, neither disease nor death. One enjoys the company of the omnipotent, omniscient Lord. He is ever happy. He enjoys all divine Aisvarya. He is never in want of anything. All his desires are at once fulfilled."

The pig related all that Lakshmi said to his wife. She said, "My beloved husband, find out from the lady if we can get that stuff for our food in Vaikuntha."

The pig asked Lakshmi, "My wife wants to know whether she can get 'that stuff' in Vaikuntha for her food." Lakshmi said, "Pray, what is that stuff?"

"Why, I mean excreta, offal."

Lakshmi said, "O pig! She cannot get it there. She can get divine nectar." The pig reported to his wife that no offal was obtainable in Vaikuntha.

His wife said, "What! No offal! What is such Vaikuntha! I will have nothing to do with it. In that case I do not want to go to Vaikuntha."

The pig went to Lakshmi and said that neither he nor his wife nor the little ones wished to go to Vaikuntha owing to the absence of offal there.

Lakshmi now realised the truth uttered by her Lord. She returned to Vaikuntha. Lord Hari enquired of her as to the success of her mission.

Lakshmi said, "Yes, my Lord, what you said is quite true."

The ignorant, worldly man is immersed in worldliness. He has no idea of transcendental divine bliss that is independent of sensual objects. He is quite satisfied with sensual pleasures. Even if God appears before him and says, "Come along with Me in this celestial car and I will take you to Vaikuntha", he would not want to accompany the Lord. He is like the pig that revels in filth. Procreation and eating are his goal. If he gets some bread and dhal, a little ghee, some sweetmeats, a few vegetables, a wife and some children, it is more than Vaikuntha for him. Nobody wants the higher divine life, God-realisation, Moksha and eternal bliss. Nobody likes Vairagya, renunciation, Sadhana and Nivritti.

Pitiable is the lot of a worldly man, however rich and worldly-wise he may be. Lamentable is his plight. Despicable is his state. Sad is his condition.



SADHANA

- Don't forget God.
- Don't fail to get up at 4 a.m., and do Japa and meditation.
- Don't fail to maintain a daily diary.
- Don't fail to do Nitya-Karmas.
- Don't fail to do charity.
- Don't fail to discharge your duties to parents.
- Don't waste any opportunity.
- Don't depend upon servants.
- Don't be a slave to the Indriyas.
- Don't move with worldly-minded people.
- Don't count the time.

—Swami Sivananda



LOOK AT YOURSELF

(*Swami Ramarajyam*)

This incident happened in the state of Orissa. A devastating famine occurred there in the year 1880. There lived in a famine-stricken village a poor family—a mother and her two children. The mother used to beg food for her family. Whatever she got, she would feed her children first, then she would eat whatever was left. Several times she would go hungry as nothing would be left after feeding the scanty alms to the children.

It never rains but it pours. Misfortunes usually come in large numbers. One day the younger child died of starvation. The mother fell ill. Now the elder child had to beg for food. Whatever he got, he would feed his mother first and then would eat whatever was left.

Once he could not get anything to eat for days together. Somehow he stumbled in front of a house. The master of the house said, “I have got some rice and if you eat it here, I shall give it to you.”

The boy replied with folded hands, “My mother is sick. She has not eaten

anything since last week. How can I eat here without feeding her?”

The master said, “I will give you nothing to carry your home.”

The boy said again, “My mother never eats anything without feeding me. Now she is sick. How can I eat without feeding her?”

The master shut the door.

The starving boy said nothing. He thought he should try again to get from the householder some food for his mother. He knocked at the door, but the door was not opened.

Night fell. It went by. In the morning the passers-by saw that the boy was lying dead.

What a son! He chose to die but did not eat without feeding his mother. Look at yourself. Compare yourself with that boy. How much do you differ from him—a little or much? Are you also prepared to put your life at risk for the sake of your mother, of your father?

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JAGULEE CHAS, BAPULEE CHAS

(Wisdom in Humour)

“Chas” in Gujrati is buttermilk.

It is “Matta” of Hindustanee.

There are three kinds of Chas, viz.

Jagulee Chas, Bapulee Chas and Appulee Chas.

Jagulee Chas is simple very watery buttermilk.

This is given to strangers, servants and other people.

Bapulee Chas is slightly thick.

This is distributed among the old father

And sons of the family,

Friends and distant relatives.

Appulee Chas is the best buttermilk.

It is like curd and contains butter also.

This is drunk by the master of the house,

Or the proprietor, or Lala or Seth.

Similarly, man distributes watery tea,
Stale plantains, etc., to servants and others;

A little better tea and good fruits to his friends;

He takes the best tea for himself.

He closes the door when he takes the tea.

This is the play of selfishness and mean mindedness.

O Man! This will degrade you.

Give the best things to others,

 Servants and scavenger.

 Treat others like yourself,

Love thy neighbour as thy self.

This will expand your heart.

And give you Immortal Bliss.

Swami Sivananda

ANVAYA AND VYATIREKA METHOD IN LOGIC*

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

Anvaya means the presence of one thing along with a particular another, and Vyatireka means its absence when the other is absent. It is the synthesis and analysis or the positive and negative method. In the syllogistic argument: where there is pitcher, there is clay, the negative proposition would be, where there is no clay there is no pitcher. This is the common illustration of the Anvaya-Vyatireka method in logic. Applying this process to the three states and the Atman we see from experience that when waking exists, Atman exists (Anvaya). But the Vyatireka method cannot be applied in the following way: when Atman does not exist, waking does not exist. Because in the method of Anvaya-Vyatireka which is applied in the Vedanta philosophy to prove the difference of the Atman from the three states of consciousness, we cannot, in the beginning itself, take for granted that the Atman is consciousness, as the very purpose of the method is to show that the Atman is independent consciousness. Therefore, in order to avoid the fallacy of *petitio principii* (begging the question) and also to avoid the conception of the non-existence of the Atman which is involved in the argument, we have to put the statement thus: when waking exists, Atman exists

(Anvaya); and when waking does not exist, Atman exists (Vyatireka).

The names and forms are different and illusory, but the one underlying essence of Atman is the same in all forms. It is the one reality. Negate the forms and grasp the essence by meditating on the Atman. Separate the Atman from the five Koshas (sheaths) just as you draw the pith from the Munja grass or a reed. Just as you take out the small diamond that is mixed with different kinds of pulses and cereals by separating it from them, so also take out this Atman by separating it from the five sheaths (physical, vital, mental, intellectual and blissful entities of man). Where the five sheaths exist, there the Atman also exists. Where the five sheaths do not exist, even there the Atman exists. Therefore, it is independent of the five sheaths.

During the state of dreaming there is no consciousness of the existence of the material body, but the presence of the Spirit is experienced, as without the Spirit it is not possible to have the consciousness of what occurs in a dream. It thus follows that in the state of dreaming there is the presence of the Spirit and the absence of the material body. This co-existence of the Spirit in all conditions is called Anvaya, and the

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From DL March 1963

non-co-existence of the material or the physical and other sheaths with the Spirit in certain circumstances is called Vyatireka.

Similarly in the state of sound sleep one is not conscious of the existence of the subtle body (Linga Sarira) but the presence of the Spirit is proved by the fact that after waking everyone has the consciousness that during the state of sound sleep he was perfectly ignorant of everything and this consciousness is the result of previous experience and in that state there is no one else than the Spirit to receive that experience. This co-existence of the Spirit with the Karana Sarira (Causal body) is called Anvaya, and the non-coexistence of the Linga Sarira with the Spirit in the state of sound sleep is called Vyatireka. It is thus clear that the Spirit is present in all conditions while the material and subtle bodies are not present in certain states. It thus follows that while the Spirit is eternal, these two bodies are not.

The Annamaya Kosha is the material body and it has been shown that the Spirit exists without the material body in certain conditions. It follows, therefore, that this Annamaya Kosha is not the Spirit. It has also been shown, in the foregoing lines, that the Spirit exists without the subtle body in certain conditions. The three sheaths: Pranamaya Kosha, Manomaya Kosha and Vijnanamaya Kosha are connected with the Linga Sarira and receive their different names on account of the

difference in quality and condition of their constituents, all of which together go to form the Linga Sarira. It, therefore, follows that these three sheaths also are not the Spirit.

The first four sheaths having been differentiated from the Spirit, it now remains to differentiate the Anandamaya Kosha. This sheath is connected with the Karana Sarira. In the state of Samadhi, i.e., perfect absorption of thought into the one object of meditation or the Supreme Spirit, there is absence of Karana Sarira, which is the same thing as perfect ignorance, but the presence of the Spirit is experienced in that state. The co-existence of the Spirit with the state of Samadhi is called Anvaya, and the non-co-existence of the Karana Sarira with the Spirit is called Vyatireka. It thus follows that in certain conditions the Spirit does not co-exist with the Karana Sarira, and as the Anandamaya Kosha is connected with the Karana Sarira, it must be said that in those conditions the Spirit does not co-exist with the Anandamaya Kosha. The conclusion, therefore, is that this sheath also is not the Spirit.

It has thus been shown that the Spirit exists independently of the several sheaths under certain conditions. It is an axiom that whatever exists apart from certain other things is different from those things. It, therefore, follows that the Spirit is different from the five sheaths.

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CULTURAL TOUR OF H. H. SRI SWAMI PADMANABHANANDAJI MAHARAJ

At the kind invitation of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj's devotees in Malaysia, H. H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj, General Secretary the Divine Life Society Headquarters, undertook a sixteen-days' cultural and spiritual tour to Malaysia from 18th April to 3rd May 2014.

Sri Swamiji Maharaj was invited to be the guest of honour at the first Punyatithi Aradhana celebration of H.H. Sri Swami Guhabhaktanandaji Maharaj at Batu Caves Ashram. Besides this ceremony, Swamiji Maharaj was also to preside and grace other programmes at Batu Caves and at other sub branches in Malaysia.

On 18th April 2014, Sri Swamiji was received by Sri Swami Swayamjayanandaji, Dr. Kumararajah and Sri Marimuthu at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport. Upon arrival at the DLS Ashram at Batu Caves, Sri Swamiji Maharaj was accorded traditional welcome by the Ashramites and devotees. On 19th April, Swamiji Maharaj commenced his series of seven discourses on Kenopanishad followed by a question-answer session. In the evening, Sri Swamiji addressed the members of the Management Committee and devotees on 'Devotion and selfless service'. Next day, Sri Swamiji Maharaj accompanied

by Swami Swayamajayanandaji attended a Satsanga at the Thandayuthapani Temple in Ipoh organised by the Ipoh and Lahat sub-branches and delivered a talk on 'The Life of Saivite Saint, Sundaramurthy Nayanar and the significance of Bhakti yoga'. On 21st April, Swamiji Maharaj continued his discourses on Kenopanishad at Batu Caves Ashram.

On the first Punyatithi Aradhana day of H.H. Sri Swami Guhabhaktanandaji Maharaj i.e. 22nd April, Sri Swamiji offered his loving tribute to Worshipful Sri Swami Guhabhaktanandaji Maharaj in the form of his talk on 'Selfless Service and Guru-bhakti'. On 23rd April, Swamiji Maharaj gave his fourth discourse on Kenopanishad and attended a Satsanga at the Temple of Fine Arts, Malaysia (founded by Brahmaleen Sri Swami Shantanandaji Maharaj, a direct disciple of Worshipful Gurudev) in the evening and addressed the devotees on 'Art, Religion and Spiritual Life'. Next day, apart from his regular discourse on Kenopanishad at Batu Caves Ashram, Swamiji Maharaj gave a talk on 'Bhakti Yoga' in the evening Satsanga organized at Seremban sub branch. On 25th April, Sri Swamiji visited Johor Bahru sub branch and delivered a short talk followed by question-answer

session. In the evening, Swamiji Maharaj accompanied by Swami Swayamjayanandaji and Swami Karunyanandaji, attended a programme at the Thandayuthapani Temple, Johor Bahru jointly organized by the Temple, DLS Johor Bahru and DLS Tampoi sub-branches in honour of late H.H. Sri Swami Guhabhaktanandaji Maharaj. Swamiji Maharaj addressed the devotees on 'Lives of Saints and Significance of Selfless Service'.

Sri Swamiji Maharaj guided the devotees in a spiritual retreat organized at Fraser Hill on 26th and 27th April. Sri Swamiji gave talks on various subjects viz. 'Sadhana for Busy People', 'Introduction to Vedanta' and 'Art of Vedantic Living' and also answered the queries of the participants in the question-answer session. On 28th April, Swamiji Maharaj attended a Satsanga at the Sivananda Home, Batu Caves (an orphanage run by DLS Malaysia) and spoke on 'Importance of Spiritual Life'. Later in the night, Swamiji Maharaj accompanied by Swami Swayamjayanandaji and Swami Brahmajnandanandaji attended a Satsanga at the Arsha Vidya Vanam and delivered a short talk on spiritual life. Sri Swamiji concluded his discourses on Kenopanishad at Batu caves Ashram on 29th April. Thereafter, Sri Swamiji

proceeded to Sungai Karangan sub-branch to attend a retreat for northern region organized on 30th April and 1st May. Sri Swamiji delivered talks on 'Worshipful Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj's life in Malaya' and 'Life and Teachings of Gurudev and Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj'. On 2nd May, Swamiji Maharaj visited the Buddhist Vihar Temple and had an audience with the President Monk. Swamiji Maharaj also had a short session with the devotees from Singapore. In the evening, Sri Swamiji Maharaj presided over the 'Night of Appreciation' for the DLS volunteers and addressed them on 'Gurudev's Teachings and Selfless Service'.

Sri Swamiji Maharaj's Satsangas at Batu Caves Ashram and the other sub branches were well attended by the devotees. On 3rd May, Sri Swamiji Maharaj was given a warm send-off at the airport by Swami Swayamjayanandaji and other devotees. On his return journey, Sri Swamiji visited the DLS Jullandhar Branch and presided over the annual meeting held in connection with Worshipful Sri Swami Premanandaji's birthday. Sri Swamiji Maharaj consecrated the Murti (statue) of Worshipful Gurudev at Jullandhar Branch building on 7th May and returned to Headquarters Ashram on 8th May 2014.

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SRI ADI SANKARACHARYA JAYANTI CELEBRATION AT THE HEADQUARTERS ASHRAM

Offer your individual selves at the altar of the Knowledge-Sacrifice, to the Absolute Brahman! Dissolve yourselves in the ocean of the Akhanda-Ekarasa-Satchidananda! Then the Goal of life is reached! This is what Sankara speaks to you all.

—Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj

The sacred day of Jagadguru Sri Adi Sankaracharya's advent on earth was celebrated with great sanctity and deep devotion at the Headquarters Ashram on 4th May 2014.

The marble statue of Bhagavan Sankaracharya at Sri Vishwanatha Mandir was splendidly decorated with multicoloured flowers and garlands for this auspicious occasion. The programme commenced at 9 a.m. with the singing of Jaya Ganesh prayers and Kirtans by H. H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj. Thereafter,

Sri Swami Hariharanandaji Maharaj, Sri Swami Akhilanandaji Maharaj and Sri Swami Advaitanandaji Maharaj gave discourses on the inspiring life and illuminating teachings of Acharya Sankara. Then, floral Archana to the chanting of Ashtottarashata-namavali was offered to the Adiguru. The celebration concluded at 11 a.m. with Arati and distribution of holy Prasad.

May Sri Adi Sankaracharya and Sadgurudev bless us all to strive sincerely to realize our true Divine Identity in this very life!

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If the dust is in the company of the wind, it soars high in the sky. If it is in the company of muddy water, it becomes a dirty mire. If the air is in the company of jasmine, it wafts a sweet aroma. If it is in the company of offal, it disseminates a foul odour. Put the parrot in the company of wicked men. It will start abusing. Put it in the company of Sadhus. It will repeat, "Ram, Renga, Renga." Even so, if one is in the company of a sage, he attains knowledge and soars high in the realm of eternal bliss. If he is in the company of a rogue or a drunkard, he drinks and commits vicious deeds. —**Swami Sivananda**

CELEBRATION OF NINETIETH SANNYAS DIKSHA ANNIVERSARY OF SADGURUDEV SRI SWAMI SIVANANDAJI MAHARAJ

Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj is the most glorious and ideal exemplifier of what Sannyas in all its grandeur can be and has to be for every one of us.

(Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj)

The auspicious day of Ninetieth Sannyas Diksha Anniversary of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was celebrated with great devoutness and sacredness on 1st June, 2014 at the Headquarters Ashram. In the forenoon, special worship was offered to the Holy Padukas of Sadgurudev in the Samadhi Shrine. It was followed by a brief Satsanga wherein H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj delivered a short talk on the inspiring life of the Adorable Master and the Sannyasins of the Ashram presented soulful Bhajans as their worshipful tribute to the Beloved Gurudev. One book and two booklets were released to mark this sacred day.

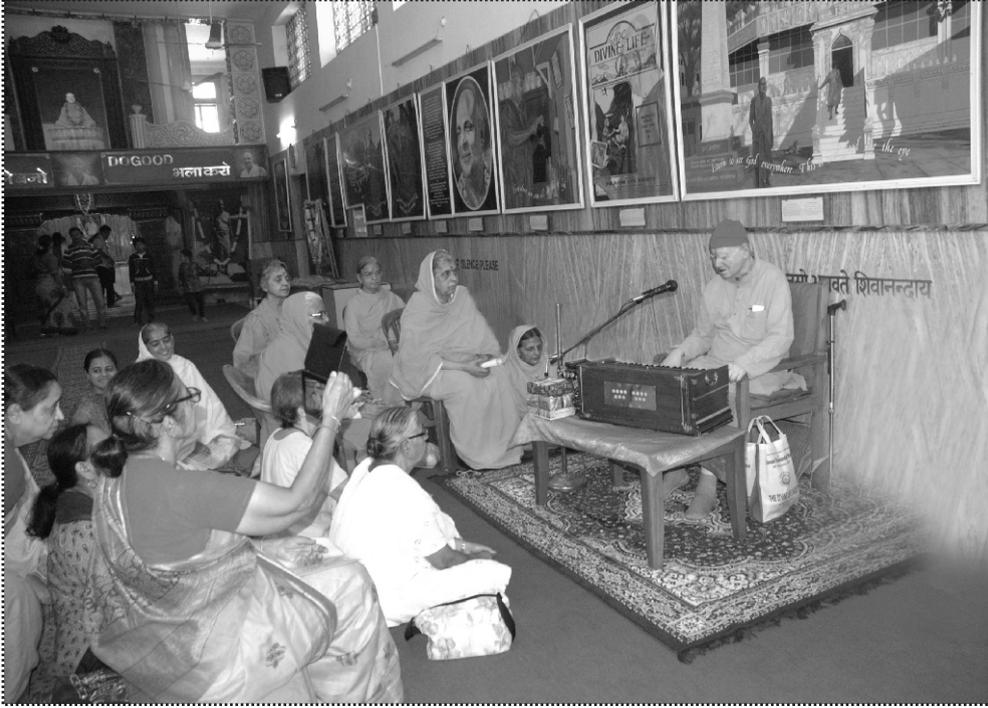


The Satsanga concluded with distribution of special Prasad.

During the night Satsanga, H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj and H.H. Sri Swami Advaitanandaji Maharaj in their short talks highlighted the uniqueness and significance of Sadgurudev's Sannyas. All the devotees felt completely saturated in indescribable joy to have Darshan of Beloved Sadgurudev on this blessed day through a DVD show. Thereafter, Ms. Jagriti Rath of Odisha sang one melodious Bhajan as her Pushpanjali at the sacred feet of Worshipful Gurudev. The Satsanga concluded with the floral Archana to Sadgurudev to the chant of Ashtottarashatnamavali, Arati and distribution of special Prasad.

May the Lord Almighty and Sadgurudev bless us all to strive earnestly to live up to the sublime ideals of true renunciation. □ □ □

SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATION OF SIVANANDA MATRI SATSANGA



The auspicious occasion of Silver Jubilee of Sivananda Matri Satsanga was celebrated with great joy by the members of Matri Satsanga Group on 2nd May 2014 at the Headquarters Ashram.

Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj inspired the lady inmates of the Ashram to organize a daily Satsanga wherein they could do collective Sadhana in the form of Swadhyaya, Kirtan and meditation and also interact with each other. With his blessings, Sivananda Matri Satsanga commenced on the sacred day of Akshaya Tertiya i.e. 8th May 1989. Since then, the Matri Satsanga is regularly held at the Ashram Library and enthusiastically attended by the lady inmates and visitors to the Ashram.

On Silver Jubilee day i.e. 2nd May 2014, special Puja was offered to Lord Vishwanatha and to the sacred Padukas of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj by the members of Matri Satsanga Group. After the Paduka Puja, a brief Satsanga was held in the holy Samadhi Shrine wherein

H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj blessed the members with his inspiring words. Sri Swamiji Maharaj also released four booklets and two books to commemorate the occasion. The four booklets—two in English ‘Greatness of Women’, ‘Laws of Prosperity in the Home’ and two in Hindi ‘Mahaneeya Matritva’ and ‘Mahan Jivan Ki Adharshila’, each comprising 25 inspiring articles of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, were compiled by the Matri Satsanga Group for the sacred occasion of Silver Jubilee.

May the divine grace of the Lord Almighty, Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj be upon Sivananda Matri Satsanga Group!

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**INTERFAITH DIALOGUE WITH THE PROFESSORS AND
THE STUDENTS OF SAINT FILARET’S ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN
INSTITUTE, MOSCOW THROUGH SKYPE**

H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj, General Secretary, DLS Headquarters Ashram addressed the professors and the students of Saint Filaret’s Orthodox Christian Institute, Moscow in a Skype Satsanga on 24th May 2014. Sri Swamiji expressed his views on ‘Vedantic Perspective on Christianity’ and ‘Hindu-Christian Dialogue’ and also answered the queries of the participants in the question-answer session. Sri Swamiji’s talk was well received by the professors, students and guests of Saint Filaret’s Orthodox Christian Institute, Moscow. This Skype Satsanga, first of its kind in Russia, was organised with the noble initiative and sincere efforts of Prof. Sri Maxim Demchenko who also rendered his services as translator in this unique programme.

Prof. Sri Maxim Demchenko intends to organise such programmes in future to ensure cooperation between the Divine Life Society and Moscow Universities and Colleges of Oriental Studies and to promote interfaith harmony as well.

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VALEDICTORY FUNCTION OF THE 76TH BASIC YOGA-VEDANTA COURSE

The Valedictory function of the 76th Basic Yoga-Vedanta Course was held on 29th April 2014 at YVFA Hall. H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, President, DLS Headquarters graced the function by his benign presence.

After the invocatory prayers, Sri Swami Yogavedantanandaji Maharaj, Registrar of the Academy, welcomed all those present on the occasion. Sri Swami Akhilanandaji Maharaj, presented the report of the course. Thereafter, the students shared their experiences and impressions about the Course. It was followed by distribution of certificates

and Jnana-prasad to the students and felicitation of the faculty members.

H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj in his blessing message highlighted the significant role of Satya, Ahimsa and Brahmacharya in spiritual life. Sri Swamiji also inspired the students to put into practice the sublime precepts received at the Academy. The function concluded with the worship of Mother Saraswati and distribution of Prasad.

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

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INAUGURAL FUNCTION OF THE 77TH YOGA-VEDANTA COURSE

The Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy of the Headquarters Ashram commenced its 77th Basic Yoga-Vedanta Course on 3rd May 2014. Thirty seven seeking aspirants from different parts of India came to the sacred Ashram of Sadgurudev Sri Sivanandaji Maharaj to be blessed with the wisdom treasure of Yoga and Vedanta.

The Inaugural Day programme commenced with worship at Sri Durga and Sri Dattatreya temples. After the invocatory prayers and welcome address by Sri Swami Akhilanandaji Maharaj, Asstt. Registrar of the Academy, H. H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, President, DLS Headquarters, inaugurated the Course with the lighting

of the sacred lamp. Sri Swamiji Maharaj in his inaugural address emphasising the importance of Yoga-Vedanta Course said that this course was a blessed opportunity for the students to know the fundamental truths of different paths leading to one's salvation. Thereafter, Sri Swami Yogavedantanandaji Maharaj, Registrar, YVFA in his blessing message advised the students to practise whatever they learn at Academy for their spiritual evolution. The function came to a close with Puja to Mother Saraswati and distribution of holy Prasad.

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

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**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 12th of July, 2014, and the 51st Anniversary of the Punyatithi Aradhana of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj will be celebrated on the 20th of July 2014.

In between the above two sacred functions, there will be a Spiritual Conference, known as Sadhana Week, for seven days from 13th to 19th July 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 15th of June, 2014.

Persons with any kind of physical handicap, or health problem, may consider to avoid the strain of this concentrated programme and visit the Ashram at some other time. Further, this 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 likelihood of 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 with these difficulties and adjust themselves, lovingly. Devotees are requested kindly 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

25th April, 2014

—THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

SEVA THROUGH SIVANANDA HOME

By the profound blessings of Sri Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, 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, and do not have anybody else to take care of them.

“Look”, she said. “Look what I have got. Come and look!” She carefully opened her hand and showed a tiny insect. She held it at her ear, to hear the buzzing sound; at her nose and she smelt it. “Bhagwan hai”, she said, and she took it outside and placed it with great reverence on a leaf. To see the extra-ordinary in the ordinary. To see a miracle in daily life. To experience God’s presence. And to live in the moment. This very moment only. Grace! She has been in Sivananda Home for some time and is under treatment for pulmonary TB. But the indication for her admission was her destitute status. She was brought from the roadside where she was sitting all alone, barely clothed. Her age is about 35 years and people have been calling her “mad”. Her speech is less developed, her mind cannot grasp much, but in her heart and soul she is the sweetest. For her the past does not exist anymore, about the future she does not worry, and she just IS. JOY, SHINING STAR, GRACE. “To enjoy the little things in life, for some day, one realizes, they were the big things”.

Each and every creature is able to give something to life. To express that particular talent that God has gifted it with. Sometimes so deeply hidden, sometimes on the surface and actively present. But it is there for sure in everyone. Even the young kitten in Sivananda Home which nestles itself on someone’s lap, a person who hardly communicates with others. This kitten allows herself to be petted, and while petting, the young lady melts a little, and a smile appears on her face.

The small things, the big things: the patients who were admitted this month, with serious diseases, two of them with pulmonary TB in terminal stage, an elderly patient with a paralysis, someone having an infected ulcer on the foot, and a young girl with a serious skin disease, with eruptions over the whole body. All of them received medical treatment and nursing care, according to their need.

“No one is dispensable. No one is useless. No one is lesser in the eyes of God or in the eyes of those who try to avoid human judgment and human standards of criticism, who accept God’s creation as it is, because God created it. For them, whatever God thought fit to make, in any manner whatsoever, is perfect; there is nothing wrong in it, and it is acceptable. For them, whatever emanates from God, partakes of His divinity and perfection, and therefore in God’s own plan, and in God’s own way, is fully complete.” **(Swami Chidananda)**



ACADEMY ANNOUNCEMENT

MEMBERSHIP

REPORTS FROM THE D.L.S. BRANCHES

INLAND BRANCHES

Ambala (Haryana): Regular Satsang activities were carried on in addition to a Video Satsang on every 2nd Sunday. Free Jalseva and Nishkam Homeopathic Seva at Sri Gurugranth Sahib in which about 50 persons were treated and were given free medicines, continued.

Aska (Odisha): Satsang activities were conducted regularly on every Thursday and Sunday of the month. The Branch celebrated its Annual Function on 27th March with Paduka Puja, Bhajan, Kirtan and discourses which was attended by about 300 devotees and concluded with Anna Prasad.

Babanpur (Odisha): Mobile Satsang was organised by the Branch in the residences of the devotees with Guru Stotra, Gita Path, Bhajan and Kirtan. Hanuman Chalisa was recited on the 'Sankranti' by ladies and children. Matri Satsangs were conducted on every Thursday.

Balasore (Odisha): In addition to regular Satsang activities, the Branch celebrated Sri Rama Navami on 8th April with chanting of "Sri Ram Jay Ram Jay Ram" mantra and a special Paduka Puja and concluded with Prasad Sevan to Narayanas. Hanuman Jayanti was also celebrated on 15th with recitation of Hanuman Chalisa (108 times) and also a discourse and concluded with Prasad Sevan.

Bargarh (Odisha): Daily and weekly Satsang activities were carried on

regularly. Sri Rama Navami was celebrated on 8th April with Gurupaduka Puja and a Pravachan on Tulsi Ramayana, Narayana Seva, and concluded with Prasad Sevan. A discourse on Srimad Bhagavat (11th Skanda) in Oriya was delivered by a disciple of Sri Gurudev in the evening Satsang which was held on 12th. Sri Hanuman Jayanti was celebrated with recitation of Hanuman Chalisa on 14th followed by Bhajans and Kirtans.

Bangalore (Karnataka): Satsang activities on Thursdays and Sundays were held regularly with Bhajan, Kirtan, Paduka Puja, Swadhyaya from Sri Gurudev's books, and distribution of Jnana Prasad. Devi Puja was done on every Friday with recitation of Lalita Sahasranama, Vishnu Sahasranama and readings from Sri Gurudev's books on Devi Mahatmyam. Akhanda Mahamantra Kirtan, and chanting of Sri Guru Gita were conducted on 20th April and concluded with Mahamangalarati. A Satsang was conducted on 27th with Divine chantings. Bhagavad Gita chanting was done for one hour on all Sundays of the month.

Bellary (Karnataka): Daily Satsang activities continued regularly along with Paduka Puja and Ashtottara Archana on all Sundays. Gita Jnana Yajna was held from 2nd to 7th March on 'Karma Yoga'. Chandramana Ugadi was celebrated along with Panchanga Shravana. All the above functions were concluded with the chanting of Mahamrityunjaya Mantra,

Shanti Mantra and Prayer for World Peace and distribution of Prasad after Mahamangalarati.

Bhubaneshwar (Ashoknagar-Odisha): Weekly Satsangs and Mobile Satsangs were continued regularly. Akhanda chanting of 'Sri Rama Jaya Rama' Mantra was done for 3 hours followed by Harihat for Global welfare on 24th April. Free Homeopathic services were rendered to 25 Outdoor patients and Allopathic treatment to 28 patients. Sadhana Day was observed on 27th. Maha Vishubha Sankranti and Hanuman Jayanti were celebrated on 14th. Well furnished short stay homes like Santha Niwas, Bhakta Niwas, Meditation Hall, Krishnananda Book Stall were inaugurated by Sri Swami Sivachidananda Saraswatiji Maharaj. Birth anniversary of H.H. Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj was celebrated on 25th. The 4th Aradhana Diwas of Revered Swami Sivananda Gurusevananda Saraswati was observed with great fervour and devotion.

Barbil (Matkambeda-Odisha): Satsang activities were carried on regularly. Dola Purnima was celebrated on 16th March. A Sadhana Day was observed on 24th of the month. Around 657 patients have been given free Homeo treatment through Sivananda Charitable Homeo Dispensary run by this Branch. Balvihar classes for school going children were conducted on every Sunday.

Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh): The Branch has conducted Satsangs, Mobile Satsangs and Children's Satsangs

regularly and Mahamantra Kirtan was conducted for one hour on Ekadashi which was attended by all the devotees.

Bhishmagiri (Odisha): Besides regular Sunday Satsang activities, the Branch also conducted special Satsang on 8th March with Paduka Puja, Bhajan, Kirtan, Gita Path, and Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Japa. Gita Saptaha was held from 8th to 14th with Pravachans and also Bhajan, Kirtan, meditation and group chanting on 14th. Mahamantra Kirtan was conducted from 11th to 16th of March.

Bhanjanagar (Ganjam-Odisha): Regular Satsang activities continued. 377th and 378th Sadhana days were observed on 10th March and 14th April in which 350 and 400 devotees participated respectively which was concluded with Prasad Sevan. Pravachan and Parayan of Sri Ramacharita Manas was conducted from 18th to 26th March and from 31st March to 8th April only Parayana of Sri Ramacharita Manas was done.

Chandigarh (Haryana): Satsang activities continued regularly including Narayana Seva in the form of feeding to 250 poor and needy people, free medical consultation and medicines to 50 to 80 patients on Sundays and also Akhanda Mahamantra Japa once in a month, and collective chanting of Mahamrityunjaya mantra on Thursday evenings. A Special Satsang was organised on 8th April on the occasion of Sri Rama Navami which was celebrated with great Bhava and enthusiasm. Hanuman Jayanti was celebrated on 15th with Hanuman

Chalisa recitation, Sundarkand Path, Bhajan, Kirtan, Arati and concluded with Prasad Sevan. 12 hour Akhanda Mahamantra Japa on 24th was conducted in the presence of revered Sri Swami Akhilanandaji Maharaj and Swami Shivashritananda Mataji in which Sri Swamiji delivered a brief but inspiring speech and also interacted with the devotees, and it was concluded with Bhajan and Kirtan.

Digapahandi (Odisha): Apart from regular Satsang activities, the Branch also conducted Mobile Satsangs (4 Nos) in the residences of the devotees and Gurupaduka Puja on Sivananda and Chidananda Days and a special evening Satsang on Sankranti Day.

Ghari (Manipur): The Branch celebrated Basanti Puja and Sri Rama Navami from 6th to 9th April with Bhajan, Kirtan, Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Japa and Shanti Path in which 150 devotees participated.

Jeypore (Koraput-Odisha): Daily, weekly and mobile Satsangs went on regularly. Sivananda Day was observed on 8th of February and March with Havan, Puja and concluded with Prasad Sevan. Mahasivaratri was celebrated on 27th February with a traditional worship of Lord Shiva with Rudrabhisheka amidst chanting of Vedic Stotras and Archana and Sacred Prasad was distributed after the Mangalarati. Koraput District Charitable Homeopathy Dispensary treated about 850 different types of patients free of cost.

Kanpur (Uttar Pradesh): Apart from daily Satsang with Arati both in the

morning and evenings, the Branch also conducted Bhajan and Sankirtan on every Ekadashi. Monthly Satsang was held on 27th April with the Parayan of Sundarkand, Ramayana, and Gita and concluded with distribution of Prasad to the devotees.

Kantabanji (Odisha): The Branch conducted Satsang on all Sundays with the reading of Srimad Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 4) and chanting of Om, with Bhajan and Kirtan and concluded with Shanti Path.

Khatiguda (Odisha): In addition to two times Puja everyday and weekly Satsang on Thursdays, the Branch observed Sadhana Day on 6th April with Narayan Seva and Ekadashi Satsangs on 11th and 25th with Sri Vishnu-sahasranama chanting. Mobile Satsangs (2 Nos) were conducted on 14th and 27th.

Lanjipalli (Odisha): Daily Satsang activities went on regularly. Sri Rama Navami was celebrated on 8th April with Ramaraksha Stotra Path and blood donation was also arranged. Hanuman Chalisa was recited (108 times) on Hanuman Jayanti Day on 14th which included the reading of Sri Hanuman Kavacha and discussion on Sri Hanuman and concluded with the distribution of Prasad to the public. Narayana Seva was arranged on 27th for the poor and needy.

Lanjipalli Ladies Branch (Brahmapur-Odisha): Daily, weekly and mobile Satsangs were carried on regularly. Gita chanting on Ekadashis (12th and 27th March) and recitation of

Hanuman Chalisa (108 times) and Sundarakand Parayana on Sankranti Day on 15th were conducted. A Pravachan programme was arranged from 1st to 7th. District level Sadhana Day was conducted on 16th with Narayan Seva in which Sattvic food was distributed to about 70 poor and needy people.

Lucknow (U.P.): Satsangs were conducted on 6th and 20th April with Jai Ganesh Kirtan, Guru Stotra, Shanti Path, recitation from Srimad Bhagavad Gita and readings from the books of Sri Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. Bhog and Arati were offered to the Lord with devotional songs by the devotees.

Lakhimpur-Kheri (Uttar Pradesh): The Branch conducted Satsangs on every Monday with Bhajan, Kirtan, Guru Stotra, Shanti Path, chanting of Bhagavadgita and Mahamantra and concluding with Universal Prayer. Reading of the book 'Always ever with you' by H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj is also included in the Satsang. A special Satsang was conducted at a rural Girl's School in which fans were donated by the Branch.

Nandininagar (Chhattisgarh): Daily Brahmamuhurta Satsang, evening Satsang, weekly mobile Satsang, Matri Satsang and Ekadashi Satsang continued regularly. Ramanavami was celebrated from 31st March to 8th April with lighting of 33 Jyoti Kalas and Bhajan, Kirtan were sung during these days for 2 hours. A Havan was performed

on 7th April, and on 8th. Kanya Puja and Bhojan were done in which 120 devotees took Prasad. Sri Hanuman Jayanti was celebrated on 14th in which Hanuman Chalisa was recited for 6 hours.

Rajkot (Gujrat): Regular Satsang activities were carried on with recitation of slokas from Bhagavadgita, Sundarkand, Bhajan, Kirtan and readings from Sri Gurudev's books. A half day shibir was organised on Mahasivaratri in which recitation of Shivamahimna Stotra was done. Free Homeopathic services were rendered for four days a week in which around 1800 needy patients were treated. Eye camps were arranged by the Branch in which 4694 patients were treated and 812 patients were operated free of cost at "Saurashtra Central Hospital", Virnagar. Financial assistance of Rs 8000/- was provided for four patients for cataract operation at Shivanand Hospital Rajkot. Weekly dental clinic is running in Shivanand Bhavan every Tuesday in which 146 patients were provided free treatment for dental ailment. Two out-door dental camps were organized in which a total of 49 patients were treated and 13 patients were provided with free dentures. The Branch has spent Rs 12500/- for the camps and distribution of free dentures. Financial assistance of Rs 24000/- was provided during the quarter to the patients suffering from heart diseases/cancer for the operation. Four patients suffering from heart disease were paid Rs 14000/- during the quarter for purchase of medicines. Yoga classes continued in the early morning

and evening, and coaching class for the students of weaker section of the society was started in Shivanand Bhavan in which 50 students of class VIII are regularly attending class and they were given books and other stationery materials free of cost.

Raipur (Chhattisgarh): Weekly Satsang on every Sunday went on regularly. On every “Mas Sivaratri”, Rudrabhishekam for Lord Vishwanath is being performed with Namakam–Chamakam and Purusha Suktam chanting. Sri Vishnu-sahasranama, Ekadashi Ramayana and Sri Hanuman Chalisa are recited on both the Ekadashis and Puja of Lord Vishnu by Sahasra Tulsi Dal is done followed by Arati and Prasad distribution. Devi Puja was performed from 31st March to 8th April for 9 days and a Havan on Navami. Sri Ram Navami was celebrated on 8th with Jay Ganesh Kirtan, Mahamantra Chanting (6 Hours), Havan of Mahamantra, Bhajan, Arati and Prasad distribution. Hanuman Jayanti was celebrated with Shodashopachar of Sri Hanumanji along with chanting of Hanuman Chalisa and Sundar Kanda Parayan of Ramcharitmanas.

Sunabeda Ladies Branch (Odisha): Daily Mahamantra Sankirtan for 1 hour, one chapter of Gita Patha and Majamrityunjaya Mantra Japa for 54 times are held regularly. General Satsang on Sunday evening including Sivananda study circle and Children’s Satsang in the afternoons, Narayan Seva on Tuesday noon, and Wednesday and

Saturday Satsangs in the afternoons continued. Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Parayana with Abhisheka was done on every Ekadashi. Sri Rama Navami was celebrated on 8th April and Navahna Parayana was conducted by the Branch devotees in the nearest Hanuman Temple from 10th to 18th and on 14th 108 times Hanuman Chalisa was recited by the devotees. Chidananda day was observed on 24th with Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Japa for 12 hours. Sundarakanda Parayan on every Sankranti evening and Sadhana day was conducted on 20th.

Salipur (Odisha): In addition to regular Satsang, Sivananda day on 8th March and Sadhana day on 16th were conducted with Gurupaduka Puja. Health services were continued by the Swami Sivananda Charitable Hospital every Sunday in which 86 patients were treated and given free medicines. Yoga training for local School/college students/staff was held in which 31 staff members/students participated. Akhanda Mahamantra Japa was conducted on 23rd for 6 hours.

South Balanda (Odisha): Everyday two times Puja and Friday’s evening Satsang went on regularly. ‘Shri Swami Sivananda Diwas’ and ‘Sri Swami Chidananda Diwas’ was observed on 8th and 24th April with Gurupaduka Puja and a special Satsang. Sri Rama Navami was also celebrated. Mobile Satsangs were on 2nd and 19th April. ‘Sankranti Diwas’ special Satsang on 14th, and Akhanda Mahamantra Sankirtan for 3

hours on 26th for the sake of world peace were also conducted by the Branch.

Steel Township Branch (Rourkela–Odisha): Mobile Satsangs (4 nos) were organised in the residences of devotees, and Gurupaduka Puja was performed on every Thursday morning. Sadhana day was observed on 15th and 21st April at the residence of a devotee. Punyatithi Utsav of H.H. Sri Swami Sivananda Gurusevananda Saraswatiji Maharaj was observed on 26th with Gurupaduka Puja, Bhagavad Gita Path, recitation of Hanuman Chalisa and Sri Ram Stuti, a spiritual discourse, Bhajan and Kirtan and concluded with Prasad Sevan to the Narayanas and also the Public. Sri Rama Navami was celebrated on 8th and from 1st to 7th April spiritual discourses were conducted at the Satsang Bhawan on the occasion of birth centenary celebrations of H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj and also a talk on 6th and 7th chapter of Bhagavad Gita and concluded with Prasad Sevan for the participants.

Varanasi (U.P): The Branch conducted a Satsang on 13th April at 'Vridha Ashram' and a mobile Satsang on 30th which were concluded after Arati and distribution of Prasad to all those who participated.

OVERSEAS BRANCH

Hong Kong (China): The Branch conducted Satsang every Saturday with 1 hour Mahamantra chanting in both North Point Yoga Centre and Cheung Sha Wan Yoga Centre (total 61 participants for the month of March).

Monthly Satsang was held with 1 hour chanting of Mahamrityunjaya Mantra and Hanuman Chalisa followed by a talk on the teachings of Sri Gurudev (on Yoga Vedanta Sutras) in the North Point Yoga Centre (42 Participants) . Regular Yogasana classes based on 'Practical Guide to Yoga' with essential Yoga exercises, breathing techniques, and meditation were continued (25 new classes with 258 participants). Bhajan practice session continued on 1st and 29th March and 2 sessions of workshop on "Yoga for Beginners" on 18th and 29th were held (total 11 participants). A special Bhajan Kirtan session with a talk on the Essence of Bhagavad Gita was held on 22nd and on 29th. The Academic Affairs Group and the Yoga Teachers Coordinating Group of the Branch jointly organised an information sharing session and a gathering for the yoga teachers held at the Cheung Sha Wan Yoga Centre of the Branch (24) patients. The Branch continued to participate in "Walk for Sight 2014" (Under Team Category) organized by Orbis Hong Kong on the 9th (15 participants). The President of the Branch represented the Branch to participate in "The Award Presentation Ceremony for Elderly" held on the 10th by the Hong Kong Family Welfare Society. The Branch continues to provide Yoga teachers who volunteer to serve in the Yoga classes organised by the China Development Bank (Hong Kong Office) for the Bank Staff (One course of 10 sessions with 4 participants). □ □ □