

# PEACE

A Quarterly Spiritual Magazine with a Message for universal Brotherhood

January 2025 - March 2025



Pranavodhanuh Sharohyatma Brahmataallakshya Muchyate !  
Apramattena Veddhavyam Sharavat Tanmayo Bhavet !!



Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti  
God is One, men call Him by Various Names

## PEACE

A quarterly Journal of Peace and illumination

Founder : **H.H. Sri Swami Omkar**

Editor : Swamini Vinamrananda

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## PRAYER

O Lord! For Thy precious gifts of love and mercy, our souls prostrate themselves at Thy feet. Unnumbered are the times Thy Grace has saved, comforted and lovingly guided us. May we ever rest in Thy heavenly peace, singing Thy praises from eternity to eternity.

**Om                      Santi                      Om!**



## MEDITATION

We trust in the Lord,  
His word is on the staff,  
His spirit is our light,  
His temple is the pure heart,  
His voice is meditative silence,  
His consciousness is bliss,  
His threshold is self-surrender.  
His peace is over us now.  
His love encompasseth us.  
His light fills our hearts and minds.  
We strive perpetually to remember God.  
In Him is all wisdom, life, light and joy.  
Let us merge entirely in His everlasting glory.

**Om                      Santi                      Om!**



## BIRTHDAY MESSAGE BY PARAMA PUJYA SWAMI OMKARJI

*Om namaste satete jagatkaranya*  
*Namaste hite sarvalokashrayaya*  
*Namo dvaita tatvaya muktipradaya*  
*Namo brahmatevyapineshashvataya*

Greetings to you all into the Divine Presence. It is very difficult for me to talk when my heart is filled with your love. I am grateful for your love. My heart yearns to touch your devout souls with Divine Love.

One can celebrate his birthday only when he lives in the awareness of the Effulgent Light which shines with the brightness of millions of Suns. Usually, these celebrations can be divided into 1) Important events and 2) Ordinary events. External display of pomp and those in the name and form of the person are unimportant. At least now it is important to recognise the Inner Effulgent Light shining brightly and purify our hearts with Peace and Love. But alas! How many of us are truly introspective on our true Self? If you really wish to make me happy on my birthday, recognise and love the Divine Presence that is manifest all around us. That gives me real happiness.

It does not matter for how long the Banyan tree lives! Even though I have lived for 81 years, I feel I am not yet born. The day on which I can help you feel the Divine Light in the stillness of your purified hearts, I deem it as my birthday. Whether we recognise or not, God is ceaselessly waiting for us in our hearts. All we need to do is only to look inwards to recognise the Indwelling Presence of God. In remembrance of my birthday, please don't forget God even for a millionth of a second. I wake up during Brahmamuhurta and contemplate that I am the whole and God has no other body except mine. Whenever I eat or drink, I do it for all. A toy with three monkeys

is very dear to me. As they do: May I not see bad! May I not hear bad! May I not speak ill of others! May I see the Divinity in the entire Universe! May I hear the Divine name in all sounds heard by me! May my tongue not utter any words other than God's name! May I see the Divine in both who love me as well as those who hate me!

May you forget all my utterances! But don't ever forget the Divine Light in the stillness of your very hearts. May all your bodies acquire Godliness. Begin your activity with remembrance of God. Now let us repeat Omkaram thrice. May our breath, activity, life be solely dedicated to the Lord and so shall we take an oath.

**Om Shanti Shanti Shanti**



- ◆ Never get into your head that your faith alone is true and every other is false. Know for certain that God without form is real and that God with form is also real. Then hold fast to whichever faith appeals to you.
- ◆ Many are the names of God and infinite the forms that lead us to know Him. In whatsoever name or form you desire to call Him; in that very form and name you will see Him.  
**Ramakrishna Paramahansa**
- ◆ The enlightened one seeks no reward for his actions; he acts purely out of love and compassion for all living beings.  
**Isha Upanishad**
- ◆ If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion.  
**DALAI LAMA**
- ◆ A successful man is one who can lay a firm foundation with the bricks that others throw at him.

**SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA**

**Speech delivered by Pujya Sri Padmanabhananda  
Swamiji on the occasion of 131st Birthday of Pujya  
Sri Swami Omkarji**

We are celebrating the birthday of Worshipful Sri Omkar Swamiji, the birthday of one who has no birth. How do we celebrate the birthday of one who has no birth and what is the relevance and importance of such a day?

Paramatma is unborn, ever present, but still Krishna Bhagawan says, 'Yada Yadahi Dharmasya Glanir Bhavati Bharata, Abhyurthana madharmasya Tadatmanam Srujamyaham'. 'Wherever there is a decline in righteousness and an increase in sinfulness, I appear in this world.' Not only to protect and restore righteousness, but also sometimes God takes birth to accomplish specific tasks. Though He had taken several forms, out of them, only 10 are well known as Avataaras. Depending upon the specific task to be accomplished, he takes suitable form and after completing His mission, He leaves that body or form and exits from this world. To protect Vedas, he had taken the form of a fish. To protect Devas, at the time of churning of the ocean of milk, he came in the form of a turtle. He saved the mother earth, taking the form of Varaha, the wild boar. Pleased with Prahlada's devotion, He appeared as Narasimha, half man and half lion and ended religious persecution. Like this, God has appeared in many Avatars to fulfil different tasks and disappeared immediately after that. But during Rama Avatar and Krishna Avatar, the duration was much longer, and these are known as Poorna Avataara, full or complete Avatar.

Vedavyas is also considered as an Avatar. He compiled Vedas, written Mahabharata, and enriched spiritual knowledge through several writings. He had also written Puranas for the benefit of common man to understand easily.

Sri Adi Sankaracharya, considered as an Avatar of Lord Shiva, revived the dying Advaita Vedanta. Before his birth, many Darshan Sastras were coming into prominence and Advaita Vedanta was losing its relevance. Adi Shankara had uplifted the decaying Advaita philosophy. Once, when he goes for alms/begging, a woman offers him a gooseberry as she was extremely poor and did not have anything else to give him. Out of compassion, he prayed to Goddess Laxmi, the prayer/shlokas are popularly known as Kanaka Dhara Stotram. Pleased with his prayer, Goddess Lakshmi appears but tells him that the poor lady did not do any virtuous act to bless her with riches. Adi Shankara tells her of the act of charity- sacrificing the only gooseberry she had and then the poor lady was blessed with prosperity. Bhagavan Sri Adi Shankaracharya had written commentary on Brahma Sutras. His commentary or introduction to Brahmasutras is known as Adhyasa (false attribution) Bhashyam. It is said that this whole world is an illusory superimposition of Brahman. For example, when we walk with other Swamis in dark amongst the trees, a rope may appear as a snake for someone. This is called Adhyasa, by Adi Shankara. Likewise, gold is seen in many forms in ornaments like bangles, chains, earrings, etcetera. But they are not different from gold. Only gold has taken different forms and names. Another example is when a picture of dog is sculpted on a rock, to look at it as a dog is Adhyasa, though it is not really a dog but only a stone.

Chandogya Upanishad says 'Vacharambhanam vikaro namadheyam', meaning all changes are mere words in names only. This concept of Adhyasa, avidya is not easily understood by ordinary people. To explain this philosophy in easy ways and to make it simple for a common man, God appears in the form of Saints and Mahatmas. Mahatmas like Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Sivananda ji Maharaj. Omkar Swamiji-all conveyed

such truths in simple, understandable ways. For any kind of question or doubt raised by people going to him, Sri Ramana Bhagavan always used to make only one statement: truth alone exists, nothing else. Sivanandaji Maharaj has expressed Vedanta philosophy in simple songs so that everyone can easily understand and sing. In this way, God appears in the form of Mahatmas only to help people understand the spiritual truths through their simple and effective writings and their lives.

The peace prayer written by Omkar Swamiji has received world fame as a world peace prayer. It begins with 'Adorable Presence'. Swamiji describes God as not only existence but adorable existence or presence. This word, Presence itself explains that all that exists is God alone. The peace prayer brings out God's omnipresent nature in simple words, unlike complex expressions used in various Upanishads, though he has taken the main content from them.

Swamiji further elaborates God's presence in plain words as:

'Thou who art within and without, above and below, and all around, thou who art interpenetrating the very cells of our being'.

Mundak Upanishad in sloka 2.2.11 gives a similar description: "*Brahmaivedamantram, purastad brahma paschad Brahma dakshinata, schottarenaadharschordhvam cha prasaratam brahma ivedam viswamidam varishtam.*"

That immortal Brahman alone is behind, that Brahman is to the right and left, pervades everything, above and below, this universe is that Brahman alone.

Kena Upanishad (1.2): "*shrotrasya shrotram manaso mano yadvacho ha vacham sa u pranasya pranaschakshusashchaksuh.....*"

The ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, the tongue of the tongue, and also the life of the life and the eye of the eye.....

Swamiji has written it in the Peace Prayer as : thou who art the Eye of our eyes, the Ear of our ears, the Heart of our hearts, the Mind of our minds, the Breath of our breaths, the Life of our lives and the Soul of our souls....'

If anyone asks, when and where should one seek God, Swamiji has a beautiful answer- Now and Here! He says 'bless us dear God, to be aware of Thy Presence, Now and Here.

Swamiji addresses God as Sat, Chit Ananda Swaroopa, truth-consciousness-bliss. Truth is not separate or different from consciousness and they are also not different from bliss. Truth is consciousness, consciousness is bliss and bliss is truth. This is Brahman.

Further, he writes, 'May peace and goodwill abide among individuals as well as communities and nations. This is our earnest prayer.' He concludes the prayer with, 'May peace be unto all'. Om Peace Peace Peace. This earnest prayer is for the peace of all and not for any particular person, community or nation. He brought out the essence of the Vedic santi mantras like '*Sam no astudwipade, Sam chatushpade....* In simple words!

Let us strive to realise Satchidananda Swaroop, truth-consciousness-bliss, all-pervasive Paramatma, indwelling Light now and here! Through this, let us all make Omkar Swamiji happy.

May his grace and blessings be on all of us!



◆ Men are like pillow cases. The colour of one may be red, that of another blue, and that of the third black; but all contain the same cotton within. So it is with man; one is beautiful, another ugly, a third holy, and a fourth wicked; but the Divine Being dwells in them all.

**Ramakrishna Paramahansa**

## Speech delivered by Swami Ramananda on the occasion of 131st Birthday of Pujya Swami Omkarji

Most revered Mataji's message in the morning on the auspicious occasion of Sri Omkar Swamiji's 131st birthday celebrations in this extremely holy and purifying Santi Ashram, worked as a 'mantra', a sacred uttering on my mind. Mataji followed in the footsteps of Swamiji with strict discipline, and so believe wholeheartedly that whatever she utters is like a sacred mantra. Discipline is an essential component in life more so for a spiritual seeker. If spiritual practitioners are not disciplined, it can lead to their downfall. On the other hand, if they can stick to their discipline at all times, irrespective of adverse circumstances that may arise in the course of time, taking that as their ambition, they will be able to cross all the obstacles on their way and reach the ultimate goal.

Like a spotless sky,  
Teaching without expectations,  
Omkar Swami gives happiness  
Salutations to Omkar.

Most revered Omkar Swamiji was like a clear sky. Anyone, however distracted or disturbed he may be, felt peaceful, focussed and pure in his company. It was because Swamiji had a pure and steady state of mind. His presence itself quietened others' wavering minds. Just like when we go near fire, we feel hot and when a pleasant breeze blows, we feel cool, in the same way, when we are in the company of great souls, we experience a calm and peaceful mind. The sky does not get affected by the heat of the sun, the rain or the cold. So also, Swamiji is pure at heart and unaffected by external factors. He was such a great soul that he taught Atmajnanam, the knowledge of Self, to anyone whoever approached him and without any expectation.

Even parents may have some expectation or the other while bringing up their children. Only self-realised persons can take up activities without expecting anything in return.

The whispering sound that comes from the waves near a sea is Omkar. The chirping sounds of birds is also Omkar. The soft muffled crackling sound that comes out of leaves is nothing but Omkar. All sounds are Omkar only. There is nothing but Omkar.

God had proclaimed, '*Nahi jnanena sadrusam*' (Bhagawad Gita 4,38), nothing is comparable to knowledge. There is nothing like knowledge in the past, present or future. Many saints have also conveyed in different ways, that there is nothing superior to knowledge. In day to day life, when someone is successful in business, achieves praiseworthy status in any field, we all would like to follow their methods and approaches to success. But in spiritual life, why we are not eager to adopt the methods and practices of saints and seek that spiritual knowledge?

Once a sanyasi came to the Ashram, the following was the conversation between Swami Omkarji and the Sanyasi.

Sanyasi: Ashram is quite spacious. I would like to spend some time here.

Swamiji: What is your profession?

Sanyasi: I keep visiting religious places. I have no other profession.

Swamiji: How is it possible not to have any profession? You must have some work, isn't it like regular spiritual practices, meditation, reciting God's name or self-study? What do you know?

Sanyasi: I don't know anything. I have an Akshaya Patra (a begging bowl).

Swamiji: Is this only your profession? Very good. Get ready in the morning after completing your morning routine. Continue your

profession. There are many people in the nearby villages who are suffering from hunger. They all need to be fed well and freed from hunger. Otherwise, how can they understand spiritual teachings?

The Sanyasi left the Ashram the very next day.

Some people ask: 'is there hot water supply in Santi Ashram?' When Omkar Swamiji came to this place, there wasn't even water here. It is only because of his efforts and sadhana that we have water in this area today. What kind of devotion is it if you are enquiring about mosquitoes, hot water etc.?

Swamiji was above body consciousness. May we all, with his blessings, aspire for such a state.



- ◆ Rain water never stands on high ground, but runs down to the lowest level. So also, the mercy of God remains in the hearts of the lowly, but drains off from those of the vain and the proud.

**Ramakrishna Paramahansa**

- ◆ You do not like to suffer yourself. How can you inflict suffering on others? Every killing is a suicide. The eternal, blissful and natural state has been smothered by this life of ignorance. In this way the present life is due to killing of the eternal, pristine Being. Is it not a case of suicide?

**RAMANA MAHARSHI**

- ◆ O lover of meditation, become pure and clean. Observe non-violence in mind, speech and body. Never break another's heart. Avoid wounding another's feelings. Harm no one. Help all. Neither be afraid nor frighten others.

**SWAMI MUKTANANDA**

- ◆ All worldly actions, individually or collectively, among men or animals or plants, have the same motive and aim, to escape from pain and achieve bliss.

**SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA**

## **TALK DELIVERED BY SWAMI LAXMANANANDA ON THE OCCASION OF PUJYA SWAMI OMKARJI'S 131st BIRTHDAY**

Our Gururji Swami Nirvishayananda ji had written about Swami Omkarji's life, his ideals and various services he has rendered to the world at large in the form of 108 verses /poems and named it as Omkara Yatindra Shatakam. When you recite them, they take us to a higher plane, an exalted state!

At a young age of less than 20 years, Swami Omkarji did severe penance in this forest, infested with wild animals like tigers. He established such a beautiful and extensive ashram for our comfort and blessed us to live here in peace.

Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi while he was living on Arunachala Hills, wearing just a loin cloth, his mother used to get upset and feel unhappy. So many visitors and disciples used to go to Bhagavan and request him to please her and make her happy. But he said "every individual/Jiva feels happy or sad according to one's past karmas; things which cannot happen will not happen, however hard one may try. Similarly, however hard one may try to stop something, it cannot be stopped if it was to happen. So, the best method is to keep silent." He not only said this, but also practised and dedicated his life to this philosophy.

It is about 108 years that this Santhi Ashram had been established. That means it has completed one 'Ashtothara'.

Even to do small things, we face so many difficulties in life. Swamiji has established such an ideal ashram so efficiently. He has created a facility and an opportunity for all of us for our spiritual practices. Swamiji is a great soul. He could even sacrifice a part of his own body to cure an ailing child. If only we can understand and obey his instructions and follow his advice, we can also have peace and joy in our lives.



**MESSAGE BY SWAMINI SUMITRANANDA**  
**SARASWATI ON THE OCCASION OF 131st BIRTHDAY**  
**OF PUJYA SWAMI OMKARJI**

The life lived by Pujya Swamiji is an ideal way of life worth emulation by each one of us. In every step we walk through the Ashram we feel his power and presence. Even though the Ashram was established more than a hundred years ago, Swamiji's powerful presence is felt even now. I came to the Ashram in the year 2004, when I was still young. The day I entered the precincts of the Ashram; I had an amazing experience that I belong to this place. My spiritual journey began after I received a copy of the Peace Prayer from Mataji. I continue to repeat this prayer even today. This prayer is so unique and powerful that it shaped my future spiritual journey. Once we enter the Ashram, it is my fervent appeal that each one of us must carry with us the peace and calm to deal with our day-to-day activities in a more meaningful manner. Those who come here are enveloped in peace.

When Mataji told me that my grandfather and Swamiji were contemporaries and handed me a few letters exchanged by them, I was in for a pleasant surprise. Whenever I came here to participate in Swamiji's birthday celebrations, Mataji was kind enough to allow me to serve the Saints and Seers who came here to grace the auspicious event. I earnestly feel that their benign blessings have brought me to this position where I am today. The speciality of this Ashram is that many of the holy saints and mahatmas did their penance here at one time or the other. They are all aware that this is the sacred place where Pujya Swamiji did rigorous penance and the entire atmosphere is electrified with the vibrations of his presence.

In the contemporary history none can equal Swamiji as he has allowed his live bone from his body grafted for saving the life of a child. Such is the compassion of Swamiji towards his fellow-beings and this amply demonstrate that he is above body, mind complex. Only in the puranic tales of yore, we heard about Dadhichi who did a similar act. We are so fortunate that we are stepping on the land which has embraced Pujya Swamiji's divine feet.

Man in his curiosity searches everywhere to look for material comforts to satisfy his unending desires but never delves deep into oneself to experience his true nature which is nothing but the 'Self' or 'Brahman'. Even though we are aware of the fact that it is only a human birth which can lead us to salvation to abide eternally in the 'Self', our search is directed to the external world for the so-called material happiness which is transient in nature. In the case of an aspirant who wants to adopt spiritual life, half of his life is wasted in deciding on the particular path he wants to travel along. Spiritual seeker must understand that his efforts should be directed to get freedom from bondage meaning thereby from the cycle of births and deaths. Once this is achieved, he lives in the awareness that he is none other than the 'Brahman'. Spirituality does not mean giving up worldly life but transforming our day to day life as a spiritual journey.

Pujya Swamiji has laid a firm foundation to alleviate us from the suffering by creating this beautiful abode of peace. It is therefore incumbent on us to tread the path shown by him and attain immortality in this very life itself.

However, many books we may read, until we practice the teachings of great masters, the 'Self' does not reveal itself to us. Let us make the best use of the opportunities created by Swamiji for our benefit and achieve the ultimate goal of human birth which alone is

endowed with free will and power of discrimination. Let us purify our minds by making rigorous efforts and begin to see God's presence in the entire creation and free ourselves from the sense of duality.

Let us ever abide in the 'Self' which is oneness without a second. That would be a fitting tribute to Swamiji on his birthday.

OM OM OM



◆ The Supreme Brahman is characterised by truth, knowledge and bliss (sat-chit-ananda), and that is the only reality. The universe is perceived to be real, because it is superimposed upon Brahman, just as blue colour is superimposed upon the sky. Whatever is negated by means of proof must be unreal. But that which is not so disproved must be real, if it is true at all times. The animate and the inanimate prove the existence of Brahman. When one says, "I do not know Brahman," even that should be taken as proof of its existence.

◆ The success of one's actions rests equally on destiny and personal effort. Destiny is the fruit of efforts made in a previous life. A chariot cannot move on one wheel alone, so without personal effort destiny alone accomplishes nothing.

**SAGE YAGYAVALKA**

◆ All love is expansion, all selfishness is contraction. Love is therefore the only law of life. He who loves lives, he who is selfish is dying. Therefore, love for love's sake, because it is the only law of life, just as you breathe to live.

◆ Stand up, be bold, and take the blame on your shoulders. Do not go about throwing mud at others; for all the faults you suffer from, you are the sole and only cause.

**SWAMI VIVEKANANDA**

## OBITUARY

With profound regret, we may inform the readers that Nalini Amma of Ananda Ashram left her mortal coil on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2025. She was married to Sriram Trikkannad (whose name after Sannyas Ashram was changed to Swami Shuddhanandaji) who is not only Beloved Papa's grandson but also her life partner in a life of Spirituality and selfless-service. Nalini Amma endeared herself to one and all with her motherly care and affection. She was an embodiment of true Vairagya and selfless love and also rendered her services in the capacity of a Trustee of Anandashram Trust. Our Pujya Mataji and others from our Ashram met Nalini Amma whenever they visited Anandashram and were treated with tender love and affection. Pujya Mataji, members of the Managing Committee of the Ashram and the Ashramites pay their humble homage to revered Nalini Amma and pray that her soul may rest in Peace.

**Managing Committee,  
Sri Santi Ashram**

## OBITUARY

Disciple of Pujya Swamiji, Late Sri Guru Swamy's wife Smt. Saraswati attained the Lotus feet of the Lord on 19-12-2024 at Kotagiri. She had rendered invaluable services in establishing the Ashram at Kotagiri and also in starting the School which has presently grown into a model school in that area for providing value based education. She had helped in developmental activities of other branches also. May Pujya Swamiji provide her family members with necessary courage and strength to withstand this tragedy.

## **GOD IS A STATE BUT NOT A PERSON**

**SWAMI OMKAR**

We have studied the philosophies and religions of all ages and mastered the teachings of the Prophets of the East and the West. Yet, God remains a mystery to us.

We have listened to numerous lectures and sermons of learned teachers and masters. We have gone through numberless books that were ever written in the name of religion, yet, the Peace that we seek for in all these, remains a myth to us.

We have to come to the direct facts of spiritual practices, taking into consideration one's personal experience in one's search of God or Truth. In all sincerity and earnestness, how very few are there who can understand that what we call God is not a person, but consciousness within ourselves.

We beg and plead for the blessing God, looking far high in the sky. Meanwhile, all time He is patiently waiting for us in the sacred sanctuary of our hearts, pervading and permeating our very being.

We pray and struggle and search for His Light and illumination while all the time, He is shining as the Light of lights, expressing His Glory in every heartbeat, in every breath of man, nay, in his very words and movements.

God is not far off. He is not separate or away from us. He is here. He is within. He is all this. Yet, we seek and search for Him, while hiding His Light under dense clouds of ignorance.

Let the clouds of ignorance be melted away by the breeze of wisdom. Let the darkness of the little 'I' disappear in the Light of the Sun of suns. Let us give a deathblow to our self-centred, small personality in order to realise our impersonal Self. The time is now and the place is here, to manifest our Divine Heritage.

The consciousness of a beast makes one a beast. The consciousness of a saint makes one a saint and the consciousness of a sinner makes one a sinner. Similarly, the consciousness of God makes one a living God.

Mind plays an important part in leading one to the sublime state of Godhead or in dragging down to the despicable condition of animal-life. It is the mind that makes one feel strong or weak, rich or poor, healthy or sick. Hence let us educate and spiritualise our minds. Let us remember: that which was in Christ is manifesting in us.

As this Christ-mind dissolves in the light of the Sun of suns, one tastes glimpses of God-consciousness. Then religion remains no more a myth or legend and God no longer a mere name or form or person.

Here be in the blessedness of personal experience with God in Truth. It is too subtle for words, too subtle to express or write about. It is to be realised and recognised in all sacredness in the stillness of one's being.

Hence, one need not grope any more running after teachers and masters, one need not seek and search even in the scriptural books. God is a living fact. He is an open mystery. He is the only reality. He is all around manifesting the Glory in all, from a tiny dew drop to mighty Sun.

Behold! He is blooming in the flowers, singing in the birds, shining in the stars, playing in the children writing in me and reading in you.

O Blessed Glory! Let us dissolve in this inexpressible state of incomprehensible beauty. He is the stillness of our heartbeat. He is the silent flow of our very breath. He is the fragrance of our silent thoughts.

Dear beloved reader! Merge within and behold! He is the formless spirit of your very form and nameless Light of your very name. he is the infinite illumination in the finite 'I'.

Verily, He is a state of highly evolved super consciousness of inexpressible Peace. However, He is never a person, form or name.

Then is God merely a state of consciousness? He is more than that. He is beyond all states of consciousness. He is beyond the dimensions of every kind. He is above mind, intellect and "I". He shines in full Glory where the little ego is annihilated.

He is formless state, nameless and causeless state. Therefore, let us worship him by becoming formless and nameless. Let us worship and adore Him in silence, in every form and aspect by recognising His Presence in every moment of our lives.

Above all, let us pay our heart's homage to this indweller of our hearts and to the creator of the universe, by realising now His formlessness and Glory of the Light of lights.



- ◆ Humility leads to self-surrender, i.e., an attitude of submission to the will and purpose of God, who is the source of infinite power that controls all the movements in the universe.
- ◆ God-vision is nothing but to realise and feel His presence within yourself and everywhere about you; because God is an all-prevailing spirit, permeating the entire universe. The manifested worlds are not different from Him, since they are but His own expression in terms of name and form.

**SWAMI RAMDAS**

- ◆ Common men talk bagful of religion but do not practise even a grain of it. The wise man speaks a little, even though his whole life is religion expressed in action.

**RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA**

## RETURN TO NATURE

**SWAMI OMKAR**

When shall we be free? We will be free only when we return to Nature, when we can attune ourselves with Universal Energy, when the little ego is completely dissolved, when we can fully establish ourselves in Gnosis or direct perception of Truth, dissolving the restless mind and destroying its innumerable impressions.

How very difficult it is to find a complete man who is natural always, physically, mentally and spiritually. The life of artificiality is reigning supreme everywhere, in both East and West. Many are slaves to a little bit of applause or for the passing joy of name and fame. It is sad to see that the world is filled with slaves of food, fashion and passion instead of with masters of Nature in every aspect. Such slavery brings bondage, creates weakness and kills self-reliance.

We need people for the building of the new age, who are masters over everything even in the most trying circumstances. We need souls that are masters of not only food and dress but who are the masters of their nerves, muscles and of the very cells in their bodies. Humanity is ever ready to offer its homage to the masters of the mind, heart and soul.

Who is the greatest man in the world? Not he who can hover in the ethereal regions nor he who has conquered even the whole world but he who has conquered his mind and emotions. The master of the mind is the Master of the World, and the Ruler of Universe.

As we return to nature, let us have a look around us, to behold its complicated, artificial and unnatural lives, that pass about us as object lessons. Then let us turn to the very food we eat to begin with, for, it has been said that one who has conquered his palate has conquered everything. We find a few people, struggling to control

their passions, without controlling first, the quantity and quality of the food they eat.

How can we expect a firm and steady structure of higher, inner life with a poor foundation, made of highly spiced animal diet and other things unfit for human beings. Instead of prolonging life, with pure natural diet such as nature produces, man runs after mixtures, fried stuffs and all manner of spiced combination dishes, and thus unconsciously is diminishing his life and digging an early grave with his spoon, knife and fork. Someone said that "God created food, and the devil created the cook."

We have a cook in the Ashram, who is a new man; in spite of our repeated requests and reprimands, never to use chillies in our food, he adds a chilly or two and when we find fault with him, he says ignorantly, "How can you eat insipid and tasteless food? I put only a small chilly into it for taste."

I heard people that eat only a single coconut a day and thus prolong their lives and look young always. I once met a great soul, who is the picture of health and happiness, in spite of his many long years and I asked him to tell me the secret of his perpetual youth and he smilingly replied, "I live attuning myself with nature, eating natural food, enjoying out-door life, observing celibacy ever filled with pure and clean thoughts.

Here is a personal question to my loving readers. Are you eating to live or living only to eat? Pause for a while and answer the question yourselves sincerely. Wake up from the surface of artificiality to the glorious life of Nature and thus eat only something natural and invigorating, to help you to realise the goal of your precious lives.

What prevents us in comparing some stomachs to garbage pails? Alas, they are not even, private or personal garbage pails but they

are the public ones, for such stomachs are continuously, from various sources filled with every kind of highly spiced pungent, putrefied food of many mixtures. Eating and drinking is not only the goal but the soul of such lives. Watch them while they eat. Are they eating food, chewing and masticating? No, no, they are gulping, swallowing it hastily and bolting it. They have a very long way to walk before they return to nature. The root cause of all worry, hurry, sickness, weakness and ignorance of every kind is only the unnatural way of eating unnatural things.

Now let us consider the dress we wear. Are we wearing it only to protect our bodies from the heat and cold? No, no, the times are changed and so are the lives. Whether we are monks or householders, we have to wear a certain dress conforming to the rules of the order, being slaves of fashion, all this has changed.

Even in the mental plane we do not have any freedom. We are made to think sometimes as others think. In the spiritual world also, there is very little freedom. Many are like blind sheep following their headless shepherd whether it is for good or bad. Thus, at every step, we are violating the natural laws of life choking the instinct, burying the free-will and blindly ignoring HIS OMNIPRESENCE.

We are always on the go, filled with mental strain, running after innumerable conflicting desires. Where are peace, poise and contentment? How badly we all need relaxation. Watch the faces of people as they walk by, sit or eat. They are in a terrible hurry as if they were spirits in the nether world.

Did you ever see passengers sitting in the railway trains as if glued to the seats, clutching their fists? Many people also do carry their luggage in the compartment where they sit. They carry it on their shoulders, and thus make their lives nervous wrecks.

It was only last year; we were ascending the steep hills of Kashmir in a lorry which was fully loaded with luggage. We were on a level of more than ten thousand feet and the path was narrow and curves steep and dangerous. No doubt, the least slip would have meant an 'Adieu' to this world, but there was no need to cross such bridges before we reached them. You have only to glance at the death-like paleness on the faces of some of the worried passengers, to see that they were already in the hands of death passing untold agonies and sufferings. They were embracing death not once but several times before the lorry reached its destination over those slippery and rugged roads. It has been said that one is dying every time he is afraid of some little thing or other.

We all need relaxation, not only on the smooth roads of life, but even in climbing the rugged precipices. Not only in the waking hours but even in sleeping time. We find very few people who can repose peacefully, relaxing their feverish nerves and restless minds. Relaxation is the spiritual food for the body, mind and the soul. It is quite essential in all vocations of life.

A preacher should preach his sermon in a most relaxed and natural way but never should he teach excitedly, pretending to be something other than what he is. All excitement and restlessness come only from a life of pretention. Even when we have company, instead of being simple, humble and natural, we pretend to be something other than what we are; no need of putting an unnatural air of false pride and supremacy, killing the God-given, blessed state of relaxation and reposeful serenity. Whatever we may be doing, it is our privilege to be relaxed. It costs us so little to be relaxed and it means so much for the success of life. It has been experienced by one's self analysis by scientists, that one hour sleep in a totally relaxed state is equal to the dreamy and restless sleep of twenty-four hours.

There is no need of strangulating the presence of God by practising some of the painful postures, where one is stiff, nervous and excited. Meditation should be practised in an easy and comfortable posture, with perfect relaxation. Relaxation is the soul and goal of all spiritual practices and meditation. Once a disciple approached a Guru- the spiritual teacher and asked him to initiate him into the mysteries of life. He received the direct and simple initiation in the form of the following words: -

"BE YOUR OWN SWEET SELF, ALWAYS"

If we could only remain for ever, as our own Sweet Self, what else is needed. Poor and naked we came and we return in the same way from this world. There is nothing to be added or accumulated, neither is there anything left out or renounced for those who are living as the One Sweet Self, for it is complete in itself.

To return to nature, one must enter into the heart of nature, spending a part of the time in the lap of nature among trees, where birds sing hymns of joy, flowers perfume and bloom, fresh winds blow and rocks stand in silent grandeur. Watch the children playing, how guileless and innocent and natural they are! Listen to the birds singing. How care-free and joyous, they are. Look at the blooming flowers, inhaling their fragrance. Is there any artificiality in them? We have so much to learn from nature!

Return to Nature

Be Thou free and sure

No longer slave of food and dress

No longer cowed by worldly stress

But soaring like a snowy dove

Enter the resting place of Love.

Dear patient and loving readers of Peace, how many of you are willing to arise, become free and return to Nature? Putting aside all the masks of deluding forms and names, let us remember always, that the highest spirituality is the most child-like life of nature. Let us be natural and relaxed in all we do. Let us not sell our souls to please and entertain our so-called friends. Let our one ideal and ambition be true to the inner Self, and the sweet harmony of Mother Nature will be ours.

Dear beloved readers, it is not only worthwhile, but it is our only hope to be relaxed and natural. Even as you read this message, see that you are completely relaxed, for a while both within and without. Practise this most beneficial exercise, not only when you read this essay, or when you meditate, but, in all the activities of your lives. As you rest on your beds, remember that you are not these gross sheaths, but only one Indivisible Self.

May this sweet Self shine through your loving eyes, throb in your ever blooming heart, work through your selfless hands and flow forth in your very breath, filling and revivifying your whole being with infinite life of eternal Nature- is the prayer of your own brother-Omkar



◆ What is self-realisation? It is giving up the pretension that you are not the Self, that you are a mere body. People say to me, 'You are God Himself.' I reply, 'You are also He.' 'We are not He'- they rejoin. What else is this, but that they simulate and for some lila of their own, hide behind a mask their real and divine nature.

**SWAMI RAMDAS**

◆ The glory of life is not in 'never falling'. The true glory consists in 'rising' each time we fall.

**SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA**

## AN EXPERIENCE IN LOVE DIVINE

**Swami Ramananda Tirtha**

Some great one possibly Aristotle, if I mistake not, defined man as a social being, quite true! Yet another would like to tell that he is a root and branch of an organic whole. We get various other definitions of man. They vary according to the varied aspects to which the writer's attention is drawn. If I were to describe man, I would say, "Man is a creature of love. He is born in love, he lives in love, and his end is also in love."

To me life is love. That is admitted on all hands. If you go to each and every man severally and ask him "Brother! Do you know how it is to love? Have you loved anyone?" he will have one thousand instances to quote. One would talk of his country, the sad plight of his fellow-men, the tyranny of the rulers and the oppression of the officialdom and would go on dilating upon the hard fight he had to put up against these and how in the end he entered into the list of the "Great Patriots" of the land. Another would speak about his conjugal love, yet another of his affection for all humanity and so on. Loving readers! I do not wish to exhaust your patience by adding to the list of lovers anymore. Believe me, that is all but a passing phase of their life! They simply loved! That is all they did! Poor souls! They did not know how to love. This world is full of such forlorn lovers! Lovers disappointed in their love-making jobs! The phantom of love haunts them wherever they go and brings them to utter recklessness of the heart! Ah! The misery of love! How to avoid it? I will deal with that.

I am a Bhakta, a devotee. I wish I loved all. I would be overjoyed to have realised oneness with all. How blessed, if I were to look

upon all creatures as myself! Good luck would have it, if I rose with the sun and blew with the wind! "All hands my hands, all heads my heads, all in me, myself in all," I would prize nothing better than this. I wish to see divinity in all! I must look upon all forms as His forms. This is my craving. For this struggle, my heart must be full of love divine. That is the only desire, deep-rooted in my heart.

I begin to love an object, a visible form, an idol or an image! Love is abstract. It cannot manifest itself except in concrete forms. You cannot love nothing. You must select some object, some person or thing to love. Well! For the present my object of love is an idol, an image of some deity. I worship it. In itself, the image is stone, a metal, a lifeless thing. No emotions, no feelings no sentiments can it claim. It is all cold! Why I took it? Well! It is all sentiment to me. It speaks to me! It goes with me. It is moved to tears whenever I weep! At my will, it partakes of the offerings at my hands! I drag it to the grinding stone and persuade it to work at the looms! It does everything at my behest! I love it and it loves me. I find myself.

- ◆ What Brahman is cannot be described. All things in the world- the Vedas, the Puranas, the Tantras, the six systems of philosophy- have been defiled, like food that has been touched by the tongue, for they have been read and uttered by the tongue. Only one thing has not been defiled in this way, and that is Brahman. No one has ever been able to say what Brahman is.
- ◆ God has revealed to me that only the Paramatman, whom the Vedas describe as the Pure Soul, is as immutable as Mount Sumeru, unattached, and beyond pain and pleasure. There is much confusion in this world of His maya. One can by no means say that 'this' will come after 'that' or 'this' will produce 'that'.

**RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA**

## MOTHER GANGA

**SWAMI SIVANANDA**

The Ganga is the most sacred river of India. Lord Krishna says in the Gita: "I am the Ganga among rivers." No germ can flourish in the waters of the Ganga. It is saturated with antiseptic minerals. In the West, doctors prescribe Ganga water for rubbing in the treatment of diseases of the skin. Ganga is not merely a river. It is a sacred Tirtha. It is possessed of mysterious powers which are not found in any other rivers in the world. Even scientists admitted the efficacy of the Ganga water.

Dr. F.C. Harrison of McGill University, Canada, writes: "A peculiar fact, which has never been satisfactorily explained, is the quick death (in three or five hours) of the cholera vibrio in the waters of Ganga. When one remembers sewage, by numerous corpses of natives (often dead of cholera) and by the bathing of thousands of natives, it seems remarkable that the belief of Hindus, that the water of this river is pure and cannot be defiled and that they can safely drink it and bathe in it, should be confirmed by modern bacteriological research." A well-known French physician Dr. D. Herelle, made similar investigations into the mystery of the Ganga. He observed some of the floating corpses of men dead of dysentery and cholera and was surprised to find that only a few feet below the bodies, where one would expect to find millions of these dysentery and cholera germs, there were no germs at all. He then grew germs from patients having the disease and to these cultures added water from the Ganga. When he incubated the mixture for a period, much to his surprise, the germs were completely destroyed.

A British physician Dr. C.E. Nelson, F.R.C.S. tells us of another striking fact. He says: "Ships leaving Calcutta for England take their water from the Hugli River which is one of the mouths of the filthy Ganga and this Ganga water will remain fresh all the way to England. On the other hand, ships leaving England for India, find that the water that they take on in London will not stay fresh till they reach Bombay, the nearest Indian Port, which is a week closer to England than Calcutta. They must replenish their water supply at Fort Said, Suez or at Adden on the Red Sea. It is no wonder that the Indian people should hold that the Ganga is very sacred and possessed of mysterious powers."

For a Hindu the word 'Ganga' has its own sacred association. Every Hindu thirsts for a dip in the Ganga, and for a drop of water at the time of his death. Aspirants and mendicants build their huts on the banks of the Ganga for practising penance and meditation. Bhishma spoke very highly on the glory of the Ganga in his parting instructions to the Pandavas from his bed of arrows.

Wherever a pious Hindu goes to take his bath, he invokes first the Ganga, and feels Her presence in the water before he takes a plunge in the river. If he lives in a place far away from the Ganga, he intensely yearns to see Her on some day and feels blessed by bathing in the holy waters. He carries some water to his house and carefully saves it in a vessel so that he may use it for purposes of purification.

Hindus believe that all their sins are washed away if they take a dip in the sacred waters of the Ganga.

In the Satya Yuga, all places were sacred. In the Treta Yuga, Pushkara was considered as the most holy place. In the Dvapara Yuga, Kurukshetra was regarded as the most sacred place. In Kali Yuga, the Ganga has that glory. Devi Bhagavata says: "He who utters

the name of Ganga even from hundreds of miles afar, is freed from sins and attains the abode of Lord Hari."

The Ganga comes out of the Supreme Being. She enters the feet of Sri Hari and reaches Vaikuntha. She issues from Goloka and passes through the regions of Vishnu, Brahma, Siva, Dhruva, Chandra, Surya, Tapah, Janah, Mahah, and reaching Indraloka flows as Mandakini.

The Ganga entered the matted locks of Lord Siva at the request of Bhagiratha who did rigorous penance for the descent of Ganga to Patala for the redemption of his ancestors, the thousand sons of Sagara, who had been burnt to ashes by sage Kapila.

Thereupon, She flowed down from the locks of Lord Siva. She was drunk up by the sage Jahnu, as the water inundated the Yajnasala of the sage. Then again, She issued out of the ear of the sage and acquired the name of Jahnavi. She is also known by the name Bhagirathi, daughter of Bhagiratha. The Ganga flowed into Patala as Bhagirathi. The ancestors of the king were raised to Svarga by the touch of the sacred waters of the Ganga.

Ganga had to take a human form on account of Her own fault in behaviour in the presence of Brahma. She became the wife of Santanu. Santanu also was a celestial being known as king of Mahabhissha. He had to take birth in the world for his fault in conduct in the presence of Brahma by showing vanity. Ganga gave birth to Bhishma, the illustrious hero and sage.

Ganga consented to bear the seed of Lord Siva which was transferred to Her by Agni. She gave to the world, Lord Subrahmanya, the great commander of the army of Devas, who killed the formidable Asura Taraka.

Ganga is the form of Vishnu. Her sight is soul stirring and elevating. She flows in the valleys and lives by the side of Parvati, daughter of Himavan. How magnificent She is when She flows in the valley of Rishikesh! She has a blue colour like that of the ocean. The water is extremely clear and sweet. Rich people from the plains get water from Rishikesh. They take it in big copper vessels to far off places in India.

To have a look at the Ganga in Rishikesh, is soul-elevating. To sit for a few minutes on a block of stone by the side of the Ganga, is a blessing. To stay for some months in Rishikesh on the bank of the Ganga and do Anushthana or Purascharana, is great Tapas which will take the aspirant to the abode of Lord Hari. To live for ever on the banks of the Ganga and spend the life in meditation is Sivanandam.

May Mother Ganga bless you all! May She help you to live on Her banks and practise Yoga and Tapas!

- ◆ God has made different religions to suit different aspirants, times, and countries. All doctrines are only so many paths; but a path is by no means God Himself. Indeed, one can reach God if one follows any of the paths with whole-hearted devotion.... One may eat a cake with icing either straight or sidewise. It will taste sweet either way.
- ◆ Bondage is of the mind; freedom too is of the mind. If you say 'I am a free soul. I am a son of God who can bind me' free you shall be.

**RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA**

- ◆ To the Hindu, the 'Lotus' is a symbol of peace and purity, the symbol of his "goal of life," held symbolically by Lord Vishnu.

**SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA**

## THE EFFICACY OF THE PRAYER

**Sai Bhakta Sri Kesavaiah**

Man is in essence a spark of the divine power. But he manifests himself in lower worlds. His physical body is like an animal. His mind makes him human and his spirit which is the spark of God makes him divine. The summum bonum of human existence is to seek the kingdom of Heaven within. Man is essentially a spiritual being, his self being an emanation from the Universal Self, God. Hence to know himself, his deepest self, is to know God. He can sink in consciousness into the depths of his own being beyond the body, the passions, the emotions, the mind and the reason; these all his, but they are not he, he can pass beyond them all, and realise himself as separate from them, the pure 'I'. Then the recognition dawns that the universal spirit into which the Self opens, transcends all the beings in which it is manifested and is alike in all.

The paths leading to this self-realisation are many. One of the paths is through prayer. It is of threefold forms: - physical, verbal and mental. The first consists of rituals and ceremonials. In modern life due to stress of activity, lack of leisure and other conveniences, this form of prayer has almost fallen out of use in the life of the individual. In view of this tendency of the age, great emphasis was laid on verbal and mental prayer which is meditation and meditation is sequential thinking directed towards an inspiring and interesting object- an Ista devatha, no matter what the deity is. As Sri. Rajagopalachari said, it is true that Bhakti counted, and it did not matter what deity we worship.

In all our puranas great emphasis is laid on verbal prayer because it is easier to practise than the other two. "The seeker after Truth"

says Manu, "reaches the highest goal by japa only. And "japa" declares the Mahabharata, "is said to be the best of all spiritual practices" in the modern age. The Vishnu purana supports this view whole-heartedly when it observes, "That which one obtained through meditation in the Satya Yuga (the Golden Age), through sacrifice in the Treta Yuga (Silver Age) and through worship in the Dwapara Yuga (Bronze Age), may be achieved in the Kali Yuga (Iron Age) by reciting the names of the Lord.

In the modern age, the physical body and the mind of man are highly developed. The divinity in man is dormant. As has already been stated man has a mind but mind is not man. But the tragedy of the present day is that man thinks that he is the mind. Mind is a good servant but a bad master. We are living in an age of the mind, of intellect which is trying to assert its supremacy over man. Look at the incalculable harm the mind has done in releasing the forces of nature- atomic energy, for the destruction of man himself. Can there be anything more suicidal than this?

The reason is not far to seek. The gulf between the human mind and the divinity within him has not been spanned. The mind is estranged from the divinity latent in man. How to link the mind of man with his divinity? Prayer is the bridge that connects the human with the divine. This prayer has to be practised daily, hourly and in fact every moment of our waking consciousness in order to strengthen it. When the diabolic pleasure of the human mind in releasing destructive forces can be sublimated, the angelic influences send forth comfort and peace, happiness and health to all mankind.

A suffering world is calling to us. Within us is the power to heal waiting to be discovered and released through prayer. Shall we then not find time to pray and to turn towards and seek the God within,

that we may reveal Him to others and that the spiritual life may become a living reality to us and to them? As Rajaji had said recently that the quality of love, kindness and mercy are the attributes of God. If we imbibe and manifest these qualities in our daily life, we could say that we have truly offered prayers to God. In fact, as Swami Vivekananda has said, 'Every soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest the divinity within, by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, prayer or worship or psychic control or all of these- and be free. This is the whole of religion.' Thus, prayer leads to the kingdom of Heaven within us and let us begin it now.



- ◆ This world is your best teacher. There is a lesson in everything. There is a lesson in each experience. Learn it and become wise. Every failure is a stepping stone to success. Every difficulty or disappointment is a trial of your faith. Every unpleasant incident or temptation is a test of your inner strength. Therefore, nil desperandum. March forward hero!
- ◆ If you think about disaster, you will get it. Brood about death and you hasten your demise. Think positively and masterfully; with confidence and faith, and life becomes more secure, more fraught with action, richer in achievement and experience.

**SWAMI SIVANANDA**

- ◆ Open wide your door to the one who comes. Open your soul, throw open the depths of your heart to see the riches of simplicity, the treasures of peace, the sweetness of grace. Open your heart and run to meet the Sun of eternal light that illuminates all men.

**St. Ambrose of Milan**

## WAY TO DIVINE LOVE AND PEACE

SWAMI RAMDAS

Love is the expression of God. To realise love is to realise God. God is all-pervading and is seated in the hearts of all beings, creatures and things. To love all is to be in tune with God, i.e. to become conscious of our perfect oneness with every form of manifestation in the universe. The first thing necessary for a man to attain this all-absorbing and glorious love is that he should be freed from the baneful clutches of lust, greed and wrath, because these passions, taking their stand upon the separative ego-sense, throw a cloud or veil over this self-luminous, self-existent and immortal source of love within him. The eradication of the ego with its dark movements can be possible, by a continuous meditation of the indwelling Reality or God and by a process of surrender of all actions to the same Lord, who causes all activity and movements in the worlds. Action thus done in the gradual sublimation of the ego-sense expands the vision and purifies the mind, enabling it to find union with the all-blissful Truth or God.

The path of self-surrender declared in the sublime teachings of the Gita is the easiest one, and this fact is borne witness to by the galaxy of sages and saints, both of the past and the present ages. Krishna, Mohammed, Buddha and Jesus Christ- founders of the four great religions of the world- perfectly agree in that they point to this path alone as the supreme way to the attainment of God, i.e. immortality and peace.

Compassion, forgiveness and peace are the conditions governing self-surrender. Love denotes a combination of these triple virtues.

~~To surrender to God is to be God-like or to be God Himself. God is all-~~  
**PEACE**

compassion, mercy and goodness. Hence to acquire these qualities by self-purification and self-surrender is to approach God and ultimately become one with Him.

The aspirant who longs to realise the blessedness of his union with God must become perfectly harmless in thought, word and deed. His heart must well up with love for all beings and creatures without regard to any distinction and he must also possess an equal or universal vision. The aspirant should be guided not only by the noble principle of not returning evil for evil in any manner, but also by a still higher principle of returning good for evil. Thus forgiveness and mercy are held forth as the great attributes, essentially to be cultivated by the earnest seeker according to the teachings of all incarnations, saints and sages of the world.

It is better for him, thinks the aspirant to die in the practice of forgiveness rather than live through revenge, because while one elevates him to the immortal status, the other drags him further deep into the hell of ever-recurring births and deaths. Indeed, a death, in whatever form it comes, when his soul rests in the bosom of the infinite and when he has no ill-will, hate or enmity towards any living creature on the face of the earth, could be welcomed with cheerfulness and resignation. This is the cult of Christ and Buddha. Krishna and Mohammed show by their life and teachings that the other extreme way is also possible under the same spiritual condition of the aspirant. Surrender grants him not only the knowledge that he is the immortal spirit, but also that he is in all his physical activities a mere instrument in the hands of the Almighty. In this state of liberation or self-surrender, God could use him as an instrument to

destroy without hatred- for the existence of which the ego-sense is responsible and which is now absent-the evil forces that work against the progressive march of humanity to the great purpose of God, viz. the establishment of harmony, goodwill and peace in the world.

When all the peoples are united in the spirit, through mutual love and toleration under the banner of the one supreme Lord dwelling in the hearts of them all, they attain to a power which bestows nothing but pure peace, freedom and joy. The people who stand for distinctions and divisions not only suffer under miseries as a result of them, but also raise the instruments of God for their own destruction.

So, O ye people of the world, unite in the freedom of your immortal existence for enjoying the pure bliss through universal love, by acts of self-sacrifice, sympathy, compassion and forgiveness. Do not be any longer caught by the external forms and formalities, customs and traditions and dogmas and rituals that should disappear or change with the passing of time. Persistence in these non-essentials has given rise to the present state of chaos and confusion, since they obstruct the free-play of the under-current of love upon which is founded the real unity and peace of the world. Stand together as children of the same parent in the radiance of the almighty Lord of the universe who is at once immanent and transcendent, and enjoy the supreme blessings of true peace and freedom.

**Om!**

**Om!**

**Om!**

- ◆ If seekers have the grace of God, they may, in a short time, that is, in the course of a few lives, realise the vanity of worldly life and turn round to the path of Truth.

**SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA**

## Understanding the Unreality of Matter

### Sri Sri Paramahansa Yogananda

The Hindu scriptures point out that belief in the nonexistence of matter and the allness of Spirit should not be founded on dogmatic, illogical, unintelligible, or inexplicable theories, but on scientific inner investigation and exact understanding.

People generally identify themselves with the body, which is supported by food; but they fail to realize that the basic source of bodily existence is prana (life energy). No food or other outer aid can revive a man from whom the cosmic current has withdrawn. The link between man's material body and his immaterial mind is prana. The ancient Hindu sages discovered the existence of prana and formulated the science of pranayama, life-energy control.

Lord Jesus fasted in the wilderness for forty days. He said: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The 'word' is cosmic vibration; the "mouth of God" is the medulla oblongata in the posterior part of the brain, tapering of into the spinal cord. This, the most vital spot in the human body, is the divine entrance ("mouth of God") for the "word" or "Aum", the cosmic vibratory energy by which man is sustained.

People who never fast do not know from experience that man can live solely by the "word" of God. In the early stages of a week's fasting, hunger is present; but as the days go by, less hunger and a sense of freedom are distinctly felt. Why? Because denial of gross food to the body compels it to depend on immaterial food: the life current.

Man's will power is the great generator of energy. Through will power and willingness one is able to draw quickly on the infinite store of inner strength. A person who is unwilling to perform his daily tasks experiences a lack of energy. A man who works hard but with willingness is borne up physically and mentally by the cosmic current.

One who learns and practices the metaphysical methods of living by will power and by consciously tapping the inexhaustible source of life energy is freed from many limitations of the body. The Hindu sages and yogis say that matter is materialised mind-stuff; and some of them have proved this truth by demonstrating the power to materialize and dematerialize their bodies and other physical objects.

#### **The Chemical Elements of Matter are Electronic Vibrations:**

Modern science shows that matter is composed of vibratory forces. The chemical elements, the structural factors are responsible for all forms in the universe- from stones and stars to man- are nothing more than different forms of electronic vibrations. For example, in ice we find coldness, weight, form; it is visible. Melt the ice; it becomes water. Pass electricity through it, it becomes invisible hydrogen and oxygen, which analysed further, are forms of electronic vibrations. One may therefore say scientifically that ice does not exist, even though it is perceptible to our senses of sight, touch, and so on. In reality its essence is invisible electrons or forms of energy. In other words, that which can be dissolved into invisibility cannot be said to have valid existence. In this sense, matter can be considered as not existing, but matter does have relative existence. Matter exists in relation to our mind and as an expression of invisible electronic forces that do exist, being unchangeable and immortal.

Both water and ice are manifestations of invisible gases and have only formal transitory existence. Similarly, both mortal mind and matter are fleeting manifestations of Divine Consciousness, and possess merely formal existence; in reality only, cosmic mind exists.

Just as a child is born through the instrumentality of parents, so matter is dependent on mind for its existence. Matter is born from Divine Mind and is perceptible to mortal mind; in itself and of itself, matter has no reality, no intrinsic existence.

The blind or non-intellectual electronic forces of creation are nevertheless creative teleological agents because they contain within themselves the vibrations of the universal, conscious-of-itself life force or prana, which in turn issued from the fiat of Divinity.

"God said, let there be light; and there was light," that is, the projection of Divine Thought and Will became light or vibratory energy; the flowing forth of life current and electrons, which further vibrated more strongly and became the diverse subtle or unseen forces of nature, which in turn externalised themselves as the ninety-two principal elements of matter that constitute the universe.

To human consciousness, matter is both perceptible and real. But man has discovered through theoretical investigation, through logic, and through certain laboratory experiments (such as converting a visible piece of ice into invisible forces) that a permanent and unalterable creative power must underlie all the transitory and illusive forms of the phenomenal world.

This truth may be grasped just as we grasp the fact that the ocean exists though its waves have no permanent existence, being just passing, formal manifestations of one great substance. Waves cannot exist without the ocean, but the ocean exists with or without waves.

These concepts can be intellectually understood but cannot be known until one has learned the method of converting matter into life force, and life force into Cosmic Consciousness, as Krishna, Christ, and other Self-realized masters were able to do. To such an enlightened one, matter per se does not exist, because they see that beneath the slight rippling waves of creation is the changeless Ocean of Spirit.

#### **The Universe is God's Dream:**

In the Vedanta, and Yoga philosophies the universe is spoken of as God's dream. Matter and mind- the cosmos with its stars and planets; the gross surface waves and the subtle undercurrents of

the material creation; the human powers of feeling, will, and consciousness; and the states of life and death, day and night, health and disease, success and failure- are realities according to the law of relativity governing this dream of God's.

All the dualities perceived by the law of relativity are real to the dreamer, the mortal man who plays his little part in the great cosmic dream. To escape from maya, illusion, the law of relativity, one must awaken from the dream into eternal God-wakefulness. We cannot change the lawful dream by imagination or by denying its existence, or by accepting "life" but rejecting "death", or by recognising health but ignoring sickness. One state is as much a part of its opposite state as are the two sides of a fabric. The dualities are inherently and essentially one. The truth seeker does not try to separate them in his mind, but to rise above them by wisdom.

The man who considers his body to be different from his mind, and who wants to accept as "real" only the positive, happy, and beneficial aspects of a universe unalterably dual in its nature, is a man deeply asleep in the delusions of the dream world.

Just as a person has dreams that seem real for a time but lose their validity when he emerges into the waking state of consciousness, so it is possible for man to awaken from the dream of matter-reality and to live in the changeless realm of Spirit.

Only the superman, who has learned to expand and transfer his consciousness to the Infinite, can realize creation as a dream of God's; he alone can say with true knowledge that matter has no existence. By means of a long series of self-disciplinary steps-through following the scientific yoga path or any other way of spiritual perfection, whether that of love, wisdom, service, or self-effacement- God-seeker dissolves the dualities and discerns the Eternal Oneness. "He who, freed from delusion, knows Me as the Supreme Spirit obtains omniscience. He worships Me with his whole being."



## ASHRAM NEWS

### MOTHER ASHRAM

**21-01-2025:** Pujya Swami Omkarji's 131<sup>st</sup> Birthday was celebrated with devotion and reverence. Pujya Sri Padmanabhananda Swamiji of DLS, Rishikesh, Swami Ramananda and Swami Lakshmanananda of Sri Ramanashram, Rachapalli and Swamini Sumitrananda Saraswati of Pranavashramam and other distinguished personalities from different corners graced the occasion.

The program commenced with Lighting of the Lamp by Swami Padmanabhanandaji at 7:30 am in Omkar Mandir followed by Ashtothara Sata Nama Puja of Pujya Omkar Swamiji by Sri Padmanabhananda Swamiji. Pujya Jnaneswari Mataji delivered Pujya Swamiji's Birthday message.

In the evening at 5:00 pm, Pujya Sri Padmanabhananda Swamiji, Sri Ramananda Swamiji and Sri Lakshmananda Swamiji were among the distinguished speakers who, while addressing the gathering reminded them about the life and philosophy of Swami Omkarji and his tireless efforts in building the Ashram as an abode of Peace for spiritual seekers in their quest for Self-knowledge.

**26-01-2025:** 76<sup>th</sup> Republic Day was celebrated in our school premises with patriotic fervour and enthusiasm. Swamini Vinamrananda Saraswati, Swamini Saradapriyananda Saraswati, Ashramites, Correspondent of the School Sri Sarma, Principal, teachers and students participated in large numbers. Swamini Vinamrananda Saraswati exhorted the students to live with values while pursuing their academic career. This should help them to grow up as responsible citizens contributing their mite to the progress of our country. Swamini Saradapriyananda Saraswati reminded the students that this day is very special as our Constitution came into

being. Every student should read the Constitution albeit in its abridged form to understand not only the rights conferred on them as citizens but also look into the directive principles which throw light on the duties required to be performed. Then only we can understand our duties towards the society as citizens and lead a wholesome life.

**KOTAGIRI BRANCH: 12-01-2025:** The vibrant festival of Pongal was celebrated with great enthusiasm and traditional fervour at Viswa Shanthi Vidyalaya on 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2025. The event showcased the rich heritage and traditions of Tamil Nadu, bringing the entire community together in a spirit of joy and pride.

**21-01-2025:** The sacred Pada Puja ceremony for the students of class X was conducted with devotion and reverence on 21<sup>st</sup> January in the School premises. The occasion was graced by Swayam Prakash Ananda Swamiji. The ceremony commenced with Vedic chants by a learned priest from Aadhinam Perur, creating a divine and spiritually uplifting atmosphere. A poignant moment of the ceremony was the Pada Puja, where the students of Class X and XI expressed their gratitude and reverence by washing the feet of their parents and seeking their blessings. Swamiji then addressed the gathering, emphasising the values of humility, dedication and respect towards elders and teachers and blessed the students for a bright future.

**24-01-2025:** National Girl Child Day was observed with great enthusiasm at Viswa Santhi school, aimed at raising the awareness of empowering and educating girls. The event was graced by Mrs. Vanitha, Judge, Kotagiri, who emphasised the significance of gender equality and opportunity for girls. She further shared valuable insights on legal rights, educational policies, and government initiatives aimed at supporting girl child.

The 44<sup>th</sup> annual day of our school was celebrated with great enthusiasm on 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2025, marking another milestone in our institution's journey. The event was graced by our esteemed Chief Guest, Sri Thirumala Rau, Proprietor of Best Service Company, along with other distinguished personalities, parents and well-wishers.

One of the highlights of the evening was the prize distribution ceremony, where students were awarded for their academic excellence, regularity, and achievements in the National Taekwondo Championship.

In a special segment, the teachers of Grade 10 were honored by the PTA members, appreciating their unwavering commitment in shaping the young minds.

The Board examination practical assessments for class X and XI were conducted between 14<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> in a systematic manner with strict adherence to the guidelines. A total of 124 students from class X and 85 students from class XI appeared for the examination.

On 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2025 an impactful Girl Child Program was conducted at our School by Mithra, a representative from the Social Welfare Association. A significant part of the session focussed on girl safety in public places and valuable tips were shared for using helplines in times of emergency.

### **Green Day Celebration-**

The tiny tots arrived in various shades of green on 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2025- radiating freshness, much like the lush fields and dense forests. The Green Day celebration was not just a visual delight but also an enriching experience, helping children to connect with nature and understand the importance of a sustainable environment.



**FORM-IV**  
(SEE RULE - 8)

1. Name of the Magazine : Peace
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I, Publisher, Sri Santi Ashram, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

**M.V.V.Satyanarayana**

Publisher

The Mission of Peace,  
Sri Santi Ashram

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◆ Isavasyamidam Sarvam: Every content of the universe is throbbing with the life of the Lord. Smile with the flowers and the green grass. Smile with the shrubs, ferns and twigs. Develop friendship with all neighbours, dogs, cats, cows, human beings, trees, in fact, with all nature's creations. You will have a perfect and rich life.

**SWAMI SIVANANDA**

◆ The body is said to be a temple, and the soul is truly Shiva. Discard the faded flower offerings of ignorance, Worship with the thought: "I am he".

**Maitreya Upanishad**

## APPEAL

1. We, at the Mission of Peace, Sri Santi Ashram, Totapalli, East Godavari District, India, are glad to inform the devotees of Sri Santi Ashram worldwide, that, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi, accorded approval for the registration of Ashram under the provisions of FOREIGN CONTRIBUTIONS (REGULATION) ACT, 2010
2. The Ministry of Home affairs, New Delhi, vide its letter bearing No. 0100019772018, dated 17-12-2019 approved registration and allocated the No. and the same is as hereunder: Registration No. 010170343
3. In view of the approval, our Ashram is now eligible to receive the contributions from the donors residing in foreign countries and in the currency of the respective country, Viz. US \$ or Euros etc.
4. In accordance with the guidelines of Home Ministry, we have opened a separate and exclusive account for receiving the contributions from foreign national and NRI's and the details are as hereunder :

Name of the account : The Mission of Peace  
Name of the Bank : State Bank of India,  
New Delhi Main Branch  
Savings Bank account No. : 40127798428  
SWIFT Code : SBININBB104  
Address of Bank : State Bank of India, New Delhi Main  
Branch, 11 Sansad Marg. New Delhi, Pin  
Code - 110001. INDIA  
E-mail ID of the Bank : fcra.00691@sbi.co.in

5. We, at the Ashram, Pujya Mataji and members of the Managing Committee, hereby request the devotees of Mission of Peace -Sri Santi Ashram to contribute liberally for the over all development of Ashram by remitting the amount to the above referred account.
6. The donors are requested to furnish their e-mail ID also and convey the details of the contributions to any of the following e-mail ID's to enable us to follow up and also keep you apprised of the utilization and developments arising therefrom.  
srisanthiashram@gmail.com mattavvs07@gmail.com  
adityamn07@gmail.com
7. The blessings of the Almighty God and those of Pujya Sri Swami Omkar and Pujya Sri Jnaneswari Mataji would always be showered upon you all.

For and on behalf of Santi Ashram  
The Managing Committee

## APPEAL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS / SUPPORT

Sri Santi Ashram is conducting various activities in the areas of educations, medical aid, poor feeding, running and maintaining a Goshala with more than one Hundred Cows and residential facilities to Vanaprastha seekers etc. To support these activities your generous contributions are welcome.

1. Feeding : a) for one day : Rs. 5000/- and above.  
b) Privileged Donors : Rs. 25000 and above.  
(Feeding done one day on a day of choice every year)

2. Educational Fund
3. Gosamrakshana Fund
4. Children's Educational Fund
5. Old Age Welfare Fund
6. Library Fund
7. Educational Fund
8. Building Maintenance Fund
9. Ashram Maintenance Fund

Donations to the Ashram are exempt from I.T. under Sec. 80(G) of I.T. Act

**Donations may be addressed to :**

**The Secretary,**

**The Mission of Peace-Sri Santi Ashram**

**Via) Sankhavaram 533446,** East Godavari District,

Andhra Pradesh, India, Ph. 7382009962

Email : srisanthiashram@gmail.com

Website : www. srisantiashram.org

- ◆ We have today more people who 'talk' on the Gita than those who "learn" the Gita; more who "read" the Gita than "understand" the Divine Song; and indeed, very few are trying to "live" the Gita!
- ◆ There is no New Year I know of. We with our minds, passions and hopes conceive the coming year and the year that has gone off! Rest in Him who is ever the same in your heart and watch the parade of events in the stream of TIME.

**SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA**

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