



PEACE

A Quarterly Journal of Peace and Illumination

Founder : H.H. Sri Swami Omkar

Editor : Secretary, Sri Shanti Ashram

Vol. 89. SEPTEMBER- 2015 No. 03

CONTENTS

1. Upanishad	–	2
2. Prayer	–	3
3. Meditation	–	4
4. Free -will	– Swami Omkarji Maharaj	5
5. Fulcrum	– Swami Omkarji Maharaj	7
6. Mantra Yoga Sadhana	– Swami Sivananda	10
7. How to Achieve the Natural State	– Swami Chidananda	13
8. Resurgent Culture- The Goal of Life	– Swami Krishnananda	17
9. Gita Jayanti	– Mata Jnaneswari	25
10. <i>Māyā Pañcakam</i>	– Swami Tattvavidananda Saraswati	27
11. Saints Give What God Cannot Give	– Swami Ramdas	35
12. There is Only One Unity	– Swami Satchidananda	36
13. Man of Divine Wisdom	– Swami Rama Tirtha	39
14. Finding the Joy in Life	– Paramhansa Yogananda	43
15. Practice or Live the Life	– James Allen	46
16. How to Meet a difficult Situation	– J P Vaswani	53
17. The Melody of Om	– Swami Jyotirmayananda	55
18. Ashram News	–	58

Kaivalyopaniṣat

उमासहायं परमेश्वरं प्रभुं त्रिलोचनं नीलकण्ठं प्रशान्तम्।
ध्यात्वा मुनिर्गच्छति भूतयोनिं समस्तसाक्षिं तमसः परस्तात्॥

*umāsahāyaṃ paramēśvaraṃ prabhuṃ
trilocanaṃ nīlakaṇṭhaṃ praśāntaṃ,
dhyātvā munirgacchati bhūtayoniṃ
samastasākṣiṃ tamasaḥ parastāt ..*

The contemplative person meditates upon the all powerful Supreme Lord together with his consort *Uma* and attains the Lord. The serene Lord has three eyes and blue-hued neck. He is the originator of the living beings. He is the witness of all and he transcends the darkness.

Umasahayam, together with his consort *Uma* is the *maya sakti*, the magical power of creation. The attributeless Brahman cannot be the cause of the universe, for causality itself is an attribute. The creation is not real; it is only an appearance on the substratum of Brahman. Thus Brahman due to its power of creation is the apparitional, not transformational cause of the universe. Brahman is the noumenon of the phenomenon called the universe.

(The detailed explanation of this Mantra can be had from *Kaivalyopaniṣat* (mantra 7) Published by Brahma Vidya Kuteer, #501, Deccan Corner Building, Diamond Point, Sikh Village, Secunderabad - 500 009, Telangana, India, Ph. 040- 2750 2035).

(Tattva Prakāṣikā by Swami Tattvavidananda Saraswati)

Prayer

VERSE 4

अपगतगुणवर्णजातिभेदे सुखचिति विप्रविडाद्यहङ्कृतिं च ।
स्फुटयति सुतदारगेहमोहं त्वघटितघटनापटीयसी माया ॥ ४

apagataguṇavarṇajātibhede
sukhaciti vipraṇḍādyahanḥkṛtiṃ ca,
sphuṭayati sutadāragehamohaṃ
tvaghaṭitaghaṭanāpaṭīyasī māyā. 4

अघटितघटनापटीयसी *aghaṭitaghaṭanāpaṭīyasī* = capable of making the impossible possible; माया *māyā* = illusion; अपगतगुणवर्णजातिभेदे *apagataguṇavarṇajātibhede* = devoid of qualities, caste appellations and divisions based on birth; सुखचिति *sukhaciti* = in the blissful Awareness; विप्रविडाद्यहङ्कृतिम् *vipraṇḍādyahanḥkṛtim* = the egotism of brahminhood, merchanthood, etc.; च *ca* = and; सुतदारगेहमोहम् *sutadāragehamoham* = the delusion of son, wife, and home; तु *tu* = indeed; स्फुटयति *sphuṭayati* = makes shine.

The illusion, capable of making the impossible possible, indeed makes the egotism of brahminhood, merchanthood, etc. appear in the blissful awareness, which is devoid of qualities, caste appellations and divisions based on birth.

(From *tatvapraṇḍāsyikā of māyā pañcakam*, Published by Brahma Vidya Kuteer, # 501, Deccan Corner Building, Diamond Point, Sikh Village, Secunderabad - 500 009, Telangana, India, Ph. 040- 2750 2035).

(Śrī Śaṅkarācārya's *Māyā Pañcakam*)

MEDITATION

दुरवगमात्मतत्त्वनिगमाय तवात्तनो
ञ्चरिमहामृताब्धिपरिश्रमणाः ।
न परिलषन्ति केचिदपवर्गमपश्वर ते
चरणसरोजहंकुलसङ्गविसृष्टगृहाः ॥

duravagamātmataṭṭvanigamāya tavāttatano-
ścārimahāmṛtābhi parīśramaṇaḥ,
na parilaṣanti kecidapavargamapaśvara te
caraṇasarojahamkulasaṅgavisṛṣṭagrāhaḥ.

Your real nature is incomprehensible to mortals who are equipped with ordinary modes of perception. Hence, with a view to revealing Your nature in human language, You assumed through *māyā* human forms and acted as such, thus bequeathing a rich heritage of spiritual literature. Sages who dived deep into this sacred literature, the record of Your doings and sayings, have renounced the world. Some of them, having the company of godly saints, who are comparable to swans delighting in the lotus of your holy feet, do not even care about liberation (*mokṣa*) after death; for, they are free from *saṃsāra* even while living in the body.

- from *Śṛṅgīta* by Swami Gabhirananda,
Advaita Ashram Publication

FREE-WILL

-Swami Omkar

What is this FREE-WILL? Is there a bound or free will? Is man free to do what he likes?

If man is free to do what he likes, there will not be any law or order in the universe. The finite man, the ignorant and arrogant man, may wish to change the very course of planets, the sun and moon etc., he may wish to destroy the whole world in his fickleness. Is it possible to change the world? No, it is not possible. Hence, man is limited, where the universal laws of creation are concerned. Man has to obey and respect the LAWS OF NATURE. He cannot go against the LAWS OF GRAVITY with all his big talk of FREE WILL.

But, he is free to do what he makes of his life. Hence, no wonder man's life is filled with confusion and chaos. He eats many bitter fruits and then weeps and suffers. He sows many rotten seeds and in sorrow he is compelled to reap what he had sown. Free-will is like the burning fire, which can be used both in a constructive and destructive manner.

The wise man who uses his FREE WILL in a sane, natural and helpful way is rewarded with good fruits. The LAW operates for the good and bad, the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant very relentlessly. Each one is digging his own grave by his bitter and selfish thoughts. It has been said "thought is another word for fate." Verily, thoughts are things.

The ignorant man, with the little FREE WILL he was given, makes a mess of his life and the world as well, with his selfish thoughts and by inventing implements of destruction, such as atom bombs etc. Imagine what greater mess, havoc and chaos he would have brought on, were he given FREE WILL over the laws of Nature

or Creation itself !

There is only ONE WILL- ONE LAW the will and the law of God, the infinite and eternal One. When man identifies with the SUPREME WILL, he is filled with harmony, Bliss and Peace. When he goes against it or violates it, he has bumps and knocks, sorrows and disappointments – finally all ending in destruction or death.

May all homage be unto the FREE WILL the splendour of Millions of suns, which bumps away the dross of the dual world and ignorance of every kind, wherein nothing else exists except the Stupendous Light – the Brahmin Splendour !

MAY PEACE BE UNTO ALL

OM! OM! OM!

THE WHOLE WORLD IS IMAGINATION

*The Invisible and Eternal is real,
This holds in your thoughts alone,
Don't think of your pain and suffering,
Live in God and peace you have won.*

Bondage and salvation are imagination of the mind. Where is bondage in the Heights? Where is freedom there? Who is fettered you, that you should think of freeing yourself? Where is the evil, the misery and the suffering, that can trouble you, while all is joy? Worldly cares, ills of the body - say you? Where are they? Are not they chimeras, you have yourself raised? Bondage and freedom, evil and good, body and world - imagination these are all. It is the nature of thought to revel amidst these dualities and opposites. Unreal they are all, that which is beyond thought, that which is the Source of all things, is the Real. It is You. It is the Inner Self, Changeless, Invisible and Eternal. May you realise your Essence and be established in THAT !

- from COSMIC FLASHES, - Swami Omkar

FULCRUM

-Swami Omkar

A Fulcrum is a point on which a lever turns. Without fulcrum, the base, nothing turns. Even for any machine to work or operate, an axle is needed. Any axle is a rod on which the wheel turns. We are all aware how an axle is indispensable for a car or a train to move and operate. In our North Indian Peace tour, when the axle of our peace van was broken we could not proceed further, not a step more, until a new axle was fixed. As the axle is the basis, life and soul for any engine or machine, so is the Fulcrum the support and main stay, the very centre of all our activities in life. Archimedes was considered as one of the great Greek Philosophers in the West. He wanted to move the world and tried to find a Fulcrum with which the world could be moved.

In vain did he search for the Fulcrum in the outer world. When the Fulcrum of life is within how could he find it out in the outer world? The fulcrum, the Peace Centre is within, in the life of Nirvritti, where the senses are stilled and the mind becomes calm and waveless. As I close my eyes, go within and meditate deeply, I find the Fulcrum within myself, in all stillness and ecstasy.

The Fulcrum is the Soham within. It is the Universal Breath and it unites the individual with the Universal. Breath unites all unto One Universal Whole, whether you are near or far away, in the East or in the West. One who is living in the far away America is taking the same breath as one who is living in the distant East. My breath is not separate from your breath, in fact, there are not two breaths or many breaths, for breath is one. It is one and the same, being itself indivisible. If you follow your own finite breath Soham, the visible, it will slowly, steadily and concentratedly lead you to the infinite Breath, the invisible Breath, which is the basis of all life. Soham excludes none, it includes all and embraces all. Wherever there is movement or motion or manifestation it is all due to the Soham Energy, the one divine Power!

The ether- Akasa-in the jar is not different or separate from the ether outside the jar. It is all one and the same. The water in one wave of the Ocean is not different from the water in the other waves. It is all one and same water. It is the same light in all the rays of the effulgent sun. Similarly, the life breath in mineral, vegetable, animal or human kingdoms of life, is all one and the same breath or energy.

Blessed are they who can recognize the one in the many! Peace that passeth all understanding belongs to those rare and blessed souls who have found the elixir of life within themselves, who have found the Fulcrum in the waveless stillness of their purified hearts. I am like a child playing with the spiritual toys centred on the Fulcrum of life Divine. Our simple PEACE PRAYER is the lever which moves the hearts of the individuals in the East and West, all over the world. Often and often I take joy meditating on Holy Soham, the sacred Fulcrum, drawing the whole world of manifestation towards the manifested Glory, through the simple Peace Prayer.

The ADORABLE PRESENCE unites not only individuals but also all the elements in the East and the West into one homogenous whole, thus bringing humanity into the centre of the Life Light and Love. The scientists in the West relying on the outer Fulcrums, delved into the secrets of the elements and were able to succeed in finding out poisonous gases and in inventing atom bombs etc., to destroy the world and themselves in the long run. Whereas the Yogis or Swamis in the East, dedicating their lives to the Highest, for the cause of World Peace, dwelled into the mysteries of the soul or the Atman, and were able to find out the panacea for all the ills of life. They identified themselves with the Soham Breath, the sacred Fulcrum within themselves, which alone paves the way to the Peace of the individuals as well as nations in the long run.

O man, it is in you now to follow the broad and wide path of outer life of bewitching names and forms that leads you to destruction, or to turn back and follow the narrow and rugged path of loneliness, which leads you to heaven within and which will make you a messenger of Peace, a blessing to the world and savior of humanity.

To me the essence of the message in a nutshell is that Fulcrum is the breath within and the Peace prayer is the lever to be fixed on the Fulcrum; to be spread and radiated far and near all over the world from heart to heart, in all the religions and nations. Verily, your breath is the breath of all humanity, for there are never two breaths but only one breath, which is called by the name Soham in the East and the *Big Breath or Universal Breath* in the West.

Dear loving readers of Peace pray close your eyes to the outer world of phenomena and merge within, as it helps you to find the centre of Peace, the Fulcrum within. Meditate deeply identifying with the Fulcrum, the Holy Breath. Then repeat the Peace Prayer, mentally sending forth vibrations of light towards all the corners of the world in the East and the West, in the North and in the South. In that transcendental state you are not repeating the Peace Prayer but in each and every moment of your life. There are deep thoughts, not for mere outer reading, but for deeper study and assimilating in your deep meditations, when you are face to face with the indivisible light, recognizing only the Fulcrum, the indivisible and Universal Breath, both in rest and activity.

May the recognition of the Fulcrum within bring Peace on Earth and Goodwill among all nations of the world! It is only when one recognized the Fulcrum within, following the breath ceaselessly, that one rises above all man made differences in caste, creed, colour and nations. For, all are the same rays of the One Sun and the same waves of the One Ocean, and the same aspects of the one manifested Divine Energy. It is only when one is full and complete, out of the fullness of one's heart, that the Vedic chant bursts or comes forth unconsciously and automatically blessing all the world, with infinite Peace, Eternal Peace and Universal Peace.

MAY THERE BE PEACE IN THE HEAVENS!

OM! OM! OM!

MANTRA YOGA SADHANA

-Swami Sivananda

Mantra Yoga is an exact science. "*Mananat trayate iti mantrah*," by the Mantra (constant thinking or recollection) of which one is released from the round of births and deaths, is Mantra.

Every mantra has a Rishi who gave it to the world; a Mantra, a Devata, the Bija or seed which gives it a special power, the Sakti and the *Kilakam* or the pillar.

A Mantra is Divinity. Mantra and its presiding Devata are one. The Mantra itself is Devata. Mantra, is divine power, *Daivi śakti*, manifesting in a sound body. Constant repetition of the Mantra with faith, devotion and purity augments the Sakti or power of the aspirant, purifies and awakens the Mantra Chaitanya latent in the Mantra and bestows on the Sadhaka Mantra siddhi, illumination, freedom, peace, eternal bliss.

By constant repetition of the Mantra the Sadhaka imbibes the virtues and powers of the Deity that presides over the Mantra. Repetition of Surya Mantra bestows health, long life, vigour, vitality, Tejas or brilliance. It removes all desires of the body and diseases of the body and diseases of the eye. No enemy can do any harm. Repetition of *Aditya-hridayam* in the early morning is highly beneficial. Lord Rama conquered Ravana through the repetition of *Aditya-hridayam* imparted by Agastya Rishi.

Mantras are in the form of praise and appeal to the deities, craving for help and mercy. Some Mantras control and command the evil spirits. Rhythmic vibrations of sound give rise to forms. Recitation of the Mantras gives rise to the formation of the particular figure of the deity.

Repetition of Sarasvati Mantra "*Om Sarasvatyai Namaḥ*"

will bestow on you wisdom and good intelligence. You will get inspiration and compose poems. Repetition of "*Om Sri Mahalkshmyai Namah*" will confer on you wealth and remove poverty. Ganesh Mantra will remove any obstacle in any undertaking. *Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra* will remove accidents, incurable diseases and bestow long life and immortality. It is a Moksha Mantra too.

Repetition of Subrahmanya Mantra "*Om Saravanabhavaya Namaha*" will give you success in any undertaking and make you glorious. It will drive off the evil influence and evil spirits. Repetition of Sri Hanuman Mantra "*Om Hanumanthaya Namah*" will, bestow victory and strength. Repetition of *Panchadasakshara* and *Sodasakshara* (Sri Vidya) will give you wealth, power, freedom etc. it will give you whatever you want. You must learn this Vidya from Guru alone.

Repetition of Gayatri or Pranava or "*Om Namah Shivaya*", "*Om Namo Narayanaya*", "*Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya*", a one and a quarter lakh times with Bhava, faith and devotion will confor on you Mantra Siddhi.

"*OM*", "*Soham*", "*Sivoham*", "*Aham Brahmasmi*" are Moksha Mantras. They will help you to attain Self-realisation. "*Om Sri Ramaya Namah*, *Om Namo Bhagavate vasudevaya*" are Saguna Mantras, which enable you to attain Saguna realization first and then Nirguna realization in the end.

Mantra Siddhi for curing scorpion stings, cobra bites etc., can be attained within 40 days. Repeat the Mantra with faith for 40 days. Repeat the Mantra with faith and devotion regularly. Have a sitting in the early morning after taking bath. Observe Brahmacharya and live on milk and fruits for 40 days or take restricted diet.

Chronic diseases can be cured by Mantras. Chanting of

Mantras generate potent spiritual waves or divine vibrations. They penetrate the physical and astral bodies of the patients and remove the root causes of sufferings. They fill the cells with pure *Satva* or divine energy. They destroy the microbes and vivify the cells and tissues. They are the best, most potent antiseptics and germicides. They are more potent than ultra violet rays or Roentgen rays.

Mantra Siddhi should not be misused for the destruction of others. Those who misuse the Mantra power for destroying others are themselves destroyed in the end.

Those who utilize Mantra power in curing snake bites, Scorpion stings and chronic diseases should not accept any kind of presents or money. They must be absolutely unselfish. They should not accept even fruits or clothes. They will lose the power if they utilize the power for selfish purposes. If they are absolutely unselfish, if they serve the humanity with *Sarvatma Bhava*, their power will increase through the grace of the Lord.

He who attained Mantra Siddhi can cure cobra bite or scorpion sting or any chronic disease by mere touch on the affected part. When a man is bitten by a cobra a telegram is sent to the Mantra Siddha. The Mantra Siddha recites Mantra and the man who is bitten by a cobra is cured. What a grand marvel! Does this not prove the tremendous power of Mantra?

Get the Mantra initiation from your Guru. Or pray to your Ishta Devata and start doing Japa of the particular Mantra, if you find it difficult to get a Guru.

May you all become Mantra Yogis with Mantra Siddhi! May you all become real benefactors of the world by becoming divine healers through Mantra cure! May Mantra cure, divine healing centres be started all over the world!

- from the *Divine Life Society Magazine*, February, 2000

HOW TO ACHIEVE THE NATURAL STATE

-Swami Chidananda

Worshipful homage to that one supreme, eternal Universal Spirit, the one, the one all-transcending, non-dual Divine Reality that pervades everywhere, is immanent in all things and indwells all creatures. May its divine grace enable us to perceive and experience Its presence within us.

Loving adorations to revered and beloved Holy Master Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, who again and again in ever so many ways tried to awaken us to this awareness that we ever live not so much in this world, but we live in God.

We have been told of four classical yogas – *karma yoga*, *bhakti yoga*, *dhyana yoga* and *jnana yoga*. However the extraordinary wisdom teachings of the Srimad Bhagavad Gita place before us not four yogas, not even four times four yogas, but eighteen yogas. Each chapter is entitled as a yoga of this or that kind. “Everything in life is yoga” seems to be the truth that the Lord is trying to place before us. Your whole life should be yoga oriented, the highest yogic-experience-oriented.

Similarly, many, many years ago, perhaps somewhere in the mid forties, Gurudev wrote a small book in his own handwriting having eighteen chapters. Each page constituted a letter and was one chapter by itself. It was something unique, quite out of the way, a special kind of literary work.

In one of the epistles, Master wrote, “My goal is Sahaja Samadhi.” He means by this that he was not satisfied just to sit in a special asana and start to meditate in gathering all his mind, taking it up and focusing it upon the supreme objective, Brahman, and then losing himself in a deep transcendental, intense, superconscious condition. It is called Samadhi, when one is not aware of anything external, not aware of time and space, not even aware of one’s own body. One transcends everything, one is

established in the intense inner awareness of the supreme, eternal Reality only.

Gurudev said, “I am not satisfied with this because it is experienced only at certain times during deep meditation. I want it to be with me at all times. It must become, as it were, my permanent, natural state. Sitting, standing, walking, running, working, resting, talking, eating, drinking- always, always, always – I must be in that state of Samadhi – Sahaja Samadhi.” To some extent this is what Gita also teaches us.

In how many ways can we try to consciously practice such awareness? That would be an interesting and worthwhile exploration, consideration. How many ways? How many ways exist in which you can do it? Just as we said that there are innumerable yogas, there might be innumerable ways also. But then, prominent among them – to constantly be in a state of awareness of the great Reality – you could start by practicing the awareness of the Reality indwelling you as indweller. “I am never apart from Him. We are always one. He is always with me. He always shines within me.” This is one way of living in this awareness.

Another way is by cultivating, practicing, the awareness of His presence as the indweller of all beings, in all things. He indwells everything. Every object enshrines Him. Every creature is a living, moving temple of the Divine. He is enshrined in their heart. This is actually stated by the great teacher, the Lord Himself, in the Bhagavad Gita. That is the second way – living in a state of awareness of that Reality as the indwelling divinity in all beings and all things. He is the fire, earth, water, air and ether or space. He is in all *Panchabhutas* (five elements).

And the third way- being aware of His all pervading presence. “wherever I am, whatever I am doing, whatever I am engaged in, I am doing it in Him, because He is everywhere. He surrounds me, envelops me. I live in Him, move in Him, work in Him, have my beings in Him and act in Him as a fish does within the vastness of the ocean

waters that encompass it from all sides.” This is yet a third way.

A fourth way is to be aware that, “I of myself can do nothing. It is because His power is dynamically, vibrantly present, coursing through all my nerves and blood stream, my limbs, hands and feet, my eyes and ears – through everything. Otherwise I am like a limp, rag doll, a puppet. I can do nothing. It is His power that enables me to do everything. That power alone is the real dynamic factor within me. By God’s power I speak, by God’s power I move about, by God’s power I act and do all things.” This is a fourth way in which you can be in a constant state of awareness of His presence.

There is yet a fifth way – by bringing in a certain feeling that my entire life and activity is a continuous, unceasing act of adoration, worship; “I am constantly worshipping, I am constantly adoring. Everything is nothing but His adoration, because I am in His presence. Therefore, I constantly adore Him through life and all that I do in my life.” You can bring about this awareness through evoking within the heart this lofty sublime *bhava*, a spiritual feeling of adoration.

Yet another way: “I offer up unto Your feet. O ever-present Divinity, every little thing that I do, every little action – everything I offer up unto thee. Nothing is mine. All is Thine. I am Thine. My life is Thine. What I do in my life is also Thine.” Thus there is an unceasing, constant act of offering everything to Him as a votive offering: “Everything that I do, all my activities, the least as well as the greatest, the most insignificant as well as the most important, are like so many flowers which I keep on offering at Thy feet – a continuous flower offering at Your feet.” This is yet another way you can keep up the unbroken awareness and make everything in your life God-oriented, illumination oriented, enlightenment oriented.

All these we must be aware of – these various ways of being in a constant state almost like sahaja Samadhi, living in a state of awareness of His divine presence. All these things we should practice, making the one prominent method according to our taste, temperament and inclination. This is the great yoga and this is what requires to be done.

May God bless us all to live in such a manner! May the supreme grace of the Divine and the benedictions of the Holy master enable us to do this right now – from this moment!

Om! OM! OM!

from the Divine Life Magazine, February, 1999

PARABLE OF THE PASSENGER AND HIS LUGGAGE

Swami Sivananda

A villager has never before travelled in a train. He received an urgent telegram from his wife living in another distant village that she was very sick and that she wished to see and speak to him. The villager ran to the railway station and purchased the ticket. He got into the train and the train started. Unfortunately, the track beyond the station was under repairs and the train moved very slowly over it. The villager had seen how the train usually sped along. He could not understand why it crawled at such low speed. He was impatient to reach the wife’s village. He began thinking hard and at last discovered: “What a fool I am! I am not only a burden to the train, I have kept my bedding and trunk also as an additional burden over the train. It is only because of this load that the train is going slow.” At once he lifted the trunk and bedding and placed it upon his head – to the amusement of the co-passengers.

Similarly, man boards this train of life on earth. He is himself is borne by some unseen power. But his wife (happiness) is in grave peril and he wishes to reach her quickly. Things do not always happen here as one wishes them to. The impatient feels that if he takes on the responsibility of his family and children, of his business affairs and domestic concern, on his own head, he would reach his destination – happiness- sooner. He forgets or is ignorant of the fact that in any case it is the train that carries him and all the weight that he might put either over his own head or down on the floor of the compartment. God is the protector of all. Yet the foolish man thinks that he is responsible for his wife and children, for his house, business and property.

From DLS Feb 2000

RESURGENT CULTURE- THE GOAL OF LIFE

-Swami Krishnananda

WHAT IS TRUTH?

We say we live in a world, because we perceive and experience certain phenomena which impinge on our senses and make us feel that we are in an objective environment. This supposed environment in which we appear to be placed is felt by us to be a complex situation that influences not only our individual personalities but also other individuals whose existence we observe intuitively, as it were. We are aware, by analysis, experiment and observation, that broadly speaking, we have three avenues of knowledge, two of which are in direct relation to our normal world experience and one is known to most of us. These channels of perception are sense, reason and intuition.

Sense perception reveals to us that we are in a world from which we are cut off as knowing subjects. The world, again, is separated from us as non intelligent principle placed in the context of an object which is differentiated from the knowing subject in that the latter is endowed with a principle which we call intelligence, while the former is apparently bereft of it. And how do we perceive the world through our senses?

Any cautious intellect will be able to understand that the special feature that we observe as characterizing anything in the world is change. Change appears to be the order of things. Everything moves, flows, is in a state of becoming. We have never seen, nor have we have any chance of seeing, anything in this world, that is not subject to some kind of transformation or the other. Even our bodies, our senses, nay, even our own minds exhibit this subjection to the inexorable law of change. In short, we are in a process, not being.

And how do we know that there is change? The obvious answer would be that we see it. But here we have to raise a question, as rational beings who will not be easily satisfied by a dogmatic statement that there is change just because we see it. A truly great person is he who has the patience and the ability to first investigate himself, his powers of knowledge and his fitness for judging the nature of things. Are we correct in assessing the value of the phenomena that we observe through our senses? What is the standard of correctness? When we say that everything in the world changes, do we also include ourselves in all that changes? Now, just imagine; can we know that something changes or is in a state of transformation, if we ourselves are a part of this observed flux? Can there be knowledge of change if the knower himself changes with the change? The fact that is possible for us to recognize such a thing as movement or process shows that we somehow find ourselves standing as witnesses of what we observe. For the observer himself cannot be observed and change itself cannot be its knower. We say that a river flows, because the bed of river itself does not flow and we do not flow with the waters but stand as witnesses on the bank. This is an observation easy of understanding, that we cannot know the distinction between one part of the process and another unless we, as observing intelligences, are able to bring together the two distinguished parts by a link of understanding or consciousness which cannot belong to any one of the parts and which, yet, has to be equally present to both the parts. The knower is different from the known.

Extending this observation to the entire world of perception, we come to the conclusion that, if at all it should be possible for us to know any such thing as a world – its contents and diversities – we have to accept, by implication, that our consciousness should be at least as wide as what we know and this consciousness cannot be subject to separation or isolation as the perceptible objects are. Here we come to the crux of philosophy, the pivot of true scientific thinking. Are we in a world of truth?

And what is truth? A great philosopher-saint of ancient India, Swami Vidyaranya, has observed in his great work, the Panchadasi: *Satyatvam Badharahityam* – Truth is that, which stands the test of the principle of non-contradiction. What is never seen to change at any time, what is not subject to transcendence by any kind of experience, what is not dependent on anything else, what is its own proof and requires no other proof to establish its existence, is truth. Truth is that which is absolutely necessary to account for our experience in life and which, when negative or abrogated, contradicts all experience and cuts the ground from under our feet. Truth is the ultimate Reality of the universe, internal as well as external, - gross, subtle and causal.

MODERN SCIENCE: ITS IMPLICATION

As students of modern science and as enlightened persons interested in studying the advances of present-day researches in the realm of physics, you would be acquainted with the fact that science today has surpassed the old view that the world is made up of crass material stuff, or that it is really diversified in the manner we ordinarily see with our senses. Once upon a time we were told that the constituents of the physical world could be reduced to less than a hundred ultimate principles, - call them chemical substances. Later came the discovery that these substances are not really ultimate but could be reduced to minute elements called atoms which were supposed to differ from one another in certain specific characters they possessed. But research did not end here. Today we are said to be placed in a mysterious universe of forces, of electrical charges, of dynamic powers which are discovered to be the essence of even the atoms. Even the pluralistic notions involved at the present moment in the concept of the stuff of which the atoms are made are slowly getting narrowed down to the recognition of an immanent energy which is supposed to be the matrix of all things, the essence of the world, of our own bodies. We are in a world of energy, in which there cannot be any further differentiation and which is not

merely the cause of the substances. We are told that this energy is called light when it has an impact on the retina of our eyes, is called sound when it impinges on the eardrum, is itself taste, touch and smell in accordance with the senses by which we come to feel its presence. It looks, of course, a wonder that we assert our own segregated bodily existences, with their passions and prejudices, while intellectually we are made to conclude that even our bodies are in essence parts of the cosmos of forces. And if we have to believe in what we understand to be the truth, we have no right even to think as individual personalities. We are the cosmos!

Well, let us agree that we are in a universe of energy, as the latest developments in modern physics would indicate. But what is the nature of this energy? What is it made up of and what do we mean by energy? Is it a quantitative substance, an object with dimension and has it any quality, without which we can know nothing at all? You know, we usually say that something is seen because we observe a quality in it, a character which enables us to differentiate it from another. Has the cosmic energy of the scientist any such perceivable quality? If it has either a quantity or a quality it should be a material substance and has to be known by some thing other than itself, viz., an illuminating intelligence.

Here it will not be out of place if I make a reference to a habit that is prevalent among many, which makes out that even intelligence is an off-shoot of matter. Now such a contention really defeats itself, because it involves a self contradiction. Is matter identical with or different from intelligence? If it is one with intelligence, then what prevents us from assuming that there is only intelligence and no such thing as matter devoid of it, especially as it is very clear that we cannot even assert the existence of matter without an intelligent mind? On the other hand, if matter is different from intelligence, what is it that distinguishes matter from intelligence? Is this differentiating principle matter itself or is it intelligence? For, there cannot be a third thing. If the difference is matter, then we have to find out the difference

between this first difference and intelligence, which argument would lead to an infinite regress. If the difference is intelligence, we will find ourselves in no better predicament, for, again, there would be an infinite regress. Moreover, it is incorrect to think that intelligence, whose essential illuminating character is quite different from the nature of matter, can be its effect. The cause should be atleast as rich as the effect. If there is intelligence in the effect it should be present in the cause, also. Matter would itself be then conceived as a reservoir of intelligence.

More careful physicists like Arthur Eddington and James Jeans have perforce jumped from the land of physics to that of metaphysics. Eddington comes to assert a general or universal consciousness, a universal mind-stuff as the stuff of the universe; and to Jeans the world is like a huge mathematical mind manifesting itself, than anything else. The great genius of modern science, Albert Einstein, the discoverer of the theory of relativity, takes us by the implication of his discovery, to a realm where our ordinary space and time are not and our objects lose their significance and meaning in a vision integrating our experiences in an incredible manner. He was forced in his later years to accept by feeling, the presence of a pervading intelligence which staggers human thinking and makes human speech dumb. We are in such a world, a world of mysterious truths which we cannot comprehend. Here we revert from science to philosophy.

THE CHANGELESS CONSCIOUSNESS

The methods of philosophy are usually certain developments of the logical methods of thinking and rationalistic processes of thought. Our faculties of understanding, thinking, feeling and willing are, however, found to be subject to certain fixed categories, such as quantity, quality, relation and mode, or, to put it concisely, space, time and cause. On a careful examination it is seen that, even as the findings of science are not ultimately reliable due to their being

influenced by the changing characteristics of the senses of perception and the instruments of observation, the philosophical method, as it is usually understood by many, is not free from certain types of subjection to outward laws. It may be that restrictive laws are so intimately related to the constitution of the mind that it is ordinarily impossible to distinguish between the operation of these laws and the ways of thinking. But, nevertheless, it is a restriction to the fuller freedom that is necessary to make any categorical judgment of truth. For we can never see, or hear, or even think anything outside the limitations imposed on us by the presence of such fundamental categories of phenomenal experience as space, time and causation, the moment we think, we think in terms of space, quantity, extension and succession. This is an old prejudice of the mind, which is not able to overcome. This inseparable relation that is mysteriously established between our essential modes of thought and the laws restricting them goes by the names of relativity, phenomenality, and the like. And under these circumstances, truth unchangeable cannot be known. Truth can brook no limitation of any kind, for it is established not on any other proof of knowledge or mode of perception but in itself.

The forgoing analysis reveals the fact that our entire waking experience, being confined to the heavy operations of the categories of the understanding, or thinking, is unsuited to any genuine attempt at the discovery of the truth. Our dream-experience fares no better: it is, in the structure of the activities, similar to the waking experience. Unfortunately, we know of no other conscious human experience than waking and dreaming. Thus it is that we often hear it said that truth is not given to the human mind. Profounder methods of philosophy, such as those adumbrated in the system of Vedanta, take into consideration the deeper implications of the state of deep sleep, which has been very unwisely set aside by most of the Western philosophers in their analyses. We are bereft of all consciousness in the state of dreamless sleep, we cannot know even our own existence then. But we do exist in sleep cannot be gainsaid. Our

existence here seems to be asserted notwithstanding the absence of the consciousness of the existence! But if you think carefully you will notice that no assertion of any kind is possible without some sort of consciousness. And yet, what is it that makes us affirm ourselves in sleep? Definitely, not direct perception. We have a memory of having slept or our having existed prior to our falling asleep. Yesterday I was, and today I am, - thus does the individual assert itself. A phenomenon of this type discloses the fact of there being a connecting link between the state preceding sleep and the one succeeding it. The prior and the later states being involved in consciousness, we cannot, as we have already observed above, suppose that the link between them can be an unconscious principle. The link, too, has to be a conscious one. We never assert that we are ignorant beings in our own essence; even a stupid man does not wish to be called so. The essence of intelligence is continuously affirmed, even unwittingly.

Further, that we have a memory of sleep shows that a kind of perception was going on even in sleep, for there can be no memory without a previous perception and no perception can have a meaning unless it is attended with consciousness. If memory has a meaning, the conscious perception that ought necessarily to lie antecedent to it cannot be denied. We had consciousness and we existed as consciousness in deep sleep; but we know it not. Some mysterious darkness was veiling us. And this veil is nothing but the inactive latency of the possibility of objective experience in terms of the phenomenal categories described above.

The Vedanta, thus, takes us beneath the surface and makes us dive into an ocean where we discover the pearl of truth, the truth that we are essentially not only conscious existence but consciousness itself. We are not beings possessing consciousness as an attribute of ourselves, for then we would be reduced to unconscious bases of a conscious attribute. This cannot be, because the knower can never be said to be an unconscious principle. The

knower ought to be consciousness, not even a mere possessor of consciousness as a quality. Our existence, then, is an indescribable splendor surpassing all light and radiance known to us in this world. Saints and sages point out that words are not meant to describe the transcendent Being, for all speech, together with the mind, is in the position of an after-effect and cannot be expected to illumine its own cause and presupposition. This consciousness, which is our primal essence, cannot be conceived to be limited in any way for the very idea of the limitation of consciousness would prove that consciousness is beyond limitation. The idea of a boundary proves that there is simultaneously the idea of the existence of something outside the boundary. To set limits to consciousness would be a self-contradiction; the limitation cannot be outside the perview of consciousness. Consciousness is infinite.

The consciousness of the continuity of our personalities through the various vicissitudes and changes of life goes to prove that it itself is changeless. The fact that it is indivisible proves that it is infinite. To know this, then, is to know truth. This alone can be the great uncontradictable experience. This we really are. In knowing this we know ourselves as we truly exist. This defies all diversity and consequently, all desire, attachment, hatred, anger, prejudice and the like.

...to be continued

- from the book *Resurgent Culture*, a Divine Life Society Publication, Rishikesh, Uttarakhand, Himalayas.

GITA JAYANTI

- Mata Jnaneswari

Every year we celebrate the holy Gita Jayanti in the month of Margasira on the 11th day after the full moon. This has been the tradition. 26-12-1982 this year's Gita Jayanti is a very sacred day. It is the only unique occasion when we celebrate the origin of a text. Many great saints like Sri Sankaracharya, Sri Ramanujacharya, Sri Madhvacharya wrote commentaries on this Holy Gita. Prominent leaders like Balagangadhara Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi, Vinobha Bhave, Kashinath Nageswara Rao too authored commentaries on the Gita.

Upanishads contain the essence of the Vedas and the essence of Upanishads is the Gita. Five thousand years ago Lord Krishna himself gave the holy message of the Gita to the world making Arjuna a medium – the message which is most valid and valuable for the life here on earth and the life hereafter. Those who apply the message of the Gita in their daily life and conduct will be the ideal men. According to Mahatma Gandhi it is not just about the battle that took place on the battle field at Kurukshetra long long ago, but it is about the battle that we face in our daily life – a battle between the positive and negative forces or the divine and devilish forces. Every one should understand this holy text and implement the tenets in one's daily life. Just as we discard the worn out clothes, so should we shed the worn out body and take on a new body. We are not the body but we are the Atman. The Atman has no death. No body can destroy the Atman. Fire cannot burn it and nor can a weapon cut it.

This topic is discussed in great detail in the 2nd chapter of Gita. This chapter describes the qualities of a "*Sthitaprajna*" ie., one who is established in truth. Those who emulate the qualities of *Sthitaprajna* will neither get elated nor get dejected when something untoward befalls. They always maintain the equilibrium of the mind.

As He wanted to set an example to the world, Lord Krishna

never wasted a single minute. He worked ceaselessly. Swamiji inscribed a saying in the Ashram "Those who waste minutes will waste away the whole life."

Lord Krishna stated very clearly in the 9th chapter verse 22 that he is responsible for the worldly welfare and wellbeing of those who constantly maintain an unbroken connection with him by ceaseless contemplation on Him. In the 27th verse of the same chapter He states that what ever worldly activities are performed one should do them as an offering to Him without expecting a reward for the actions. Swamiji said "work is worship" and we see this saying too inscribed in the Ashram.

Mahatma Gandhi states that we should eat only that quantity of food that is absolutely essential for the maintenance of the body. However, great a sinner one may be, once one truly repents and decides never to commit sin again and starts a new life following the righteous path, God is pleased. In our scriptures we don't have the concept of eternal hell. The one who cooks food only for oneself and does not share it with anyone is a sinner who eats only sin.

It is said that our real enemies are our sense organs which are not under our control. Desire, anger, miserliness and infatuation are the pathways to hell. We have to work ceaselessly to conquer them. We have to do regular Sadhana to be rid of the satanic qualities and develop divine virtues. Only then we can graduate from the animal level to the human level and finally to the divine level. The goal of life is to merge with the divine. Therefore all of us who have taken birth in this holy land should make every effort to reach the goal and be blessed.

OM! OM! OM!

(Original article in Telugu is published in Shanti, January 1983.
Translated by Shanta Subba Rao)

श्रीगणेशाय नमः
श्रीमच्छङ्करभगवत्पादाचार्य विरचितं
माया पञ्चकम्
Śrī Śaṅkarācārya's
Māyā pañcakam

-Swami Tattvavidananda Saraswati

(Continued from March and June 2015)

The whole world around is best described as high drama. It is not real, but entirely a play in consciousness. All divisions, including that of the world and the individual, of the individual and God, and of God and the world are unreal. What, then, to speak of the divisions in the manner of friend and foe? Some questions may arise at this point. 'If all that exists is One, what is Self-knowledge? Who is it that has to know, and what is it that must be known?' Well, one cannot attempt to know the Self, which is Infinite; one can only be the Self. Self-knowledge is the knowledge of all that one is not. To know the false as false is knowledge. You are the very truth. 'What is it that prevents me from being the truth?' It is your delusion in mistaking the false for real that prevents it.

One should assiduously strive to get rid of the delusion of duality. Nothing ever need be done about the truth, because the truth is siddha, ever accomplished, and it is the Self, it is you. The truth you cannot know; the truth you must yourself be. For that, you must first stop imagining yourself as this or that. We experience what we are not as what we are, because of *māyā*. *Māyā* is the answer to many of the questions about human existence. In fact, we do not attempt to explain anything. It cannot and need not be explained. Don't look for explanations; instead strive to get rid of the ignorance. Without Self-realization, we will be consumed by desires and fears that repeat meaninglessly in endless cycles of suffering. You don't

have a choice but to know. Therefore, you have to understand the concept of *māyā*. Vikalpa means imagination. The human mind is capable of all kinds of imaginations that have no basis in the truth. However, we mistake our ideas and opinions to be the truth. There are no vikalpas in the truth. Therefore, drop all ideas, all imaginations, and all concepts, and simply be space-like. The truth will then dawn upon you. The truth will reveal itself to you.

A thought is a movement that has its origin in memory. It is nothing but the response of the mind to a stimulus. The stimulus could be what one perceives, or it could be what one recollects. The 'this-thought' has its origin in memory, in the past. When we look at a flower and say, 'This is a rose,' we first sense its is-ness or being through the eyesight and then superimpose the idea of the rose upon that. What we call the object, or the name that we give the object, does not belong in the present moment; it springs from memory, which is the past. In saying, 'This is a rose,' we are, in effect, superimposing the past on the present; the being or is-ness of the object, 'this is,' is the present, and 'rose' comes from the past. The present, which is the simple presence, is thus converted into a mental conception. The object is not merely a rose; it is the being in all its glory, it is none other than you. There is no difference between an 'I am-ness' and a 'this is-ness.' Both are one. They enjoy the same degree of reality, of being.

We develop attachments and aversions to names and forms. In terms of the awareness pure, these names and forms do not exist. Reality is not the product of thought or an object of thought. Reality is one unified whole in which all things are interwoven. The *jīva*, the jagat, and *Īśvara* are interwoven and merge into that one unified whole that is Atman. We should rise above the thought that fragments the one Reality.

No event in life is an isolated occurrence; it is part of the organic whole, called life. Everything in the universe happens because of everything else, because the universe is not a collection of dis-

jointed and independent events. For instance, the pot is because the entire universe is; the sun, the moon, the continents, the earth, the stars, the galaxies, the waters, wind, heat, space – indeed, everything – contributes to the existence of the rose. Similarly, you can say that Mahatma Gandhi and the British Raj are not exclusive entities independent of each other's existence, but complementary, or even that the existence of the Sahara desert has its corresponding complement in the fertile lands elsewhere. In our activities of life, even success and failure complement each other.

We tend to miss the woods for the trees in the way we view the world. We look at the woods and can only see many trees. There are no 'many trees;' it is one organic whole. We have to apply this philosophy to life. Every event is immediately labelled either good or bad. The fact is that it is neither good nor bad, but just an event that has occurred. In order to label it, one must first necessarily isolate it from the whole. Such isolation is against the truth. If we would only show some patience, an event considered bad may well prove to be good after all, and vice versa. Therefore, we must avoid fragmentary thinking, division of the whole into conceptual fragments. This vision also applies to opposites like friend and foe, pleasure and pain, etc. In the Gita, Sri Krishna advises, *nirdvandvo nityasattvastho niryogakṣema ātmavān* (B.G., 2-45) rise above the opposites, always remain calm and quiet in the mind, do not worry about accumulating and safeguarding, be centered in the Self.

We assume that the *jagat* or the world is external to us, an objective or independent entity. I would seriously question this idea of an objective world, because it is your world and a subjective world through and through. It is a very small world, based on your perception and memory. The eyes gather hundreds of sensations, but the mind focuses on just a few of them. Of the hundred people that are perceived, the mind focuses on one. That is the nature of the world we create. For instance, the periodic table has about 100 elements, but there may be a scientist who is interested in just one of them and

studies it all his life. Our world is entirely subjective and private. It is like a long dream, merely a projection of the mind. It is neither something other than nor independent of the individual, who furnishes it with his likes and dislikes. The individual first projects what he calls the world and then looks at himself as part of that world. The irony is that he is not just a part of it; he is all of it. Its apparent separateness from us does not introduce any division in the reality of Atman.

Let us say that you had a dream, in which, as the dream person, you went to Kasi and had the *darśan* of God. The entire scenario of your dream world, as in your dream-person, the city of Kasi, and the God that appeared in the dream is of your creation and none other than you. All of it is you. In your waking state, you are similarly aware that you are a person, there is the world, there is a pilgrim center, and there is God. Is your waking state any different from the world in your dream state? Is it any more real than the world in your dream state? No, it is not. In spite of its apparent reality, everything, including the waking person, is unreal and merely an appearance in the real you, the Self, the Awareness Absolute. The dream world appears very real in the dream. When one wakes up, however, one is wiser and sees that it was unreal. Yet where was this wisdom during the dream? It is ignorance that causes all the divisions to appear; the Self is the world, the Self is the individual, and the Self is the God. There is nothing that is comparable to the Self, which is your true nature, timeless, the eternal.

Eternity is truly contained in the present moment. Nevertheless, we do talk of the past. A historian talks of a past of four or five thousand years, a geologist talks of a past of four or five million years, while a cosmologist talks of the past of a few billion years. Yet, the fundamental question here is, 'Where is this past? Is it spread over all those years? Whatever be its length is it not contained in the present moment?' The entirety of the past is contained in the present moment alone. I urge you to consider this statement carefully.

What is the present moment? Is it different from you? Close

your eyes and consider the present moment, examine the present moment, explore the present moment. What is it? Is it not the same awareness that you are? This logic applies to the future as well. The entire future that one can imagine is contained in the present moment. As young students, the future of our imagination was barely longer than two or three years. Now, in middle age, the future extends far beyond that and extends to heaven as well. Yet the future that one can imagine, however distant its scope, is contained in the present moment. The present moment is in you, it is you. Therefore, you are that timeless eternity. When you know that you are the present moment and merge in the awareness of the present moment, there is no time. And when there is no time, there is no mind.

Bear in mind that all thought is encapsulated in time. There cannot be a thought without time. Time is the primary parameter of the thought process, because thought is a movement in time. The mind doesn't want to give up; it will pressure you to get out of the awareness of the present moment and drift into the past-future mode of linear time instead. That is the bondage. We are bound by time. Time is but another name for ignorance. The fact is you are the timeless. Time has no reality; it is but a mental category. If you can disregard time and abide in the present, you are already liberated. The Upanishads describe Atman over and over again as *nitya*, eternal. The Gita declares, *ajo nityaḥ* (2-20), Atman is birthless and eternal. You encompass the entire history of mankind, you are the entire history of evolution, and you are the very center of the cosmos. The God that you worship is none other than yourself. You are worshipping your own hidden self. You are Brahman. *Tattvamasi*, That art thou.

We cannot say that the world exists. We can only say that the world appears. *Jagat jāyate*, the world is born, say the logicians, the *tārkikas*. *Jagat bhavati*, the world evolves, say the evolutionists, the *sāṅkhyas*. *Jagat asti*, the world is, say those who oppose "creationism", the *mīmāṃsakas*. However, the Vedantins maintain, *jagat na jāyate, na bhavati, na asti, api tu dr̥śyate*, the world

can only be said to appear, not to take birth, or to evolve, or to be.

Time is relative and so the scale of time is naturally varied. For instance, a given appearance may last long on a given scale of time, but be very short against another scale of time. For example, a dream may appear to last fifty years, but it may have transpired in barely five minutes. Whatever the duration of the time, whether five minutes or fifty years, everything meets the same end. Whatever begins in time must end in time. Consider this: That which begins and ends is not real, and, because that which appears, begins, and ends is unreal, its apparent existence is not continuous in spite of it appearing continuous. It is purely *kṣaṇika*, momentary. For example, a movie has a beginning and an ending; it is an unreal appearance. Its movement appears continuous, but is not so; it is momentary. It is memory that strings the momentary appearances together, making it appear continuous. Suppose you have been watching the movie for an hour and I enter at that point and magically wipe out your memory of the past hour, would you continue to watch the movie in the same way as you did until then? No. It is entirely the trick of memory that makes you perceive continuity. There is nothing in this creation that is continuous. Quantum physics has also reached the same conclusion. 'What about Atman? Is it not continuous?' No, it isn't. 'Is Atman discontinuous then?' No, not at all. Atman is neither continuous nor discontinuous, but timeless, *nitya*, eternal. Descriptions based on time do not apply to Atman.

Abhyāsa is practice. Whatever is learned must be put into practice. The *Pañcadaśī of Vidyāraṇya* recommends *brahmābhyāsa*, the 'practice' of Brahman, as in one being constantly mindful of Brahman; *taccintanaṁ tatkathanamanyonyam tatprabodhanam, etadekaparatvaṁ ca*, contemplation upon That, steady remembrance of That, mutual discussions of That among seekers, and total devotion to That and That alone (13-83). Sri Krishna also emphasizes the importance of practice and dispassion in the Gita (6-35). He recommends that one must practice becoming and remaining aware of the blemishes of worldly life, following the study

of Vedanta; *janmamṛtyujarāvyādhī duḥkhaḥ doṣānudarśanam*, the practice of seeing the blemish of the afflictions of birth, death, old age, and disease (13-8). *Śrī Śaṅkara* says in his commentary that such practice will induce dispassion. The sincere student of Vedanta should deliberately practice discernment between the real and the unreal, the Self and non-Self. We should also acquire and practice dispassion in our interactions with the world.

Our learning must reflect in our behavior and attitude towards the world. We may give lengthy discourses on philosophy, yet even as the microphone is being turned off, life lies in wait. We may be able to shake it off, but only for a while. It is said that, when a person goes to take a dip in the Ganges, his sins temporarily reside in the clothes he leaves on the shore. They lie there in wait, because they cannot survive the touch of the sacred waters. The moment he is done with his sacred bath and collects his clothes, the sins attach back to him. In the same way, our worldliness is held in abeyance for a while at a time. That should not be the case.

The study of Vedanta has very important and immediate practical implications. It teaches that one must not look at situations in isolation. Try to avoid fragmentary thinking. In life, pleasure and pain are bound to alternate. They complement each other. You cannot divide life into bits to be labeled lucky or unlucky. Another important learning is that one should not divide humanity, based on caste, creed, etc. All divisions are mind-made and not real. When I say I belong to a given group, the entire humanity is implicitly divided into two groups, one to which I belong and the other, the opposite. The B.U. says, *brahma tam parādādyo'nyatrātmano brahma veda*, if a person considers a given group (in terms of caste, creed, etc.) as the other, he is ousted and slighted by that group (2-4-6). The primary teaching of Vedanta is that the entire humanity is one. There is no friend or foe; there is only divinity. One must learn to live by this philosophy. Vedanta also teaches that one must not take the world as real. You must learn to start questioning its reality. Gain a steady remembrance

of the truth. Whenever there is frustration or despair, ask yourself whether the situation causing the frustration is real and permanent. You will know, then, that it is transient and passing. The affairs of the world are but high drama. One should strive to remain the witness. Yet remaining objective and dispassionate is not easy. Non-identification is a tough task even for mendicants.

Life must be devoted to the unrelenting search for the truth. After all, merely reading the menu card does not equal the joy of eating the food. If you do not allow life to slide in the direction of worldliness, your success is assured. There is no scope for failure in the life of yoga. The progress could be slow initially, but you are a free person eventually. Indeed, you are ever free; you need only know that you are free.

to be continued...

MASTER'S FRANKNESS

A sceptic foreigner was once looking in doubt on the large propaganda apparatus of the Ashram. His doubt and skepticism increased when he saw the Master himself in a modern European overcoat. But then he looked down, and lo! The Masters feet were bare! Then and there he concluded that the Master was not the external but the internal.

The Master told him. "I wear this over-coat, which may seem absurd to you in this place, because it has been given to me by a disciple and because it is cold here in winter. It is not the robes that make the monk.

The visitor was overwhelmed by this disarming frankness of the Master.

- from DLS February, 2000 Issue by Swami Sivananda

SAINTS GIVE WHAT GOD CANNOT

-Swami Ramdas

In a village there was a devotee of Vishnu. Though married for many years, he had not been blessed with a child in spite of all the austerities performed by him for the purpose. One day, sage Narada happened to pass through the village. Meeting the sage, the devotee enquired where he was going. Narada replied he was going to Vaikuntha. Thereupon, the devotee requested Narada to enquire of Lord Vishnu why He had not yet blessed him with a child and when he might expect to have that blessing. On reaching Vaikuntha, Narada told Vishnu about the devotee's grievance. The Lord replied that the devotee was not destined to have a child.

Narada did not wish to communicate this unpleasant news to the devotee. So, many years passed before he again saw the devotee in the village. When he entered the latter's house, he saw three children playing in the court-yard and was surprised to learn that they belonged to the devotee. Narada was naturally curious to hear how the devotee got the children and made enquires about him.

The devotee replied that since he met Narada last, he chanced to have the Darshan of a saint and serve him. The saint, pleased with the service, asked him what boon he wished to have. The devotee begged to be blessed with a child. The saint blessed saying that he would have not one but three children.

Hearing this, Narada went straight to Vaikuntha and accused Lord Vishnu of uttering an untruth. Narada said "You told me some years ago that a devotee about whom I mentioned to you was not destined to have a child. Now I find he has got three children." Vishnu laughed and said, "that must surely be the work of some saint, for the saints alone can change one's destiny."

- From *the stories as told by Swami Ramdas*, Anandashram Publication, Kanhangad, Kerala.

THERE IS ONLY ONE UNITY

-Swami Satchidananda

You have all come here today because you are interested in something that is more than worldly and in other words, more clearly interested in Spiritual life. That also shows you have understood the futility of merely running after the transitory worldly pleasures. You must have also tasted the sweetness of the spiritual life. By sweetness I mean the unearthly peace you enjoy the moment you take to it.

But the paradox is that in spite of having experienced this unearthly peace, we are not able to stick to it, i.e., take to it wholeheartedly. In other words, we are now having our legs in two boats, viz., the Samsaric – worldly boat and the Adhyatmic – spiritual boat. It may be alright for some time but ultimately we have to keep both our legs in one boat or make the two boats into one by placing two planks and tying them together, meaning, instead of rejecting the worldly life in favour of Adhyatmic life, we should be able to divinize the worldly life. In other words, there will be no difference between the Adhyatmic life and worldly life. When two boats are tied together, it can carry more passengers and more weight. It may appear to be difficult in the beginning but is certainly possible if efforts are put forth with earnestness and perseverance.

When we think of the spiritual life most of us feel that if we become too spiritual, our worldly life may suffer. At the same time we don't worry if we are too worldly and our spiritual life suffers. We have to treat both these as one, so that there will be no suffering at all. So, what is to be done is to entirely divinize life, in fact, everything is divine. We only do not feel it; we do not understand it; we do not look at them that way. There is nothing but divine. As the great masters have been telling us, there is only Brahman and nothing but Brahman. But we have been seeing diversity.

We have been seeing things differently. We have been feeling that we are not divine, we are individuals and consider others also as individuals. Having full faith in the words of our Masters that

everything is divine and nothing but divine, if we go forward with intense Sadhana, we will be able to reach the goal very fast without disturbing the so-called worldly life. From the very beginning of our Sadhana, our life will be very blissful. We have only to remember our divinity. We are not merely the body, mind, intellect or senses. We are in reality Atman only. If we accept this, naturally, we have also to accept that everyone we meet, everything we see, is also not merely the body but the Atman itself. So, the Atman sees the Atman – the Atman deals with the Atman. This consciousness has to be maintained. This is possible if we sincerely try for it.

All saints say and have proved that by taking to the chanting of God's Name, one will be able to feel the divinity in everybody. This is not clear to us at present, only because our mind which has been accumulating a lot of dirt by way of desires, Vasanas, likes, dislikes etc. cannot see the divine in ourselves or in anybody else. The chanting of God's Name gradually and surely removes the dirt layer by layer and makes the mind pure. As a result, that 'something' that was making us feel 'not divine', is removed. Then we will be able to feel our divinity. So chanting of God's Name is one of the ways for that. There are many other ways also. But let us confine ourselves to the path of devotion. While chanting the Name we should also feel that we are chanting the Name symbolizing the Supreme Being which is absolute Existence-Consciousness Bliss and which has manifested as universe with innumerable names and forms and which is seated in our own hearts. This practice will take away our sense of individuality, as, we then become conscious of only one existence – the absolute existence – universal existence.

While carrying on with our daily activities, we will, with the sense of universal existence, come to feel that we are serving the divine only, in other words, whatever objects we may see or handle, we should be conscious that each of them is divine by itself. If you are touching a person, if you are serving a person, feel that he is divine. You will be then doing the service in a perfect way. That will be real worship. Such practice, Seva, will add to the power of chanting God's Name i.e., Japa. When we do such service there will be absolutely no difference in our attitude, whether we wash a lavatory

or clean a stinking ulcer of an old patient or do some other work; because our feeling will be that we are only serving the divine in those forms – the stink of the lavatory or the sick will not affect us at all, because we are serving God in those forms. Ultimately we will reach the stage where even those services or any other work we do become worship of god Himself.

We may prefer worshipping God in the Puja room, in the images or in the photographs or idols, lighting a lamp, or chanting some Mantras and offering flowers, Naivedya etc. When these things are done without the right attitude or without the feeling that we are worshipping the divine, all-pervading, absolute existence-consciousness-bliss, we are not going to gain much. Whereas, if we do any type of work, be it cleaning or attending on a patient, with the full feeling that we are serving God, that will be real worship. So when we divinize everything, we will be doing all our actions as worship of the Lord.

Those who are on the spiritual path are Sadhakas for all the twenty-four hours, cannot say that they are Sadhakas for sometime or only when they are in the Puja room and not outside. All the time we must be dedicated to God. This is possible for everyone. So there is no clash between spiritual life and worldly life. Both must go hand in hand. Both are really one.

Let us pray to the Supreme Lord seated in our heart to give us the right attitude to be conscious of our divinity, to see divinity in others and to progress on the spiritual path so that we may get established in the Truth and enjoy eternal happiness.

- From *the book Points to Ponder*, Anandashram Publication, Kanhangad, Kerala.

MAN OF DIVINE WISDOM

-Swami Rama Tirtha

Now please listen to me attentively. I again disclose the secret. Fearlessness, salvation in life, freedom and the kingdom of heaven can be achieved by none, except by the man who knows himself, with certainty, to be Brahma himself, pure Truth, Consciousness, Bliss, ever emancipated and who sees Himself everywhere. Why his heart should be perturbed, when he sees everything as his own Self? Why should a lion be afraid of his own roar? Why should iron be afraid of a sword? It is only its changed form. Why should fire be afraid of its own flames? The stars may shoot, the ocean may burn, the Himalaya may be uprooted, and the Sun may become an ice ball, but why should a self-realised man of Divine knowledge be perturbed? Nothing can happen here without His explicit order.

According to Isha Upanishad (6, 7) “when one and only one is seen everywhere i.e., when Unity is realized in this seeming diversity by a man, he has nothing to worry about. He has no attachment with anything because there is none else beside Him.”

*Yastu sarvani bhuthani atmanyevanu pasyati
Sarvabhuteshu cha ātmanam tato na vijugupsate
Asmin Sarvani Bhutani Atmaivabhudvijānath
Tatra ko moh kasaśśoka ekatva manu pasyatah*

Another Sanskrit version says “the sun may become cold, the moon may become extremely hot, the flame of fire may flicker down words, but the liberated man is not surprised at all. The man who is not alarmed even by uprooting of big mountains, is called a mahatma or great soul.”

A Hindi poet says : “if you destroy the very idea of dualism, you have nothing to fear.”

Sun shines on account of Him, Indra obeys His orders, air is His messenger, rivers as if rub their foreheads in the sand before Him. Kings, emperors, gods, goddesses, Vedas and scriptures are

only the ideas of a God-realised soul. The three worlds and all four corners of the universe are no better than a desert or a desolate land, if there is no lustrous glory of the man of Divine knowledge. The universe is like a bulb in which the self-realized soul is the Light. All the fourteen Lokas (spheres) constitute a body in which the God-realised man is the Soul. He alone is the Truth. The earth produces food-grains in the hope that the God-realised man may one day set his foot on it. The seasons change, so they may get a sight of God-intoxicated soul. The goddesses, women and Nag ladies bear the burden of pregnancy and birth pangs, only in the hope to give birth to an immortal soul having self-knowledge. All the affairs of the world are conducted for Him. On His arrival, all duties are over. The houses are constructed, clothes are woven and put on, only to welcome the God-realised Soul. When he comes then alone are the effects are successful. Wars are fought and people die only in the hope of getting a glimpse of the liberated Man. The various stages of evolution are gone through only for the ultimate result to have a perfect man of divine knowledge. Upasana, prayer, devotion, bowing, kneeling, weeping, and the paleness due to anaemia of love end when the red-bloodedness of Self knowledge is inspired in a man.

It has been said in Chandogya Upanishad, “O beloved! Your face shines like that of a man who knows Brahma.”

TRUE UPASAK (DEVOTEE)

Brother, to tell you the truth, I have not as yet been fortunate enough to be a true devoted lover. I have seen so far only one true lover or Upasak in the whole world. Otherwise, it is for name sake only to call the rest of the devotees, Rishis, munis, preceptors or prophets, as the loving upasaks. But who is that true upasak, devotee or lover who may be called the Beloved of all? It is God alone. Do you know how he teases you in disguise like a true lover? Slowly but imperceptibly he draws your attention. In a variety of disguise, under different masks and under various names and forms, He wins your heart from behind the curtain. Whenever you give your heart to unreality, He gives Himself to strange and monstrous airs. He expresses His anger in various ways. Whenever you are deviated

from His path, He gives you a rub. He does not let you rest even for a moment, unless you are made to rest in Him and Him alone.

Dear God ! If You really are my Lover, why should You give yourself to such airs? Why should You now deny me, after once giving me the blissful taste of Your sublime love? O my Lord! Look here. The demon Shishupal (egoism) is snatching away virtuousness and godliness from us. Are You not annoyed at it? Have You no shame left in You? Come to our rescue. It is no occasion for You to show indifference. Come my lord. Come immediately.

Jai deva, a great Sanskrit poet says:

“O lord! You are my ornament and decoration. You are my very life. You are my jewels churned out of the ocean. You have always been kind to me. I pray that my heart may be studiously devoted to you.”

You have bestowed light on the Sun for nothing. You would not be poor, if you grant me also Divine bliss from all time.

O Lord! I cannot now afford to perform two duties simultaneously. I cannot manage my food, shelter and clothing and at the same time look to the pleasure of my Beloved. I do not care about my food, clothing, life and even death. You are my all, my food, my blanket, my support, my medicine, my body, my soul and everything, I do not mind, if you want to keep my body and soul together. But why are so inactive? Why should you sit idle in this way? Do some service unto me and grant me oneness with You.

Out of love, a Hindi poet addresses Him thus:

“I will not close my eyes, if I see you eye to eye, I will see the game and make you dance before me.”

Another poet says :

“It is for you alone that I keep my soul in my body.”

Keep back your things. Throw them away as charity in name of your nameless Self. Dishes full of diamonds, jewels and precious

stones have been thrown away in this way. People call them stars, satellites, moon, sun and planets etc. Take them, you astronomers, metaphysicians, traders and merchants. Take them, you kings and emperors. But alas, it is not for Rama to accept the money thrown over the palanquin of the beloved even under coercion. Let others take it, but not Rama. Rama does not accept such money. He will like to have only the beautiful and charming Beloved inside the palanquin, behind the rainbow curtains (of colourful clouds, dawn, dusk, rainbow and star studded blue sky).

- From the book *In Woods of God-realization*, Published by Swami Rama Tirtha Pratishthan, Lucknow.

HINTS TO ASPIRANTS

-Swami Ramdas

It is clearly seen that the world is now wide awake. It has found out that the goal of life is not the acquisition of the empirical objects, of the attainment of the futile ambitions. The heart of the people is hungering for divine peace - the peace that can come only by the union of the soul with God - the fountain of everlasting peace and bliss. “Seek and you shall find.” So the search for true peace and freedom should end in the realisation of both, The aspiration which is rising in waves from the bosom of humanity should certainly meet the descending grace of the Divine for the transmutation of the earthly life into divine splendour, delight and peace. The crisis through which the world is passing is absolutely a needed factor in its evolution to the sublime destiny that awaits it. There is absolutely no reason for striking a note of despair or frustration. The world is safe in the hands of God who is leading on its goal.

x x x

FINDING THE JOY IN LIFE

- Paramhansa Yogananda

You want a thing as long as you are not able to get it; when you have secured it, sooner or later you will tire of it, and then you will want something else. Have you ever tried to find that will-o'-the-wisp of "something else" which you seek at the end of all accomplished desires?

No matter what you seek, you must seek it with joy, in expectation of having joy by possessing it, and you must feel joyous when you actually get it. When seeking different things directly or indirectly, in reality you are seeking joy. When seeking all things, it is really joy that you seek through all these things and the fulfillment of all desires.

Then, why not seek joy directly? Why seek it through the medium of material desires and material things? You do not want those things in life which bring you sorrow. Neither do you want those things which promise a little joy in the beginning but sink you in deep remorse and suffering in the end.

Why seek joy by supplicating the favor of short-lasting material things? Why depend upon short-lasting material things for short-lasting joys? Material things and fulfillment of material desires are short-lasting; therefore, all joys born of them are short-lasting. Joys born of eating, smelling fragrance, listening to music, beholding beautiful objects, and touching pleasing things are short-lasting. They last only as long as the sensations born of the senses of taste, smell, hearing, sight, and touch last.

You do not want a tantalizing joy; you do not want a transitory joy which brings sorrow in its trail; you crave joy which will not disappear like the sudden flicker of gossamer wings beneath the flash of lightning. You should look for joy which will shine forever steadily, like the ever luminous radium.

Neither do you want a joy which has too much sameness; you want a joy which changes and dances itself in many ways to enthrall your mind and keep your attention occupied and interested forever. Any joy that comes by fits and starts is tantalizing; any joy that is monotonous is, of course tiresome; any joy that only comes for a little while and brings sorrow at last is undesirable. Any joy that comes for a little while then flits away, sinking you in a state of indifference, and thus deepens that state by contrast, is torturing.

The joy that rhythmically changes all the time like the different poses of an actor, and yet remains unchangeable in itself, is what all of us are seeking. Such joy can only be found through regular, deep meditation. Such an ever-new, unchangeable fountain of joy alone can quench our joy-thirst.

If Nature gave to us all at once everything we wanted-wealth, power, and lost friends-we would sooner or later get tired of all of these, but one thing we can never get tired of, and that is Joy itself. By its very nature, ever-new Joy is the only thing that can never tire the mind or make it want to exchange Joy for something else.

In the pursuit of evil or good, you are always seeking joy. The former promises joy and gives sorrow; the latter may promise sorrow but will surely give lasting joy in the end. Lasting, ever-new Joy is God, and when you have found Him, you have the eternally elusive will-o'-the wisp "something else" which you always seek at the end of all fulfilled desires. Finding this "something else," you will not seek any farther. Finding this ever-new joy, you will find everything in it that you ever sought.

Material objects which give joy remain outside of the mind; they only gain entry into the mind through imagination. Joy, from its very nature, is something born of the mind and lives closest in it. External, material objects can be destroyed, but this joy within can never be destroyed if one knows how to keep it and unless the possessor of joy changes his mind and becomes sorrowful. This joy is ever-new and indestructible.

Do not seek joy through material mediums, or desires born of such contact. Seek the unconditioned, indestructible Pure Joy within yourself, and you will then have found the ever-conscious, ever-new Joy-God. This joy is not an abstract quality of mind, but it is conscious, self-born, and is the conscious, self-expressing quality of Spirit. Seek it and be comforted forever.

When you have attained this ever-new joy, you will not have become a cynic, hating everybody. Rather, it is then that you will be in a position, fit to enjoy everything rightly. As an immortal child of God, you are supposed to enjoy everything with a lasting attitude of your eternal nature of perpetual joy. People who enjoy material things become materially-minded. It is a disgrace to behave like a discontented mortal when you are made in God's image, and when you are immortal.

When immortals behave like mortals, they experience the changes of joy, sorrow, and indifference in their natures. That is why you must destroy this grafted nature of changeability on your unchangeable nature of joy. And when you have found your own nature of unchangeable joy, you will be able to enjoy everything, either pleasant or disagreeable with your unchangeable, indestructible joy. Your joy will stand unshaken amidst the crash of breaking earthly pleasures.

OM ! OM ! OM !

PRACTICE OR LIVE THE LIFE

- Edited by Sista Subba Rao

Life may be likened to a sum in arithmetic. It is bewilderingly difficult and complex to the pupil who has not yet grasped the key to its correct solution, but once this is perceived and laid hold of, it becomes as astonishingly simple as it was formerly profoundly perplexing. Some idea of this relative simplicity and complexity of life may be grasped by fully recognising and realising the fact that, while there are scores and perhaps hundreds of ways in which a sum may be done wrong, there is only one way by which it can be done right, and that when the right way is found, the pupil knows it to be right; his perplexity vanishes, and he knows that he has mastered the problem.

The schoolmaster never attempts to teach his pupils the abstract principles of mathematics at the commencement; he knows that by such a method teaching would be vain, and learning impossible. He first places before them a very simple sum and having explained it, leaves them to do it, when after repeated failures and ever-renewed efforts, they have succeeded in doing it correctly, a more difficult task is set to them, and then another and another; and not until the pupils have, through many years of diligent application, mastered all the lessons in arithmetic does he attempt to unfold to them the underlying mathematical principles.

In a properly governed house-hold, the child is first taught to be obedient and to conduct itself properly under all circumstances. The child is not even told why it must do this, but is commanded to do it and only after it has so far succeeded in doing what is right and proper it is told why it should do it. No father would attempt to teach his child the principles of ethics before exacting from it the practice of filial duty and social virtue.

Virtue can only be known by doing, and the knowledge of Truth can only be arrived at by perfecting one-self in the practice of virtue, and to be complete in the practice and acquisition of virtue is to be

complete in the knowledge of Truth.

In summer the days gradually lengthen. Each day the sun rises a little higher and the light lingers a little longer. So each day we can strengthen our character, each day we can open our heart a little more to the light of Truth and allow the sun of Righteousness to shine more highly in our mind. The sun does not increase in volume or intensity but the earth turns towards it and receives more as it turns. All that there is of truth and good is now. It does not increase or diminish but as we turn towards it, we receive of its radiance and beneficence in ever-increasing abundance and power.

As the artisan acquires skill in fashioning the articles of his craft by daily and diligent practice with his tools so do you acquire skill in fashioning good deeds by daily and diligent practice of the Truth.

The deeds and thoughts that lead to suffering are those that spring from self-interest and self-seeking; the thoughts and deeds that produce blessedness are those that spring from Truth. The process by which the mind is thus changed and transmuted is two fold, it consists of meditation and practice. By silent meditation the ground and reason of right conduct is sought and by practice, right doing is accomplished in daily life.

For Truth is not a matter of book learning or subtle reasoning, or disputation or controversial skill. It consists in right doing.

You will be greatly helped if you devote at least one hour every day to quiet meditation on lofty moral subjects and their application to every day life. In this way you will cultivate a calm, quiet strength, and will develop right perception and correct judgment. Do not be anxious to hurry matters. Do your duty to the very uttermost, live a disciplined and self-denying life. Conquer impulse and guide your actions by moral and spiritual principles, principles as distinguished from your feelings, firmly believing that your object will be in its own time completely accomplished.

It is well to become conscious of your shortcomings for having

realised them and feeling the necessity of over-coming them, you will sooner or later rise above them into the pure atmosphere of duty and unselfish love. You should not picture dark things in the future, but if you think of the future at all, think of it as bright. Above all, do your duty each day, and do it cheerfully and unselfishly, and then each day will bring its own measure of joy and peace and the future will hold much happiness for you. The best way to overcome your faults is to perform all your duties faithfully without thinking of any gain to yourself and to do all you can to make others happy, speaking kindly to all, doing kind things when you can, and not retaliating when others do or say unkind things.

DUTY

All duty should be regarded as sacred and its faithful and unselfish performance is one of the leading rules of conduct. All personal and selfish considerations should be extracted and cast away from the doing of one's duty and when this is done, Duty ceases to be irksome and becomes joyful. Duty is only irksome to him who craves for some selfish enjoyment or benefit for himself. Let the man who is chafing under the irksomeness of his duty look to himself and he will find that his fearsomeness proceeds not from the duty itself, but from his selfish desire to escape it. He who neglects duty, be it great or small, or of a public or private nature, neglects virtue; and he who in his heart rebels against duty rebels against virtue.

Jesus gave to the world a code of rules, by the observance of which all men could become sons of God, could live the perfect life. These rules or precepts are so simple, direct and unmistakable that it is impossible to misunderstand them. So plain and unequivocal are they that even an unlettered child could grasp their meaning without difficulty. All of them are directly related to human conduct, and can be applied to by the individual to his own life only. To carry out the spirit of these rules in one's daily conduct constitutes the whole duty of life, and lifts the individual into the full consciousness of his divine origin and nature of his oneness with God, the supreme good.

Do your duty with the utmost faithfulness, putting away all thought of reward. Let no thought of pleasure or self entice you from your duty. Do not interfere with the duties of others. Be upright in all things. Under the most severe trial, though your happiness and life should seem to be at stake, do not swerve from the right. The man of unconquerable integrity is invincible. He cannot be confounded and he escapes the painful mazes of doubt and bewilderment. If one should abuse or accuse or speak ill of you, remain silent and self controlled, striving to understand that the wrong doer cannot injure you, unless you retaliate and allow yourself to be carried away by the same wrong condition of mind. Strive also to meet the evildoer with compassion seeing how he is injuring himself.

Folly and wisdom, weakness and strength, are within man and not in any external thing, neither do they spring from any external cause. A man cannot be strong for another, he can only be strong for himself, he cannot overcome for another he can only overcome for him-self. You may learn of another, but you must accomplish for yourself. Put away all external props and rely upon the truth within you. A creed will not bear a man up in the hour of temptation, he must possess the inward knowledge which slays temptation. A speculative philosophy will prove a shadowy thing in the time of calamity. A man must have the inward wisdom which puts an end to grief.

The unfailing wisdom is found only, by constant practice in pure thinking and well doing, by harmonising one's mind and heart to the those things which are beautiful, loveable and true.

That Jesus was meek and lowly and loving and compassionate and pure is very beautiful but it is not sufficient. It is necessary that you also should be meek and lowly and loving and compassionate and pure.

That Jesus subordinated his own will to the will of the father it is inspiring to know, but it is not sufficient. It is necessary that you too should likewise subordinate your will to that of the over-ruling

good. The grace and beauty and goodness that were in Jesus can be of no value to you, cannot be understood by you, unless they are also in you and they can never be in you until you practise them, for apart from doing, the qualities which constitute goodness do not, as far as you are concerned, exist.

To us and to all there is no sufficiency, no blessedness, no peace to be derived from the goodness of another not even the goodness of god, not until the goodness is done by us, not until it is, by constant effort, incorporated into our being, can we know and possess its blessedness and peace. Therefore thou who adores Jesus for his divine qualities, practise those qualities thyself and thou too shall be divine.

The teaching of Jesus brings men back to the simple truth that righteousness or right doing is entirely a matter of individual conduct and not a mystical some-thing apart from a man's thoughts and actions and that each must be righteous for himself, each must be a doer of the work and it is man's own doing that brings him peace and gladness of heart, not the doing of another.

The term goodness does not mean sickly sentiment, but inward virtue the direct result of which is strength and power, therefore the good man is not weak, the weak man is not good. He should not judge the souls of others in the spirit of condemnation, but we can judge of our own life and conduct by results, there is nothing more certain than this. This evil doer speedily proves that his evil produces misery, the good man demonstrates that his goodness results in happiness. It is a fact that one may flourish like a green bay tree and yet be unrighteous, but he should also remember that the bay tree at last perishes, or is cut down and such is the fate of the unrighteous.

The unrighteous man is swayed by his feelings; likes and dislikes are his masters, prejudices and partialities blind him. Desiring and suffering, craving and sorrowing, self control he knows not and great is his unrest. The righteous man is master of his moods; likes and dislikes he has abandoned as childish things; prejudice and

partiality he has put away. Desiring nothing he does not suffer, not craving enjoyment, sorrow does not overtake him, perfect in self-control, great peace abides with him. Do not condemn, resent, or retaliate, do not argue, or become a partisan. Maintain thy calmness with all sides, be just and speak the truth. Act in gentleness, compassion and charity. Be infinitely patient, hold fast to love and let it shape thy doing. Have good will to all without distinction. Think equally of all and be disturbed by none.

Think of thy self as abolished. In all thy doing, think of the good of others and of the world and not of pleasure or reward to thyself. Thou art no longer separate and divided from men, thou art one with all. No longer strife against others for thyself but sympathise with all. Regard no men. Be at peace with all, pour out compassion on all living things and let boundless charity adorn thy words and deeds. Such is the glad way of Truth, such is the doing which is according to the eternal. Filled with joy is the right doer, he acts from principles which do not change and pass away. He is one with the eternal and has passed beyond unrest. The peace of the righteous man is perfect, it is not disturbed by change and impermanence. Freed from passion, he is equal-minded, calm and does not sorrow, he sees things as they are and is no more confused.

LOVE

Doubt, anxiety and worry are unsubstantial shades in the under-world of self and shall no more trouble him who will climb the serene altitudes of his soul. Grief also, will be for ever dispelled by him who will comprehend the law of his being. He who so comprehends shall find the supreme law of life and shall find that it is love, that it is imperishable love. He shall become one with love and loving all with mind freed from all hatred and folly, he shall receive the invincible protection which love affords. Claiming nothing he shall suffer no loss, seeking no pleasure he shall find no grief and employing all his powers as instruments of service, he shall evermore live in the highest state of blessedness and bliss.

The whole journey from the kingdom of strife to the kingdom of love resolves itself into a process which may be summed up in the following words:-

The regulation and purification of conduct, such a process must, if assiduously pursued, necessarily lead to perfection. It will also be seen that as the man obtains the mastery over certain forces within himself, he arrives at a knowledge of all the laws which operate in the realms of all these forces and by watching the ceaseless working of cause and effect within himself, until he understands it; he then understands it in its universal adjustments in the body of humanity. The process is also one of simplification of the mind a sifting away of all but the essential gold in character.

The world is and will be for many years to come shut out from that golden age which is the realisation of selfless love. You, if you are willing, may enter it now, by rising above your selfish self, if you will pass from prejudice, hatred and condemnation to gentle and forgiving love. Where hatred, dislike and condemnation are, selfless love does not abide. It resides only in the heart that has ceased from all condemnation.

He who knows that love is at the heart of all things and has realised the all suffering power of that love, has no room in his heart for condemnation.

He whose heart is centred in the supreme love does not brand and classify men, does not seek to convert men to his own views, not to convince them of the superiority of methods. Knowing the law of love he lives it and maintains the same calm attitude of mind and sweetness of heart towards all. The debased and the unlearned, the selfish and the unselfish receive alike the benediction of his tranquil thought.

to be continued..

- from the *Book of Meditation for everyday in Life* by James Allen, published by Geeta Pracharak Sangham, Secunderabad. Andhra Pradesh, India.

HOW TO MEET A DIFFICULT SITUATION

- Dada J.P. Vaswani

Do you find yourself in a difficult situation? Are you in financial trouble? Are you filled with apprehension about life?

There are events, incidents and circumstances of life over which we have no control. We may succeed in running away from unpleasant experiences for a while but we can never avoid difficult situations all the time for they are essential to our growth.

So, what can we do when unpleasant things happen to us?

It is only when we are unwilling to meet a difficulty or are afraid to face it that it gets the better of us. The one practical way to meet a difficult situation is to look it in the face with courage and determination, and with the prayer "So help me, God!" When, trusting in God, we go forward to meet it, as we would meet a friend, the impossible happens. What was thought to be a trial is seen to be a blessing in disguise.

Meet every difficulty bravely. Do not try to avoid it. Difficulties are gifts that God sends us for the enrichment of our interior life. He is the lord of compassion and His works are ever the works of mercy. If only we trust Him and surrender ourselves to Him, asking Him to lead us wherever He will, fearing nothing, avoiding nothing, but rejoicing in all that He sends us, no harm can ever happen to us. Then, through every circumstance and situation in life will flow to us the love, the joy and the peace of God.

A friend of mine lost an eye in an accident. Several friends visited him in the hospital. They found him cheerful as ever in the face of a great and irreparable loss. When they expressed surprise, he said, "I thank God that one eye still remains. I can see with it as well as I did when I had two eyes. The accident could easily have

robbed me of both my eyes, but God chose to protect one of them. Blessed be His Name!" The accident, which would have plunged another man into depths of darkness, did not seem to touch him.

We must always find some reason or the other for which to feel thankful of God. If there is one thing that God loves, it is a humble, thankful heart. Even in the darkest hours of life, if only we turn around, we shall not fail to find something for which we should feel thankful to God.

EVERYTHING SHOULD BE SACRIFICED FOR GOD

Swami Omkar

Everything should be sacrificed for God. Nothing is too big or too great a sacrifice in order to realise God. Is it a sacrifice at all to exchange the unreal for the Real? One is blessed with Light, when he eliminates darkness. Giving up darkness cannot be called as sacrifice. Whatever stands in the way of God-realisation must be cast aside. If you talk of anything that keeps you away from God, close your mouth. If your eyes fail to see God in everything close them. If your ears harken not God in every sound, plug them up. Nothing shall come between us and God-realisation.

May God help us all !

from the book HOURS OF SILENCE

OM ! OM! OM !

THE MELODY OF OM

-Swami Jyotirmayananda

Whether seated in meditation or moving about each day's activities, try to train your mind to hear all sounds as the Breath of Brahman – as the fascinating, heavenly melody of Om that is sung perpetually by the Self. All “real” sounds you hear in the world are merely inflections of Om.

The Self chants Om through the lips of the whole creation. You need only to listen. The Ocean sings Om in its rolling waves. The rumbling clouds and whispering breeze sing Om. When the Sun rises, it sings aloud and awakens all creatures by chanting Om – dispelling darkness and fear. Train your “ears” to hear this with new mystic sensitivity.

As you evolve, even the grossest sounds that normally agitate the mind – cries, loud, shouts, bursts of anger – all must be considered as merely variations of Om. Meditate on those sounds you have always rejected as ugly and demoniac and try to hear the higher language of the Self reverberating through them

Also reflect upon your own use of the gift of speech. Your lips should be a channel for the Self, not the ego. The Self should sing through your words. Your speech exists only to chant Om, to express the subtle meaning of the Self. Whenever you speak to others, feel that Om is rising up within you like the rising sun and let the song of Om radiate from you like its inspiring rays.

Meditate on a musical melody that your mind finds entrancing. All great compositions emanate from the heart. The urge to recognize melody and to feel joy when listening to melody has its root in the heart.

Deep within the human heart is a Melody of Silence that is beyond description. In this relative world, the spirit, unable to discover the spontaneous melody tries to simulate it to whatever extent possible. This effort to simulate and capture that melody in the plane of the senses has given rise to the great art of music. By pursuing

melody with the mystic sensitivity of a meditative mind, you will be led to the deeper melody that exists within.

All internal sounds, all thoughts and desires that clamor in the mind, must also become absorbed in the cosmic melody of Om. When all the noises of mental tensions are absorbed, the Melody of Silence alone is heard.

In meditation, try to witness the clamor of your thoughts and desires as still another inflection of Om. As you do, the clamor will subside to a murmur that melts into the Melody of Silence, which is Om in the subtlest form.

LEARN TO THINK CORRECTLY

Thought is a mighty force. As you think, so you become. Your thoughts not only shape your character and destiny, but they also determine the nature of things around you, the society that you live in, the circumstances that you encounter and the privileges that you enjoy.

But most people do not recognize the value of correct thinking. They let their mind harbor the dark denizens of negative thoughts, uncontrolled emotions and the blind sentiments. And this is the reason why humanity in spite of its quest for peace and joy, in spite of its advancement in various fields of science, does not achieve harmony and peace, joy and rest.

If your thoughts are freed from the passions of anger, hatred, greed and selfishness, you will experience a peace and satisfaction that you could not experience even in the most beautiful conditions of the world. If your thoughts are freed from the limitations of your selfish personality, you will experience expansion and freedom, the joy of which cannot be described in words.

You have the inexhaustible power of Spirit latent in your heart. But due to lack of right thinking, you have developed various complexes that sap your willpower; and your mind, devoid of will and spiritual strength, continues to remain in the state of distraction, disharmony and restlessness. A restless mind is the cause of all

that is negative in life. The vices such as hatred, misunderstanding, jealousy, greed and violence arise from restlessness of mind. But when the mind is brought to a peaceful state, the vices of the lower self give way to virtues such as compassion, cheerfulness at the prosperity of others, devotion to God and the like.

Endeavor to raise the level of your thinking by good association as the selfless service of humanity. Do not keep your thoughts involved in the little things of the world. Let your thoughts rise high towards the blessed center of the self, towards the Truth that sustains the world, towards God, who is the center and basis of the world.

When negative thoughts arise, do not fight with them. Be a mere witness. They will pass away. When adversities arise in your life, do not be depressed. Take recourse to wisdom. Every condition has a meaning and significance in life. Learn to be balanced in pleasure and pain, in gain and loss, in success and failure. Thus your mind will remain serene in all conditions of life, your face will be ever beaming with peace and joy. In your veins there will flow the ever-bubbling energy of the self.

Pure thoughts – undistorted by the limitations of the lower self, unaffected by anger, greed and hatred – are in unison with the Divine Will. These thoughts are most powerful. They transform the lives of people. Learn to acquire the imperishable treasure of pure thoughts, and you too will be a source of inspiration and strength for countless others.

May God bless you!

From Yoga Guide January, 2012

ASHRAM NEWS

SHANTI ASHRAM NEWS

With the blessings of Pujya Mataji the holy Vyasapurnima was celebrated in the Omkar Mandir in Shanti Ashram on 31-07-2015, Friday. The Telugu Pandit of Shanti Ashram High School, Sri Suryaprakasharao discoursed on the birth and significance in the change of the name of Lord Vyasa, the first and the foremost Guru. He also spoke on how the disciples should choose the right path to receive the grace of Guru and achieve their life's goal. Sri Vinjamuri Radhakrishna, the correspondent of the schools explained that the schools have made steady progress and made upward march only because of the grace of the guru. The students of the 10th class of the year 2014-2015 have come out in flying colours securing 100% result because of their hard work, commitment and discipline. The correspondent hoped that these children will continue to tread the same path in future too to become good citizens making the Ashram and their parents proud.

Yadla Satyanarayana who secured a first class with 9.3 grade and Padagatla Durgalakshmi with 9.2 grade received the gold medal, instituted by Late Sri MSN Murty in memory of Late Mutyala Subbarayudu, and Rs. 1116 respectively from Pujya Mataji and Smt Ammaji wife of Late Sri Subbarayudu. Sri Kola Satyanarayana presented Rs. 500/- each to all those who secured highest marks in the 10th class. The Satsang was concluded with Swamiji Peace Prayer.

Mallavaram Avadhuta Bhakta Mandali chanted Hanuman Chalisa 108 times on the Gurupurnima day. On the first Ekadasi (Toli Ekadasi) the residents of the Ashram chanted the whole of the Bhagavadgita.

Gurupurnima was celebrated in the Ashram branches at Kakinada and Pithapuram.

On the International Day of Yoga Sri Ramakrishna, the yoga master conducted a yoga camp on 21-07-2015 in the Kakinada Branch. This branch also recited the Bhagavadgita and Vishnusahasranamam on the first Ekadasi.

As a normal routine, food grains were distributed among the old in the head quarters as well as in all the branches of the Ashram.

IN MEMORIUM

Freedom fighter, ex-minister, ex-parliamentarian, Sri Bhattam Sri Rama Murty merged into the Divine on 06-07-2015 at Vishakhapattanam. He was a true Gandhian following the principles and ideals of Mahatma Gandhi. He was very closely associated with Pujya Sri Omkarji Maharaj. He used to visit the Ashram two to three times a year. He created a corpus fund so that on every Gandhi Jayanti, the students of the Ashram Gurukul would be presented with clothes. He rendered yeoman service for the development of the Vishakhapattanam branch and Kailasagiri Branch. Pujya Mataji and all the inmates of the Ashram paid their homage to this noble soul and prayed for his Sadgati.

ANUSTHANA YOGI BRAHMASRI SIVANANDA MURTY

To pen a few words about Pujya Sri Sivananda Murty is as difficult a task as making an attempt to measure the infinite sky.

Pujya Sivananda Murty and Pujya Sri Swami Omkar had known each other well. Sri Sivananda Murty used to send his divine message for all the programmes conducted at the Ashram. He was a Yogi who practiced every word that he preached. In spite of his busy schedule he always did his Anusthan with great devotion and dedication.

For the convenience of those who have retired from active life and wanted to lead a peaceful life and do Anusthan he established a Vanaprastha Ashramam called Anandavanam.

He educated many students. He also extended medical help to the needy. Though he was a government official occupying a high post and a great spiritual master he led a very simple life. Like a father he showered his love and affection on all. He was a role model for many a Sadhaka. He was a wishfulfilling tree to the poor and needy. He was always interested in the growth of Shanti Ashram. On 11-06-2015 he reached the abode of God.

However great a person may be, he will have to abide by the laws of nature. Sri Sivananda Murty may not be present physically but his spiritual waves will inspire all the Sadhakas and Vanaprasthies. May the spirit of Sivananda Murty bestow spiritual power and mental strength on all aspirants is our prayer. True devotion towards a Guru can be expressed only by following his words in letter and spirit.

(Swamini Vinamrananda Saraswati, Shanti Ashram)

Kotagiri center news

In the recent Tamil Nadu Board Examination for 10th class, the VSVM school of Shanti Ashram has secured 100% result with all the 126 students securing first class. One of the students Km. M. Nivetha secured state third rank by getting 497 out of 500 marks, while Km. B. Sanjuna got 496 out of 500 and these two being district 2nd and 3rd ranks. The School has been consistently maintaining the state and district ranks for the past three years.

Pujya Jnaneswari Mataji who was present from 23rd April to 26th June 2015 in Kotagiri expressed her happiness over the results and congratulated the students, the team of teachers, the Principal, the school correspondent Sri Saibaba and the Advisory Committee President Sri Bhojarajan for their great contribution in the progress of the school.

Your contributions and support:

1. Annadanam : a) Permanent- Rs. 5,000/-, Rs. 10,000/- Rs. 20,000/-, 25,000/-
(Meals) b) One day -Rs. 500/-, 1000/-, 2000/-, 2,500/-
2. Education Development Fund
3. Child Welfare Fund
4. Old Age Welfare Fund
5. Library Fund
6. Peace Journal Subscription Fund :
a) India b) Annual - Rs. 50/-
Abroad Annual - Rs. 500/-
7. General Maintenance Fund
8. Publication Fund
9. Teachers' Remuneration Fund (accepted each May) Rs. 3,000 per month or Rs. 36,000 per year
10. Gosamrakshana (Cow Protection) Fund

Donations can be addressed to :

**The Secretary, Sri Shanti Ashram, (via) Sankhavaram ,
E.G. Dist., A. P. India - 533 446, (D.D. can be sent on Indian Bank, Kakinada)
email : srishantiashram@gmail.com; Phone: 7382009962
FAX : 08868-244220, Thotapalli; FAX : 0891 - 2712025, Visakhapatnam**

Donors IT exemption under Sec. - 80 G.
