



PEACE

A Quarterly Journal of Peace and Illumination

Founder : H.H. Sri Swami Omkar

Editor : Secretary, Sri Shanti Ashram

Vol. 91. JUNE - 2017 No. 02

CONTENTS

1. Upanishad	–	2
2. Meditation	–	3
3. Prayer	–	4
4. How to forget god?	– Swami Omkarji Maharaj	5
5. I am the Monarch	– Swami Omkarji Maharaj	8
6. I have seen the light	– Swami Omkarji Maharaj	10
7. Kaivalyopaniṣat	– Swami Tattvavidananda Saraswati	12
8. I love to work but	– Swami Omkarji Maharaj	16
9. I take refuge in Soham	– Swami Omkarji Maharaj	18
10. Impossible for God	– Swami Omkarji Maharaj	19
11. Medha Sūktam	– Swami Tattvavidananda Saraswati	22
12. Secret of Karma Yoga	– Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj	25
13. The Key to Your	– Swami Chidananda	31
14. Yoga can change your life	– Swami Jyotirmayananda	36
15. Saguna-Brahma-Vidya	– Swami Brahmananda	43
16. Individual Self and Eternal Self	– Swami Ranganathananda	47

Kaivalyopaniṣat

पुनश्च जन्मान्तरकर्मयोगात् स एव जीवः स्वपिति प्रबुद्धः ।

पुरत्रये क्रीडति यश्च जीवस्ततस्तु जातं सकलं विचित्रम् ।

आधारमानन्दमखण्डबोधं यस्मिंल्लयं याति पुरत्रयं च ॥

१४

punaśca janmāntarakarmayogāt

sa eva jīvassvapiti prabuddhaḥ,

puratraye kṛīḍati yaśca jivastatastu

jātaṁ sakalaṁ vicitraṁ,

ādharamānandamakhaṇḍabodhaṁ

yasmin layaṁ yāti puratrayaṁ ca ..

14

punaḥ ca - and again; *saḥ eva* - That alone; *jīvaḥ* - individual; *janmāntarakarmayogāt* - due to association with actions that lead to another birth; *prabuddhaḥ* - wakes up; *svapiti* - sleeps; *yaḥ ca* - who; *jīvaḥ* - as the individual; *puratraye* - in the three cities; *kṛīḍati* - plays; *tataḥ tu* - from Him alone; *sakalam* - all; *vicitraṁ* - diverse; *jātaṁ* - originated; *ādhāram* - the ground; *ānandam* - Bliss; *akhaṇḍabodham* - undivided knowingness; *yasmin ca* - also in which; *puratrayaṁ* - the three cities; *layam* - resolution; *yāti* - attain.

That individual alone, who is awake, again sleeps because of association with the actions of past lives. The entire variety of the creation has originated from Him who is playing in the three cities as the individual. Brahman, the substratum, is Bliss; It is undivided Awareness. The three cities resolve in Him.

(*Tattava Prakāśikā* by Swami Tattavavidananda Saraswati)

MEDITATION

त्वमकरणः स्वराडखिलकारकशक्तिधरस्तव

बलिमुद्रहन्ति समदन्त्यजयानिमिषाः ।

वर्षभुजोऽखिलक्षितिपतेरिव विश्वसृजो

विदधति यत्र ये त्वधिकृता भवतश्चकिताः ।।

*tvamakaraṇaḥ svarāḍakhilakārakaśaktidharastava
balimudvahnti samadantyaajayānimiṣāḥ .*

*varṣabhujō'khilakṣitipateriva viśvasṛjō
vidadhati yatra ye tvadhikṛtā bhavataśchakitāḥ ..*

You are the self-effulgent Inspirer of the senses of the perception and the organs of action in all beings. The different deities presiding over the senses, mind, intellect, life forces, and the corresponding elements of the Nature are dependent on You, and they carry to You the various offerings which men make to them.

The various gods, beginning from Brahma the Creator, who are under the sway of maya, derive their powers from You and they are installed in their respective positions by You. Naturally, and out of fear (lest they should lose positions), they pay reverential homage to You, even as the kings of old would pay their annual tributes to the emperor.

- from *śṛtigitā* by Swakami Gabhirananda,
Advaita Ashram Publication)

*tamevaikaṃ jānatha ātmānaṃ anyā vāco vimuṃcatha.
amṛtasyaiṣa setuḥ*

Realize the supreme One who is your own *ātman*; be absorbed in Him; and give up all other vain pursuits. This is the sure way to *mokṣa* or absolute Freedom

Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad

PRAYER

आ मां मेधा सुरभिर्विश्वरूपा हिरण्यवर्णा जगती जगम्या ।

ऊर्जस्वती पयसा पिन्वमाना सा मां मेधा सुप्रतीका जुषन्ताम् ।।

*ā māṃ medhā surabhirviśvarūpā
hiraṇyavarṇā jagatī jagamyā,
ūrjasvati payasā pinvamānā sā māṃ
medhā supratikā juṣantām ..*

surabhiḥ - the wish-yielding cow; *viśvarūpā* - helping to understand a variety of things or the universe; *hiraṇyavarṇā* - Having the luster of Gold (by nature benedictory and pleasing); *jagatī* - present in all the lifeforms; *jagamyā* - attainable by the seekers; *medhā* - Goddess of intelligence; *mām* - towards me; *ā* - having come; *ūrjasvati* - strong; *payasā* - (heavy) with milk (milk-like boons); *pinvamānā* - showering me; *sā* - that; *medhā* - Goddess of intelligence; *supratikā* - with auspicious beginnings; *mām* - me; *juṣantām* - may bless.

The Goddess of intelligence is, by nature, benedictory and pleasing, like the wish-yielding cow (to the devotees). She is present in all living beings (in varying degrees) and helps the devotees that gain Her grace to understand the different aspects of the universe. May That Goddess come into my life, gain strength in me, make me begin auspicious things, and bless me by showering me with milk-like boons.

- from *Medha Sūktam*, *Vaidika Sūkta Mañjarī*; *Tattva Prakāśikā* by Swami Tattvavidananda Saraswati. Published by Brahma Vidya Kuteer, Secunderabad, Telangana State, India.

HOW TO FORGET GOD?

(Is it ever possible?)

- Swami Omkarji Maharaj

GOD CANNOT BE FORGOTTEN EVEN FOR THE MILLIONTH FRACTION OF A SECOND, FOR HE IS PRESENT ETERNALLY.

At the very outset, upon seeing the title of my message, some people may think that I am crazy or atleast queer, for any sensible man should write a message on: "HOW TO REMEBER GOD", but not on "HOW TO FOREGET GOD"! If some people think that HOW TO FOREGET GOD is a senseless theme, I repeat HOW TO REMEMBER GOD, is also an equally senseless theme, for God is never aloof or separate, to remember Him. Remembrance is possible only in duality and duality is ignorance.

But my point now is, if we could understand the theme how to forget God, or rather whether it is possible to forget God, we would be able to know the positive side of remembering God. If there is anything impossible, it is only to forget God.

How can you forget God, when he is sparkling in your very eyes, throbbing in your heart and flowing in each and every breath, both day and night? How can you forget God, who is moving and expressing, ney thinking in you? How can you forget God, when you are THAT? Forgetfulness is possible only in duaity and God is one without a second. You are a part and parcel of Him; PRAJNANAM BRAHMA. The Intelligence in you, is Brahman, the God, the indivisible and Eternal.

You cannot forget God amidst your busy or heavy work, for He is there working in you. It is impossible to forget Him even in sleep, for He is there watching over your sleep. He is the Witness of your waking, dreaming and sleeping states - Nay, He is the Eternal witness of the whole of the phenomenal world. Even in death, the so-called fearful change, God is not forsaking you, for He is there equally present

both in death and life - in desolation and creation. Death and life are relative terms, the obverse and reverse of the same coin. Forgetfulness and remembrance are the hallucinations of the restless mind. Pray! Know who you are! Realise thyself now. Know thyself and be silent.

Give up mental wrangling for the peace of your soul. Be free of all imaginations. You need not forget or remember anyone. You can forget and remember, only when something is separate from you.

In the moments of silence often I close my eyes and face the SELF-EFFULGENT light pervading and permeating the very cells of my being, as well as the universe, I exclaim in ecstasy:

O God! How impossible it is for man, Thy Living Image, to ever forget Thee!

Sometimes in the blessed moments of silence I ask the mind:

Are you forgetting or do you remember Him?

The answer comes from the STILL SMALL VOICE that FORGETFULNESS IS A DELUSION AND REMEMBRANCE is A GRATER DELUSION.

There is something beyond forgetfulness and remembrance, death and life, disease and health, poverty and wealth, virtue and vice. Listen to what Astavakra says of this Blessed Condition:

Virtue ana vice, pleasue and pain are of the mind, not of you, O all-pervading one! You are neither doer nor enjoyer. Verily, you are ever free.

You are the one seer of all and ever free. Verily this alone is your bondage, that you see the Seer as other than yourself.

Dear reader, my Loving Image of God, thus you see, God is none other than YOURSELF, the Seer, the one without a second; thus how can you forget yourself? As it is impossible to forget God,

BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD.

It is the serpent of egoism which is making a wreck of Divine Life. Destroy the ego with the consciousness of the Truth that you are the Brahman - the only changeless Reality. Repeat with ecstasy.

PRAJNANAM BRAHMA - The intelligence is Brahman.

AYAMATHMA BRAHMA - This Atman alone is Brahman.

AHAM BRAHMASMI - I am Brahman.

TAT TWAM ASI - Thou art That.

Now, let me leave you in That, the light of lights, the stupendous, self-effulgent splendour of millions of Suns. Can the Sun ever forget his light? Can the Ocean ever forget its waters? How can you, being the Sun of suns, the Light of lights, the one indivisible, Infinite and Ineffable Light, forget YOURSELF. You can forget anything or anyone in the world but it is impossible to forget YOURSELF, the Adviteeya, the one without a second. Hence be happy knowing this unalterable, unchanging and ever-present Truth, the Indwelling Light which is within, without, above, below and all around, being Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient! RECOGNISE and BE SILENT

Glory! Glory! Glory!

OM! OM! OM!

OFFERING.

This Message is offered Lovingly to the crazy and queer people in the East and the West who are like myself (for a mad one alone can understand a mad man!), but who are the different manifestations of the One Indivisible Self; wishing Peace on Earth and Goodwill among all Nations!

MAY PEACE BE UNTO ALL

OM! OM! OM!

I AM THE MONARCH

Swami Omkarji Maharaj

There are moments in the life of everyone, the moments of elevation and inspiration, when one feels that he is the Monarch of all that he surveys. There are also moments of dejection and depression, when one feels that he is a fettered bond-slave of not only the mighty and rich, but also of his base and low passions.

Yet, one is born not to be crushed with sorrow and disappointment, the passing clouds of the evanescent life, but to be the master of destiny and to be the Monarch of all that he surveys, recognising the effulgent LIGHT, both within and without.

As I sit now alone at the foot of the blessed Kailas, basking in the warm sunshine, facing the glorious ocean and listening to its sweet music, no wonder I feel that I am the Monarch of the whole world.

To whom do these rocks belong? Who owns these sand particles and these sand dunes? Who owns these green hills, the effulgent Sun, the rolling ocean and the blue sky above? To whom does the cool breeze, which is blowing on me now, belong? Who owns this world of manifested sound, and who owns the unmanifested creation of Silence?

How rich and mighty I am to own all these manifested things of form and name and unmanifested states of Love and Peace! Verily, I am the Monarch of all that I see, hear and face. All that one surveys belongs to the God-man, to the God-intoxicated one who belongs to humanity.

Dear loving reader, what belongs to me belongs to you also. Pray, come to the foot of Kailash to take a firm hold of your Divine Heritage. No man however selfish, self-centred, all powerful and mighty he may be, can ever monopolise these God-given elements, the common property of every child of God in every clime and religion, on the face of the Mother Earth.

The Sun, air, water, earth and the ether are not all these yours?
The Sun shines for you, the air blows for you, ocean is made for you.
The earth was created for you and the ether is there for you.

Love, Peace and Light, are they the monopoly of any sage or saint or of any other individual? Are they not the Birthright of all souls, the images of God, in both East and West?

It is with us now to be the Monarchs and Emperors, ruling and owning all these hills and dales, stars and suns, rivers and oceans, filled with Light and Love, to remain as stingy misers and pitiable beggars, denying and ignoring our Divine possessions, filled with fear, darkness and ignorance of every kind.

Dear Friend, pray, come to the foot of Kailas to bask in the sunshine, to taste the Peace, your Birthright. Welcome to the Heights of Kailas to reign in Supreme Glory! Why delay?

Pray do come now, for this moment is ours and not the next moment. Here is a welcome, a standing invitation awaits you at all times, both at the foot and the Heights of Kailas. Let Kailas draw you from slavery to freedom, to bless you with Peace!

MAY PEACE BE UNTO ALL!

OM! OM! OM!

**THE READERS ARE REQUESTED TO VISIT THE WEBSITE
OF SRI SANTIASHRAM UPLOADED RECENTLY ON
21-1-2017, ON THE OCCASSION OF THE CENTENARY
CELEBRATIONS.**

LOG ON TO : www.srisantiashram.org.in

I HAVE SEEN THE LIGHT

-Swami Omkarji Maharaj

Recently these words have been ringing in my ears and I often repeat the above words even unconsciously. The very repetition of the above words are life-giving and soul-awakening. But the cynic will raise the question, "How can you see the Light? Is it outside?" My answer is: "The Light is both outside and inside too, for it is everywhere."

The pessimist continues to ask. "How can you see it with these eyes? Is it an object to be seen?" To satisfy him I have to say, "I feel and experience the Light. I recognise it in the moments of Silence".

Even then a misanthrope might raise the objection, "When there is ONE without a second, how can the ONE feel, experience or recognise IT?" No doubt, the misanthrope is right hence one should be silent without uttering any words or reasoning even any feelings. Here alone I am reminded of the wise words of a sage,

He Who Says That He Knows Is A Fool.

He Who Says That He Does Not Know Is Ignorant.

*He Who Says Neither He Knows Nor He Does Not Know, Is
The Wise Among Men.*

Hence, the knower of Truth is silent. One who has seen or recognised the Light becomes silent. As such, it has been said HE WHO KNOWS THE HIGHEST MELTS IN SILENCE.

Yet, out of the fullness of heart the mouth speaks. I have the weakness of wanting to share everything I feel and realise, with each and everyone on the face of the earth. All are my own. The Light excludes none but includes all. Whether you want the Light from the Sun or not, it is basking you in its sunshine.

When the light of the ordinary outer Sun in the world is filing and refilling your being, dispelling all clouds of darkness with its light, to

speak of the Light of lights which pervades and permeates the very cells of your being as well as the Universe?

KNOWING THAT THEY MELT IN SILENCE.

RECOGNISE AND BE SILENT.

Regardless of what the cynics might say, I long to shout from the house-tops and hill-tops, the life-giving words that I HAVE SEEN THE LIGHT. I have seen the Light both within and without. I See the Light everywhere. I am seeing the Light now in you, for it is our common heritage. It belongs to you as much as to me.

Dear Friend, I have seen the Light. Why don't you see it also? Won't you help me by recognising the Light NOW and HERE? It is within, without, above, below and all around, for it is the only Reality!

May we ever abide in this Light of lights, both in activity and Silence, Not only now in the present living moment, but also in each and every moment of our lives, is the prayer of your own brother.

MAY PEACE BE UNTO ALL!

OM! OM! OM!

(From The Foot hills of Kailas, Waltair)

Universal love is not a thing to be believed or not believed.
He who possesses a universal vision spontaneously lives it.

(Ramdas)

Kaivalyopanishat

Swami Tattvavidananda Saraswati

(*Tattava Prakāṣikā* for the mantra 14)

पुनश्च जन्मान्तरकर्मयोगात् स एव जीवः स्वपिति प्रबुद्धः ।

पुरत्रये क्रीडति यश्च जीवस्ततस्तु जातं सकलं विचित्रम् ।

आधारमानन्दमखण्डबोधं यस्मिंल्लयं याति पुरत्रयं च ॥

१४

The analogy of the dream points out that you are not the waking person enjoying the waking world. You are the uninvolved witness. You appear to be attached to the things of the dream but now you know that it is false. In the same way, if you realise your nature of non-attachment even in the waking state, you are free from the bondage even while these states rotate. Everything happens in your presence but you are free from everything. The stranglehold of the waking experience is gone. A dream experience, whether it is pleasure or pain, is unreal. Waking experiences do not touch the core of the Being. They happen like waves on the ocean's surface; depth of the ocean is unaffected. The Being is the substratum that indwells and upholds the three states of waking, dream, and sleep.

By taking pleasure or pain as real, I try to manipulate them. I have to question their reality. They are the outcome of the past actions, and as such cannot be avoided. As long as there is identification with the ego, the cycle of doer-action-result-enjoyer continues. Atman is neither the doer nor the enjoyer. This is a revolution by which I do not look at the body as me-mine; I am aware of the body in action and the mind in its feelings.

When I name a thing, I am bound by it. Name seems innocuous, but it binds. I prefer to look at the body as an assembly of five elements, so that the integration of the body with nature becomes spontaneous. Identification with the body is stifling. The body-mind is *kṣetra*, field of experiences. Body-mind together with nature gives rise to the experience of pleasure and pain.

Yasca jivah. The word '*Jīva*' is translated as 'a person'. The translation does not do justice entirely. The word has its origin in the verb *jiva* meaning prana dharana, upholding life in the body. Therefore, the word simply means 'living being'. Understood thus, it acquires a new dimension; it need not be the body identified ego any more. Life, as it reflects in the body, keeps it integrated, like the moisture in the clay maintains the shape of the pot. Body, being a conglomerate, needs a factor to hold it together; otherwise it would disintegrate. *Chāndogyopaniṣat* says: *jīvenātmāna'nu praviśya* (6-3-2), Brahman Itself entered the name and form (body) as *jīva*, thus making it alive. Brahman is available for cognition in a manifest form as life.

Puratrāye kṛīḍati, playing in the three cities. *Śruti* allegorises the body-mind sometimes as a chariot and other times as a walled city. The skin is the wall; the eyes, ears nose, etc., are the gates. When a person goes to sleep, he is not present in the sleep. But the same person gets up in the next morning, because he had only resolved in the seed of ignorance in sleep. Every aspect of the person is ignorance because he takes himself to be limited, a male etc. Therefore, the seed of the person is ignorance. It is called as *ajñāna śarīra* or *kāraṇa śarīra*, causal body, because it is the cause of the personality.

The physical body, the subtle body, and the causal body are the three cities. The physical body cannot exist without the substratum of Atman, Existence-Awareness-Absolute, like the necklace that has no existence without gold. When we say, 'necklace is', there are two aspects: the necklace, which is name and form, and the 'isness', which is the 'isness' of gold. Gold 'is', therefore necklace 'is'. Similarly, there is no body without the sense of body. Body is an idea, an abstraction, in the mind. Mind is a flow of thoughts, at any given moment, the ripple on the consciousness. Wave is nothing but water; thought is nothing but consciousness. Consciousness is the Existence Absolute, which is Awareness, that manifests in the physical, subtle, and causal body.

In sleep you are witness to a state in which everything is absent. You are the witnessing awareness with reference to the physical body,

which is the city corresponding to the waking state, the subtle body, the inner city, and the causal body of ignorance appearing as ego. You sustain these three bodies and are aware of them all the time, bringing them to light, making them evident. These three states are the playground of Atman.

Tatastu jātaṃ sakalaṃ vicitram, all variety arose from That. Therefore is infinite diversity in the creation, which has its origin in the unity of Brahman. The same Brahman reflects in the body-mind as Atman, sustaining a marvelous variety. Childhood, youth, gender, states of the mind, etc., have a single origin - Life, Being. This universal Being reflects in the heart as 'I am'. 'I am' is *saccit*, the conscious presence, and everything in the life of an individual originates from it.

Ādhāram, the ground. It is all a play; play of consciousness. You see a movie on the changeless background of an illuminated screen. You are that illuminated screen in the play of life. You are *saccit*, the awareful presence, in which the three states appear and disappear. When you stand as a person identified with the body, 'I am' and 'flower is' are two different things, the subject and the object. When the subject-object division resolves in the awareful presence, there is no difference between 'am' and 'is', because it transcends space and time. That space of awareness is the basis, substratum, for this play of the three cities.

The nature of the substratum is *akhaṇḍabodham*, undivided Awareness. When you say 'flower is', 'pot is', 'cloth is' it is 'is', existence, but divided. The basic parameters required for division are space and time. The self shining Existence Absolute, which is one without a second, appears as many on the canvas of space-time. There is no difference between the being 'I am', and the knowing 'I shine'. The being shines as the knowing. *Sat* is *cit*; *Cit* is *sat*.

Yasmin layaṃ yāti puratrāyaṃ ca, in which the three cities resolve. The causal body, the subtle body, and the physical body originate from and merge in *saccit*. There is never any disconnection between the appearance and the ground of appearance. A surfer may think that he is surfing on the waves, but he is always connected to the width and depth of the ocean. We are living on the lap of *Brahman*

in the waking state. In the sleep state, we resolve in *Brahman*. The gold 'becomes' the necklace; the necklace discovers its being in the gold. When the names and forms are taken as real, the reality lies hidden. When their falsehood is realized and transcended, the reality shines brilliantly.

Meditation helps you to get connected to that "ground" of the *saccit*. When you take yourself as "I am so-and-so", all issues of living are in place. On the other hand, when you abide as the pure 'I am', there are no issues of living; eventually, you get resolved in the pure being. That being is the origin of the mind and life. Even as the body-identified person, you are always connected to It, but do not know it. That Being which is your own ground cannot save you until and unless you know it by abiding in it. There is not even an iota of inadequacy or limitation in it. It is *ananda*, happiness, which transcends the opposites of pleasure and pain.

Om! Om! Om!

WHAT IS YOGA

Yoga does not consist in sitting cross-legged for six hours or stopping the pulse or beatings of the heart or getting oneself buried underneath the ground for a week or a month. These are physical feats only. Many people think that there is nothing beyond this in the path of Yoga. Real Yoga is something more and something higher. Real Yoga is the attainment of the highest divine knowledge through '*Nirvikalpa Samadhi*', or conscious communion with the Lord by controlling the *Indriyas* (senses) and the mind.

Yoga is not something that is completely divorced from daily life. On the contrary, Yoga and daily life must be made to merge into each other. The ideal is to remember God constantly. The method is this: after each hour of work or other activity, close your eyes for a few seconds at least and think intensely of God, the all- pervading Spirit. You will derive immense strength and peace.

-Swami Sivananda

I LOVE TO WORK BUT WORSHIP SILENCE

- Swami Omkarji Maharaj

Recently I have been speaking often extolling work. By this I do not want some of you to think that I extol work more than meditation. I love work but I worship silence. But how very difficult it is to enjoy those sublime states of meditation! Hence it is through selfless work that one reaches the portals of meditation.

I abhor that kind of meditation where one shirks from doing one's ordained duty which is nearest to him. Such a one closes his eyes, sits in a posture and allows the mind to wander after forms and names.

Whenever I think of meditation the picture of Lord Siva comes, absorbed in the ecstasy of cosmic Glory forgetting the very existence of the body, mind and the world. At the end of the meditation, when he opens his eyes, Parvati holds a cup of some juice near his mouth and he silently drinks and closes his eyes again to resume his meditation. I long to be a Parvati holding the cup of juice for those who are absorbed in deep meditation.

Let us analyse now a little more about work. Of all the hard working creatures in the Ashram, our bulls work hardest, drawing water both morning and evening from such deep depths. Would we be able to engage ourselves with such drudgery work? I want to work singing with a happy and contented heart.

Carrying load alone is not work. Sitting all the while wasting precious time, criticising and condemning others is not work. Lecturing and preaching is not work. Every one thinks that he is working hard with something or the other. But who is the one that is doing the real work? Not he who is meditating, shirking from work and allowing the mind to wander. He is called a hypocrite in the Gita.

The only work for all workers is the work of God consciousness, assertion and manifestation of Divinity. What a great, hard and uphill

work that is! But one must do this great work either through activity or silence, through prayer or meditation and thus reach the Goal of life.

The greatest work and the only real work that gives us a taste of freedom is to make the mind free of modifications. Can we do this? Whether we can do it or not, it is the only goal of our lives. Do it either today or tomorrow for the freedom of your soul and for the welfare of humanity! OM! OM! OM!

I want you to remember also that we can never feel His Presence in meditation unless we feel it in our work. Now chanting OM let us strive to feel that ceaseless flow of His Presence, both in work and meditation.

OM! OM! OM!

Hints to Aspirants

Lying has become so common in the world today that it is never considered a vice. The liar justifies himself by saying that he cannot get on without having recourse to lying. All seek the smooth and easy way that leads only to evil and distress. It is difficult, indeed, to be truthful at all times. But truth is the only way to attain real inner freedom and peace. The man of truth faces all trials and sufferings cheerfully for truth's sake. He keeps his conscience pure and clear. We have instances of great souls who have sacrificed their everything for the observance of truth. It is rightly said, "Truth is God". If you wish to know God, you cannot do so by following the way of falsehood. Truthfulness is the first quality needed on the divine path. For petty gains of the world for the ephemeral interests and comforts of life, man abandons truth. The everlasting peace which we have to gain here and hereafter depends upon a life of rectitude, honesty and sincerity.

- Swami Ramdas

I TAKE REFUGE IN SOHAM

-Swami Omkarji Maharaj

Soham is the Universal Breath. It is the beginning, middle and end of every thing. It is the life, soul and goal of our existence. If there is HAPPINESS - the happiness that knows no change for man anywhere in the world, it is only in Soham, which is ever within himself as a part and parcel of his very being. If man in delusion tries to seek happiness anywhere other than within himself, than in Soham, he meets with pain, sorrow, destruction and death. Man learns in the long run, through long suffering and excruciating pain, that the **Peace which passeth all understanding** is never outside, however bewitching the life in the world may be. The real Peace, the Eternal Peace, the Infinite Peace is only within, in the stillness of his own purified heart, within himself in SOHAM.

How blessed it is to take refuge in Soham, not in troubles but even in joys! How blessed it is to take refuge in Soham, not only when in tests and trials, but when happy and contented. One should take refuge in Soham not because of some disappointment or sorrow or some big calamity but because Soham is the all-in-all, and his very life and soul. Blessed is the one who takes refuge in Soham not momentarily or temporarily but permanently and eternally.

By taking refuge in Soham one embraces the whole world and becomes all in all. Verily, one is merging in Omnipresence, Omnipotence and Omniscience, for Soham is THAT. May we ever meditate on THAT, the Soham which is within and without.

MAY PEACE BE UNTO ALL!

Om! Om! Om!

(From the Ashram at Waltair, 9-6-1948)

IMPOSSIBLE FOR GOD

- Swami Omkarji Maharaj

To the Devotees of God, the name of the very title sounds preposterous, meaningless and senseless too, for there is nothing impossible for God either on earth or in heaven. We say God can do anything and everything. Surely, for the one who has created all the universe beginning from the plants on ground to the planets of the sky, what can be impossible for Him? Verily, God can create or destroy worlds in the twinkling of an eye. Even for the mortal man, with all his imperfection and frailties it has been said IMPOSSIBLE IS A WORD FOUND ONLY IN THE DICTIONARY OF FOOLS. When such is the case with finite and mortal man himself, what to speak of the infinite and immortal God!

Yet from own personal experience of God, I have emphatically come to the conclusion that even in the face of a world of arguments supporting that there is nothing impossible for God, namely there is one thing which is not possible for Him, even with all His Omnipresence, Omnipotence and Omniscience.

You may ask the question, "What is that thing which is impossible for God?" The answer is, "God cannot forget us. He cannot live aloof from us. However much we may forget he cannot run away from us, for He is the Mind of our minds, the Heart of our hearts, the Breath of our breaths, the Life of our lives and Soul our souls.

It is impossible for God to forget any of us. He cannot forget any of his children, for He pervades and permeates the whole universe Himself. Thus the Almighty God had His Own self-imposed limitations where his children are concerned, in His relationship with his children- the Living Images of Himself.

If we try to understand one simple word-OMNIPRESENCE, we can realise how God pervades and permeates the very cells of our beings from eternity. When such is the case, how can he ever forget,

even for the millionth fraction of a moment, any of his erring or weak children? He is ever present as the witness of all His creation of both the animate and inanimate objects.

As there is the same distance or no distance between God and man, so also there is the same distance or no distance between man and God too. As it is impossible for God to forget man, His living Image, so also man should realise that it is equally impossible to deny, ignore or forget His Creator, Who is the breath of his very breath within, and Who is blowing on him in the very breeze and shining in the sun outside.

Realisation is a matter of mutual understanding between God and man. It is intuition, wisdom. Thus man in Supreme Knowledge or in Wise Silence realises that God and man are one and that He is none other than THAT, for there is only one Reality or Truth that exists and THOU ART THAT. Then how is it possible to forget your own Divine Splendour of Millions of Suns?

Even for the sake of supposition, if we say that God can forget us or be aloof from us, it will be a living blot on God, a real blemish for his Omnipresence. The Omnipresence cannot contract and become finite. Hence this good news of God's Omnipresence, must be the happiest tidings ever given out in such a simple, clear and easy way to the world of devotees. It gives them the greatest comfort and consolation, for God is with them and in them, as a part and parcel of their very lives both day and night, in all their tests and trials from the very beginning to the end.

As God is Omnipresent he is within, without, above, below and all around- filling the very cells of our being. As he is Omnipotent He is the strength of our heart and soul. As he is Omniscient He is the Intelligence in us. PRAGNANAM BRAHMA. Verily, the awareness in us the consciousness, the very intelligence, is Brahman. Man's lot is sealed once and for all with God! Hence let man be happy, recognising his inseparable oneness with God's Holy attributes of trinity, namely Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute and Bliss Absolute.

The son is the inheritor of the father's properties. All that the father has, belongs to the son. As it is impossible for the blazing Sun to forget its brilliant light, inspite of a million clouds, and just as it is impossible for the fathomless ocean to forget its water in spite of millions of rising waves, so also it is impossible for the Almighty and merciful God to forget his Children, be they weak or strong, ignorant or learned, poor or rich. As God is the ever-present, never absent witness of all the worlds, He is watching us in our very sleep, even when we forget ourselves, nay, even in the so-called death itself. Thus it is impossible for God to forget you or me or any of the least of His children in any corner of His creation. He is eternally wedded and united with His children, ever filling them with Life, Light and Love.

Thus the Grace of God is shining on one and all- whether high or low, saint or sinner, wise or ignorant, young or old- of all religions and nations equally and profusely, at all times and in all places. He who understands this great Truth of God's Grace is blessed with the Highest Wisdom, and he is centred and fixed nay, saturated in God's Omnipresence, Omnipotence and Omniscience, now and always!

Dear Readers, let us waste not more of our precious time in chewing the dry bones of mere words, but let us rise above words and merge within. Let us drink deep the nectar of God's Grace now and always, this is the prayer of your brother Omkar!

MAY PEACE BE UNTO ALL!

Om! Om! Om!

Medha Sūktam

Swami Tattvavidananda Saraswati

Tattva *Prakāśikā* for the Mantra 5

आ मां मेधा सुरभिर्विश्वरूपा हिरण्यवर्णा जगती जगम्या।

ऊर्जस्वती पयसा पिन्वमाना सा मां मेधा सुप्रतीका जुषन्ताम्॥

५

The Goddess of wisdom helps us understand various things and situations as they really are, so that we do not fall prey to delusion. In these times, corporate businesses promote consumerism and make us believe that the material objects of the world are the source of happiness. Under the spell of their advertisements, we develop a wrong notion about success in life. The intellect is enticed by the *nāma-rūpa*, names forms, and fails to see through the ruse and look beyond.

The materialistic approach segregates personal happiness afforded by the laudable qualities of the mind and heart, such as the spirit of companionship, composure, compassion etc., and substitutes the appeal of material acquisition in their place. In this consumerist approach, the entire emphasis is on wooing the consumer and his inner psyche, the target of all marketing strategies. This is a subtle kind of imperialism that can subvert not only individuals and families, but also entire societies and nations. It is not unlike failing to recognize the aspect of gold that informs an article of jewelry, in being unduly entranced by its appearance. Along with the knowledge of the sciences and humanities, a discriminating intellect is also to be acquired so as not to waste life in the blind pursuit of material possessions and sense pleasures. This is the *viśvarūpā Medhā*.

Hiraṇyavarṇā literally means having the luster of gold. Just as gold is bright and glitters, so also, a brilliant intellect shines perceptibly. This brilliance is particularly visible when a person can remember and say the most appropriate things at the proper time. Here the devotee seeks an intellect that is ever fresh and creative.

Vidyāraṇya, the master-commentator on the Vedas, provides another interesting meaning to the word *hiraṇya*. He interprets it almost in the manner of an abbreviation, as *hitaṃ ca tat ramaṇīyam*. *Hita* is that which offers benefit in the long run and *ramaṇīya* means attractive. Generally speaking, most attractive things will not do any good in the long run, while whatever is good is seldom attractive. This rule would seem to apply to food straightaway! A food item that is very delicious and presented in a very attractive way may not necessarily be good for health, whereas, a dish, like a preparation of the bitter gourd, may not be kind to the taste buds, but is very good for health. So also, in this world of names and forms, *hita* and *ramaṇīya* are generally not compatible; whatever is *hita* is not *ramaṇīya*, and whatever is *ramaṇīya* is not *hita*. *Medhā* is the one thing in which both of them are available simultaneously. Therefore, the prayer is that one may acquire that kind of intellect, which not only provides aesthetic enjoyment, but also helps overcome the thralldom of *samsāra*.

Jagamyā means worth gaining. There is only one thing truly worth possessing in this universe, and that is wisdom. The idea of something being worthy is ubiquitous, relative, and could apply to just about everything. For instance, it could be an expensive car that is 'worth possessing,' or a shirt that is 'worth wearing,' or a movie that is 'worth watching.' The only absolute in terms of anything worth gaining is *Medhā*.

This sole absolute of knowledge is *jagatī*, present everywhere. For instance, it can be found in a bird. A bird knows its role and also as much of the sciences of acoustics, meteorology, aerodynamics, and geography as it needs to know in order to survive. It puts all this knowledge to practice. Migratory birds have an uncanny ability to navigate distances of thousands of miles; they seldom lose their way. *Paramēśvara* is present in all living beings as the Awareness that illuminates their individual intellects. Thus, *medhā* exists in all the life forms.

The metaphor of the cow symbolizing wisdom continues in this

hymn. It is *ūrjasvati*, a strong and healthy cow, that yields copious milk. *Medhā* is compared to the cow that makes us strong and healthy with its milk. This comparison is typical, because the agrarian Vedic culture revolved around the cow and its progeny.

Supratīkā; *pratīkā* means beginning and *su* means auspicious. The desire expressed in this prayer is that one may make an auspicious beginning in the study of the *śāstra*. These hymns are typically recited at the beginning of a Vedānta class, so that the ensuing teaching culminates in the knowledge that liberates. This recitation helps overcome all the obstacles that may arise during the course of study.

- from *Medha Sūktam, Vaidika Sūkta Mañjarī*; by Swami Tattvavidananda Saraswati. Published by Brahma Vidya Kuteer, Secunderabad, Telangana State, India.

Hints to Aspirants

He who hates inflicts injury upon himself. It is like stabbing oneself. But love is a nectar bath, a soothing balm to the heart. While the former creates pain and confusion, the latter brings joy and harmony. While hate wounds, love heals. Therefore love is rightly called divine. Love is the quality of God, and hate is the nature of a perverted and distorted mind. The life that is built upon love is a life imbued with spiritual radiance and happiness. In fact, love is the panacea for all the ills of life. Be the votary of love and make your life blessed.

- Swami Ramdas

from the Book Hints to Aspirants, Anandashram Publication,
Kanhagad, Kasargod, Kerala

SECRET OF KARMA YOGA

H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj

SERVE SADHUS

The Rawal Saheb of the Badrinath temple visited the Master on his way from Malabar to Badrinath. Accompanying him was a Swami from the Kali Kambliwala almshouse. After the exchange of greetings, the Rawal Saheb settled down on a chair in front of the Master. But the Swami was greatly embarrassed when the Master asked him to sit on the bench.

"No, Maharajji. I shall keep standing." And then the Swami continued, "Maharaj, this year I shall be going to Badrinath to be in-charge of the free kitchen of the almshouse there. I require your blessings."

The Master folded his palms in front, closed his eyes and, swaying his head, said, "Ohji, you are a very noble soul. That is why God has given you this opportunity. May God bless you! I will tell you one thing. Serve the Sadhus and Mahatmas there with love. Do not run hither and thither, greeting rich people and entertaining them on Persian carpets, while at the same time scolding and illtreating the Sadhus. Serve the Sadhus, then God Himself will shower gold into your coffers. You will attain peace and liberation by this one service. May God bless you! Om Namō Narayanaya!"

EVERYTHING IS GOD

The Master called for a Bengali inmate of the Ashram and requested him to sing a Bengali song in the office. While he was singing, the Master turned to some of his disciples and said, "This is like a market. There is noise. There is music. But everything is God only. There is nothing to renounce, nothing to accept. Feel everything as God. Music is God. Everything is God."

BRIDGE OF IMMORTALITY

A railway engineer and a deputy chief engineer came for the Master's Darshan. When they had introduced themselves, the Master said. "Build the bridge of immortality and not the bridge of brick and mortar. Build the bridge of immortality through Japa, Kirtana, study of religious books, Satsanga and meditation. The bridge is the biggest bridge, for it is to be built across an ocean-the ocean of worldly life. This bridge alone will give you supreme happiness and immortality."

DESERVE BEFORE YOU DESIRE

The Master narrated an interesting story. "Once a proud monkey put a crown on its head and boasted that it was the king of beasts. A wise fox, who heard about it, wanted to teach the monkey a lesson. The fox took the monkey to a fruit-baited trap, and when the monkey greedily wanted to take the fruit, it got itself caught in the trap. It screamed in pain. Then the fox laughed and said, 'You cannot become a king without possessing a king's qualities.'

"In the spiritual realm also aspirants want power and position. They want to have a big band of admirers who would worship them. They want to become Gurus ruling over the lives of others. Without possessing the necessary qualities such as perfect humility, selflessness, love and purity of mind; if they try to become spiritual leaders, they will meet with the same fate as that of the monkey in the story".

"On the other hand, if they possess sufficient spiritual strength and purity of heart, the whole world will respect them without their desiring respect. First deserve, then desire. A spiritual aspirant should not desire at all, but he should only deserve. The highest spiritual experience will come to him who deserves, who possesses all the divine virtues, who is free from all faults, - and not to him who only desires but does not possess the qualities to deserve it."

DELUSION WITHIN DELUSION

Sri Ganga Prasad, with a small party of his students, had made

a lightning trip to Badrinath and returned. He had made a few rapid water colour paintings of the Himalayan landscapes at various places en-route and was showing them to the Master at night.

Wishing to see them clearly, the Master flashed his torch across the pictures.

"What is this? I see only a jumble of colours!"

"Swamiji, if you put out the torch you will see more of the beauty of the paintings."

"Oh! The darkness adds charm to the picture!" said the Master and put the torch out. "This is delusion within delusion. This is one way of cheating people. Have you ever bought shoes at night? They will be glittering. The next morning you will be quite disappointed with your purchase. A bride will appear most charming in a photograph, but when you come face to face with her you will be quite disillusioned. This is all delusion within delusion. If there is real beauty in an object, it should always be beautiful, whether you look at it in the light or in the shade. When you flash the torch of true wisdom on these shining objects, you will at once perceive their hollowness."

QUALIFICATIONS OF A NURSE

Dr. Saraswathi introduced her sister to the Master and told him that she was undergoing training in nursing.

The Master immediately advises her, "When you finish your course come and work here. I will give you a diploma to Vaikuntha."

Then he asked her, "What are the qualifications of a nurse?" and himself answered, "She must be cheerful, sympathetic, adaptable and compassionate. She must be able to bear insults. She must have faith in God and repeat the Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra."

The Master then gave a printed copy of the Mantra to the lady.

"Keep this Mantra in your bag and then roam about wherever you like. You will have success."

INDIGESTION OR DIARRHEA?

A devotee complained to the Master. "Swamiji. I would like to have a copy of your Bhagavad Gita. You sent me Ethics of the Bhagavad Gita, but I could not digest it."

"You had diarrhea?" asked the Master with a hearty laugh.

SUCCESS IN BRAHMACHARYA

A man of middle age stood in front of the Master and asked. "Swamiji, how can I maintain Brahmacharya?"

"Practise Japa, Kirtana, meditation, Sarvangasana and Sirshasana. Do enquiry into the nature of the Self, have Satsanga. Take Sattvic food, do Pranayama, - all these will help you."

"In spite of all this I do not succeed," complained the man.

"Nothing is lost when a candle burns. Take two or three baskets of mud from the Himalayas and no change will be noticed. If you continue doing so for many years there will be a definite change noticed. One's previous desires are so strong that it takes a long time to succeed."

"What is the use of succeeding in Brahmacharya in my old age? wailed the man again.

"Put forth more effort and will-power. Then you will succeed quickly. Pray for His Divine Grace," the Master comforted the man.

CONDUCT IN AN ASHRAM

"I was studying this book, Swamiji. So I could not attend the Satsanga at night." Sri K. said when he was questioned by the Master as to why he was absent from the night Satsanga.

"The other day you said that you had diarrhea and so could not attend Satsanga. Now you say you were reading, so you did not attend. Tomorrow you will have some other cause. If you don't like my

questioning then I will not pursue it any more; but you yourself should question and ask yourself for what reason you have come here and whether you are doing what is necessary to achieve your aim.

"If you work in an office and earn Rs.50 a month, you are ever ready to serve the petty master there. You are ever ready to obey him. For everything you will say. "Yes sir.' You have renounced the whole world and come to this place to attain the highest wisdom. Here you should not expect a master who would dominate over you and extract work and Sadhana. You should be your own master. You should question yourself seriously and even punish yourself if you are not doing all that you could to evolve.

"Obedience, adherence to the discipline of the Ashram, humility - all these Sadhu-qualities you have to develop in yourself. No one will enforce them on you. You should find out the daily routine of the place where you are staying and automatically fall in line with it. This will indicate that you are a good aspirant. If you do not conform to the routine of the Ashram and go your own self-willed way, then it means you have not disciplined yourself. No one need impose discipline upon you. For a moment put yourself in the other man's position. Just think for a moment that you yourself are conducting the Ashram and that you have instituted the daily Satsanga. There are several Ashramites. Would you or would you not expect all of them to attend the Satsanga?"

"Yes, Swamiji, I would like them to attend the Satsanga."

"Then is it not your duty to attend Satsanga without even being told to do so? When there is a common function and everyone attends, there is a special charm in it. It is glorious," concluded the Master.

DO IT NOW

"Not tomorrow or the day after, but now itself we should give the books. They may change their minds later on and depart earlier. We may not then have the opportunity of rendering our service to

them. Bring the books now. I will sign them and you should hand them over to Sri Rao immediately," the Master said, when a disciple told him that a visitor would be staying at the Ashram for a few days and that the Master might give him some books the next day or the day after.

The Master then explained, "This is one of the most important rules in Karma Yoga. Opportunities come and go. A Karma Yogi should be ever alert and vigilant and utilise every opportunity of service. When a task is put off for the next day, then others accumulate around it and the opportunity of service is lost. Procrastination is the Karma Yogi's greatest enemy."

The books were brought and the Master autographed them immediately, saying at the same time, "What you wish to do tomorrow, do today; what you wish to do in the afternoon, do in the forenoon. Then you will grow into a real Karma Yogi."

(from the Divine Life Society magazine May 2000)

NO ONE CAN UNDERSTAND YOU

Swami Omkarji Maharaj

How precious and blessed are the Hours of Silence, that brings the Highest Truths face to face! No one can understand YOU. There is only one, the only one, who can understand YOU thoroughly through and through. Who is that one? That one is YOURSELF – the Intelligence within.

Thou art Pragna (intelligence), Pragnanam Brahma. Intelligence Light understands Light. The sooner you realize this truth, the better is for you. O blessed one Know Thyself. Be Silent recognizing Thyself within and without.

OM! OM! OM!

(from the Hour's of Silence)

THE KEY TO YOUR TRANSFORMATION

- Sri Swami Chidananda

The words *aviveki*, *viveki* and *sadhaka* refer to three different types of individuals. An *aviveki* is a person who does not discriminate. All the lessons in life which God sends him or her are wasted, because he or she is in *ajnana* (ignorance). And *ajnana* is the outcome of *aviveka* (non-discrimination).

On the other hand, a *viveki* is a person who does discriminate. He learns the lessons of life, but they have no effect on him. His learning and the lessons he has learned are stored up in his head; they produce no fruit because they are not applied. He does not allow these lessons to have a powerful impact upon him.

But a true *sadhaka* (spiritual aspirant) is one who is both a *viveki* as well as one who actively reacts to whatever lessons life brings in the course of going through it, the experiences that form part of it. Nothing is wasted upon the true *sadhaka*. Everything produces a change, a transformation for the better. Everything brings forth from the true *sadhaka* and seeker, a certain positive, creative response, after which he is never the same as before. He is changed. His character, his nature, his very life becomes enriched, enhanced by something new that was not there previous to the impact the experience had upon him.

Two hundred years ago, there was born a grandchild, a baby girl, in the family of a very renowned Japanese warrior, a *samurai*. He was a great warrior, very brave and heroic. And the baby girl was the most beautiful child. She grew up to be a maiden of such exceptional and unusual beauty that the family thought it fitting that she be offered to the empress of the country as a hand maiden or servant.

At that time the Japanese were ruled by emperors. So they took her to the palace and the empress and the entire royal family were also struck by the beauty of this girl. She was found to be very keenly intelligent, very active and very perceptive. So she soon

became a favourite and an important part of the empress' retinue.

Unfortunately, within a few years, while the girl was still in her teens, the empress, whose health had been apparently perfectly normal, suddenly passed away. This sudden passing had such a profound impact upon this young girl that something stirred deep within her and a sudden change came into her entire psychology. She said: "What is this life? Everything is vain. Everything passes away. There is no stability; nothing can be relied upon. Nothing is real. Everything is evanescent, transitory, ephemeral, perishable and passing."

She was a very intelligent person, and so profound was this conviction that she lost all interest in life and determined then and there, "I must pursue the path of meditation and enlightenment." She was determined to become a Zen nun, a seeker and a meditator.

Everyone was shocked. Her whole family was in an uproar. They said: "Impossible! It is against our family tradition. You are too young for this; you are unprepared. You must marry. Moreover, it will not be possible for you to be a nun having such great beauty as God has endowed you with." She yielded to them upon one strict condition - that after she had mothered three children, the marriage agreement would be at an end and she would then become a nun. No one believed that such a thing would be possible, and so they readily agreed and arranged a match for her. She also told her future husband and in-laws the same thing - that only on this condition would she be willing to enter into wedlock.

All agreed and so she was married. Dutifully she served her husband and in-laws, took full interest in family affairs, looked after the household and behaved in a one hundred per cent normal way. But at the same time she was a keen student of Zen literature and practised meditation. Still, in all ways she was an efficient housewife, a good wife, and obedient daughter-in-law and a good daughter to her parents.

However, after the third child was born and she reared the child

for a few months, she suddenly announced that her promise had been fulfilled. She would no longer continue in the family life and instead would take to the life of a Zen nun. In spite of all protests, she shaved her head and silenced them with a reminder of their promise.

She then left everything, put on a nun's robe and wandered away in search of a Zen master. She went to a city where a famous master was and asked to be taken in discipleship. She was refused due to her beauty. She went to another master where she was also refused on the ground of her beauty.

Therefore, she determined that this obstacle should be removed. So, one day, in the privacy of her room she made a big fire, put an iron rod into it and branded her face. She made her face ugly beyond recognition and thus lost her beauty forever. She then went back to the second master who immediately accepted her as a disciple. She soon became a very earnest and sincere practitioner of the Zen way of life and advanced spiritually in an amazing manner.

Such was her determination. And it was all due to the way in which she was able to react when confronted by the sudden death of her patron, the empress. Of the hundreds of others who must have been in the service of the palace and the empress, some would have wept, mourned for some time and then adjusted themselves. Others might have been thoughtful and reflected and for some time had some *smasana vairagya* (graveyard dispassion). They might have stopped wearing ornaments or good clothes. But soon they too would have reverted to normal, back to square one, as they say, or into old rut. But here was one who was not only not an *aviveki*, not only not in ignorance, not only not merely a *viveki*, but was one who was also practical, who had the *viveka* and immediately applied it to her own life.

Similar indeed was the case of Prince Siddhartha. He was an *uttama adhikari* (best qualified aspirant), a practical spiritual seeker, who was ripe to react to the experiences of life in a creative and transforming manner. And that was what made him first a renunciate,

a *tyagi*, then a *tapasvi*, then a *yogi*, then a *jnani*, then an enlightened *guru*, an *uttama tattvavetta* (one who fully knows the truth) and finally a world teacher. And the whole world has benefited. Because he was an *uttama adhikari*, he did not go through life's experiences blindly with eyes closed, in a state of ignorance, in a state of non-discrimination and non-enquiry, *avichara* and *aviveka*. Nor did he merely go as an intellectual *vicharavan* and *viveki*.

Intellectually we may make enquiries, come to conclusions, learn things and then do nothing about it. So we are only burdened with knowledge. Life is left untouched. But Prince Siddhartha was a practical spiritual seeker, and he reacted to even simple ordinary experiences which leave millions of others just cold. Everyone has seen old age; everyone has seen disease; everyone has seen death. They are seen but nothing happens.

It is only when metal is touched by a philosopher's stone that it becomes gold. If clay or wood comes into contact with a philosopher's stone, it will remain clay or wood only. If a person of metal comes in contact with even day-to-day experiences, he will be transformed. Siddhartha was a person of metal; he had the right stuff in him. And this beautiful Japanese girl also had the right stuff in her. There was something there ready to absorb, to react, to get transformed. And, therefore, a transformation took place.

Today is Buddha Jayanti. You should, therefore, ponder over Buddha's life, his ideal reaction to experiences and the memorable and epoch-making step that he took. When he felt this profound change, he did not keep quiet about it. He was a practical yogi. He took a bold step and became a renunciate and a seeker. Then he became an austere practitioner, a *tapasvi*, practised *yoga* and meditation and became a *jnani* and a world teacher.

So, it is not what the *jiva* keeps experiencing in this life that really enriches it or transforms it and lifts it up to sublime heights, rather it is actively exercised *vichara* and *viveka*. More than that, for even this is not sufficient, it is how one reacts in a living manner, in a

vital manner to experiences. It is this that becomes the transforming factor in the life of a true seeker.

This is so not only in the spiritual field but also in the secular field, even in the business field. If a businessman's son goes on like a fool, he will never learn anything. The same son, if he is not a fool but a keen observer, may learn many lessons about the business world; but if he does not react to them, he will not be successful. It is only the one who keenly absorbs these experiences, reflects deeply over them, applies the lessons learned and brings about changes, it is only such a one that becomes a successful business person and perhaps a multi-millionaire. It all depends upon whether one vitally and in a living manner reacts to the experiences that one undergoes. It is that which determines one's transformation in life.

That is what the life of Buddha teaches us. He reacted in a wonderful manner, in a living manner, very early in life. Thus it was that at a young age he became a great enlightened and illumined teacher of his own times and has gone down as an immortal personality in human history. Even though it is well over twenty five hundred years since he was born, even today his teachings are followed by millions of Buddhists. And the world also remembers him, both in the East and the West.

That is the result of the living way in which he faced life, underwent experiences and responded to them in a living way. May this be well absorbed. May this be deeply pondered. That is the benefit of observing such occasions as Buddha Jayanti. May you all try to make this a period of special study of Buddha's life, his teachings and what they imply, what message they have for us. May we become enriched by his lofty and sublime example, life and teachings!

(from the Divine Life Society magazine May 2000)

YOGA CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE

Swami Jyotirmayananda

Life in the world is characterised by change. All things, all living beings are in a state of constant flux. Living an artful and meaningful life as a human being involves learning to move from the level of endless superficial change to the level of majestic change that leads to a total transformation process. Yoga can help you change your life most effectively.

Upon seeing the title of this article, you may think to yourself, "Why should I change? I am already a wonderful person." Then you may decide not to read any further, convinced that there is no need for you to do so. Or, if you have discovered that you are bound to change whether you like it or not, then you may ask, "Why should Yoga give me the message of change when I already know that I am naturally going to change? A child is no longer a child after he grows up because he has changed. Each day change takes place in everyone. Why do I need Yoga to teach me to change?"

There is, however, in every human being a serious regard for oneself and the evolution of one's personality. Everyone in his own way analyzes, aspires, and yearns to bring about a change that could make him a more dignified person.

To what extent can a person change, and what kind of change should one make? How does one make a conscious change for the better, and how does one change permanently? These are serious questions to ponder.

Normality or Super-normality?

As you become more aware of the deeper meaning of your life, you will want to become a more balanced person. As a human being, it is natural for you to have an ego; you are selfish, you are attached to objects, you react with anger and jealousy in provocative situations.

But should you be just like everyone else in this regard? Should

you remain at the mass level? With regard to mental relaxation, animals atleast enjoy more dignity in life, for they never have anything to worry about. You can scold a dog, and an hour later he will be stretched out completely relaxed. But if you scold a human being, he will often carry a grudge for days.

So, should a person go on behaving the way he has always done for his whole life? Should he continue being selfish and attached? Should he keep on reacting to people who frustrate his desires? Or should there be something more?

The great religious ideals that have been presented over the centuries declare that a human being has the potential to become a Buddha, a Christ, or a Mahatma Gandhi. You have the potential to overcome all the negative tendencies that you share with every human being - tendencies that degrade you or at least keep you at a lower stage of human consciousness.

What is the Goal of Life?

When you become serious about wanting to do something with your life, your mind turns to the problem of what to strive for. You might ask yourself, "Should I just pursue external attainments like university degrees that will allow me to get a good job so that I can make a lot of money, have wonderful family, and live in greater comfort - or is there something that I am overlooking?"

There is a simple parable that gives insight into this dilemma. Once a university student approached a Sage. "What would you have of me, my son?" the Sage asked.

The student was having difficulties with his studies and told the Sage, "I have a very important examination tomorrow morning, Swamiji, and I've got to pass it. The only thing, though, is that I haven't studied very hard. But I know by Divine Grace you could do the impossible, possible Swamiji, and let me pass it."

The Sage wanted the student to see that there was a greater purpose for his existence, so he asked him, "What will you do after you pass the examination?"

"I'll apply for a job that will pay me a lot of money." "Then what will you do?"

"Why, I'll marry a nice girl from a high society family, and we'll have a very pleasant life together."

"And what will you do after that?" the Sage asked. "Oh, I expect we'll have a few children."

"And then what will you do?"

"I shall try to take care of them the best way I can so that they won't turn out as worthless as I am."

"Well that's fine, my son, but what else will you do?" "My children will grow up and get married. Then I'll retire with my wife to the Himalayas, where we'll reside in a nice bungalow surrounded by lots of flowering shrubs and trees. We'll spend the rest of our days in splendid retirement."

"What else will you do?" the Sage asked.

"What else can a person do in his final days but watch the sun set every evening," the student replied. "And then I'll die and my relatives will give me a nice funeral. That's all."

Reflect a moment on this response of the young man. Do you really want only to pass your life in this way? Isn't there more to aspire to? What should be the goal of life? These are some questions that you must deeply reflect upon and analyse.

Do not exhaust your Energy over Life's trifles

If you think about it deeply, you will realise that there is a kind of mass hypnosis that is pressuring you to embrace the notion that this is all there is and nothing more. No sooner do you open your eyes in the morning than you are besieged by problems about your work, your studies, your family, and the people you deal with every day. Thus, the overriding concern of your mind upon awakening is how to solve the little problems of daily life - and you spend all day trying to do that, and come home in the evening exhausted or with a raging

headache. It is all you can do to get a good night's sleep so that you will awaken refreshed to face another day. Should life be like this? Yoga says that it should not. You need to change your angle of vision.

Feel The Thrill of Life

To overcome the hypnotic attraction of the petty things of this world, you should allow yourself to feel the great thrill of life. Wherever you look, wherever you turn your mind, the profundity and grandeur of this universe blazes before you.

When you gaze up into the night sky and see the giant stars whirling in space, you become aware of such great expansion that the mind staggers. And you don't have to gaze into outer space to appreciate God's creation. Each atom in a speck of dust holds the secret of nature's grandeur. Just look at the way your body functions, or how your body can garner nutrients from the food you eat, or how it can even heal itself.

The Miracle of Mind

But the most awe-inspiring thing of all, however, is that your mind has the possibility of unfolding intuitional knowledge. The same mind that has become the basis for sorrow, grief, turbulence, and chaos - the same mind that drives you from one embodiment to another, forcing you to drift like an oaken log from one condition to another - holds the possibility of allowing the soul to discover its essential nature. This very same mind can let you feel that you are the master of your circumstances and that you can commune with the whole world.

With the very same mind you can reach that state of consciousness where there is no sorrow, where the problems of life are solved, and where you realize that you are not the physical body, but the eternal Self. When this very same mind- the mind that causes so much trouble and pain and brings on countless embodiments- is slightly adjusted and cultured by the practice of Yoga, you discover a joy that your mind could never associate with any condition in the world. You experience the kind of bliss that your mind could never

know through wealth or perishable objects of the world.

Bring about True Change in All Levels of Your Personality

If you sincerely wish to change your life so that you can develop the kind of mind and intellect that is your majestic birthright, you must first analyze your personality thoroughly to see what kind of changes you need to make. You must become attuned to all the levels of your personality - physical, astral and casual.

The physical body has always been considered important in Yoga, and with this view in mind, Sages devised a system of exercises that would keep the body fit. These exercises, referred to as Hatha Yoga exercises, relax you, making your spine flexible and your nerves strong. When you are healthy you discover that you are merely working through your body - that you are not the body. This is the hallmark of true health. When you are healthy you do not know where your body is; but when you are sick, you know exactly where it is. If you have arthritis in your fingers, for instance, you know exactly where these throbbing fingers are. If you have a peptic ulcer, no one has to tell you where your stomach is. From this understanding it follows that if you stay healthy, you will not be so obsessed with your body, and you will gradually discover that there is something more to yourself than just flesh and bones.

Vedanta philosophy asserts that a human being has three bodies or divisions; physical, astral and casual. The physical body is what you see and it is sustained by the food you eat. It is also the main theme in worldly life. You generally receive most recognition on the basis of your physical looks. However, when you reflect a little, you will know that your feeling does not depend upon your looks.

Thus, the astral body - which consists of vital forces (pranas), senses, mind, intellect, and ego - is a more profound basis for your physical body. Even subtler than your astral body, however, is the causal body, for it holds the depth of the unconscious.

You experience a blend of these three bodies at every moment in your daily life. While dealing with the needs of the physical body,

you are caught up with the realities of the mind. Your physical body may be resting in a chair, but your mind may be mulling over a great many different things in a great many places.

Your mental realities belong to the astral body. But there are times when the mind itself becomes overpowered by an unconscious movement. You go to sleep and experience the causal body, an experience that only happens during deep sleep.

So, underlying all is the causal body, which you experience in the form of internal ignorance. This is why Vedanta refers to the causal body as the seat of avidya (ignorance). It is also called *anandamaya kosha* - a sheath that gives joy, because the bliss of the Self percolates through it. In essence, the causal body is like a thin veil that prevents the soul from merging with the Universal Self. If you tear the veil from the causal body, you discover that you are one with that Self.

A yogi's task is to change in such a way that his physical body becomes healthy so that it does not obstruct the expansion of his astral body. In other words, you must make your physical body healthy because it is a tool for the healthy development of your mind. In turn, you make your mind healthy so that you can reach out to your essential nature.

Your astral body is a tool for the higher causal body. There are times when you are not thinking, yet you exist because you are handled by your causal body. The causal body is ordinarily referred to as the heart. You might have heard some say, "My heart is so heavy that I can't talk or even think. I feel so much." And there are times when feelings of depression emanate from your causal body in such a way that no matter how much you reason you cannot remove them. This is so because they arise from a deeper basis within your personality. In order to change, therefore, you must bring about a harmonious unfoldment in the physical, astral, and causal planes.

Controlling Body and Mind

The physical body is tackled in Yoga through Hatha Yoga, which gradually leads you to understand how the mind is able to control the

body. Hatha Yoga leads you on to Raja Yoga and the other aspects of Yoga as well. Through this unfoldment you discover that your mind is the master of your body. In order to keep your body in good condition, you need to feel wonderful. In other words you need to have a mind that does not constantly agitate the body for the most trifling of reasons. If you are inclined to quick irritability, fear, and jealousy, even though your physical body may be healthy from a medical point of view, you are really not healthy from a yogic point of view because you are constantly keeping your body tense. You cannot be physically healthy and enjoy life if your mind is not calm and relaxed.

Yoga teaches the vast and profound technique of controlling the mind. It is an art that was discovered thousands of years ago. Long before the birth of Christ, Sages had delved deep into the mystery of the mind. They portrayed mind as a kind of pot-creating machine that creates all the conditions and circumstances in your life. This is to say that what you are, what your circumstances are, what your concepts of pleasure and pain, gain and loss are - are all molded by your mind.

to be continued ...

from International Yoga Guide, May 2012

I AM WEARY OF ALL GURUS AND CHELAS

Swami Omkarji Maharaj

In the Hours of Silence the thought comes thus. I am weary of all Gurus, disciples, of all words and thoughts, so let me forget all forms and names, both outside and inside and thus rest in my own Pristine Glory, the Splendour of Sun of suns, the Light of lights, the One Indivisible Reality, the Divine or God!. Weariness or disgust is possible only in duality. When one is shining with the full glory of the Sun of suns, where is weariness? In the Splendour of millions of suns, no cloud of weariness or sadness dares to appear.

OM! OM! OM!

- from the Hour's of Silence

SAGUNA-BRAHMA-VIDYA

(Meditation on Brahman with Attributes)

Swami Brahmananda

To those who find it difficult to practise the meditation on the attributeless Brahman, is given an easier meditation on Brahman with attributes. Brahman is that which does everything - that which does anything, anywhere at anytime. *Brahman* is to be meditated on not only as Supreme Existence, but also as Supreme Activity and the Agent behind all activity. 'Being' and 'doing' are non-different - thus should one meditate. This vidya also occurs in Kenopanishad, chapter III and IV-1 to 3. The instruction is given through a story.

In one of the battles between the celestials and the demons, the former won a victory over the latter. Such battles are going on in all levels of consciousness between the positive and negative forces, virtue and vice, at all times. Sometimes the positive forces win and at other times the negative forces have the victory. In this particular instance when the celestials were victorious, they became proud and egoistic and thought that the victory was due to their strength, forgetting the Unseen Power behind all actions described as the Prana of prana in the first chapter of this Upanishad. It is given the name *Daivam* (the Divine Power) the fifth factor in all actions - the other four being the body, the experiencer, the various organs and the activities (the Bhagavadgita XVIII-14). It is also termed *Devatma-sakti* in the *Svetasvetara Upanishad* I-3. In order to remove this false vanity which is a stumbling block in the spiritual path, the Supreme *Brahman* which is omniscience, all-sentience, pure Consciousness, appeared before them in the form of a mysterious spiritual Being, *Yaksha*, superhuman, perhaps super-divine also, because the celestials themselves were unable to know Him. If He were one among the celestial, divine beings, they would have certainly known Him. Such an incredible, mighty, gigantic form the celestials had never seen before. They were taken aback - by the appearance of this most wonderful Being. *Agni* (the god of fire) was deputed to find out who or what exactly was that Being. How can the object know the subject? How can a part, the finite, know the Whole, the Infinite? It is

impossible. Before Fire-god could start his enquiry, he was, on the other hand, himself subjected to an enquiry by that mysterious Being. On being asked by that Being as to who he was and what power he had, Fire-god in all vanity replied that he was the well-known Fire-god, the foremost among the celestials and capable of burning the whole world in a trice, thus himself giving an occasion for his power being tested. That being, the *Yaksha*, placed a piece of dry straw in front of *Agni* and asked him to burn it. He could not burn it, for the *Yaksha*, the Supreme Power behind all actions, had withdrawn that power of burning from him. *Agni* could not even touch it or shake it, a little piece of dry straw! He could not burn it. With his head bent down out of shame and frustration, *Agni* returned to the gods. Then it was the turn of *Vayu*, Wind-god, to go and enquire and know the real nature of the *Yaksha*. He also met with the same fate as *Agni*. Now *Indra* (the king of the celestials, the emperor of the three worlds) himself went, thinking that what the other gods could not do, himself (their king) could certainly achieve. *Indra* is certainly more powerful than the other gods under him. The ego or the mind in us has got more power than the sense-organs. While the sense-organs cannot function without the mind, the mind can do all sorts of things by mere imagination in the absence of the sense-organs. The story says that before that mighty *Yaksha*, the most powerful *Indra* also met with miserable defeat. As soon as *Indra* went, the *Yaksha* disappeared from his view. He could not have the privilege of even talking to the *Yaksha* which his subordinate gods enjoyed. How could he show his face to the gods now? His ego had a heavy blow that almost stunned him. When one's ego is quelled, that is the proper time for the appearance of the spiritual guru. *Indra* now saw the great goddess *Uma*, *Haimavati*, standing before him with a smiling face, ready to instruct him on the nature of the *Yaksha*, i.e. the Knowledge of *Brahman*. The goddess told *Indra* that the great mysterious *Yaksha* was none other than Brahman who was the cause for the success of the celestials over the demons.

This same truth about the Supreme Power that is behind the success of the celestials in their war against the demons, is illustrated in the great epic Mahabharata through many incidents. One such incident took place just after the close of the war, when the spirit of

Ghatotkacha (the son of *Bhima* by the demoness *Hidimbi*) was summoned and questioned as to the part played by the various warriors in that great war. 'Whom do you think as the greatest warrior?'-was the question put to him. His reply reveals the great truth of the existence of the Supreme Being behind every action. He said: "I do not know who fought and how they fought and other similar details. I only saw one Being, the Being of Krishna moving and there was nothing else visible to the eyes."

Another incident was a conversation that took place between *Sri Vyasa* and *Arjuna*, that too after the war. *Arjuna* was seeing a mysterious and gigantic form in the battlefield moving here and there, sometimes visible and sometimes invisible, during all the eighteen days of the war. After the war, *Arjuna* asked about the identity of that Being and *Vyasa* told him that it was *Lord Siva* who was helping him and his brothers in the war. "He was not only helping all of you", said *Vyasa*, "He was the only one behind you and giving strength to you to fight against the mighty personages like *Bhishma*, *Drona*, *Karna* and others."

A third incident was that which happened when, after the war, *Lord Krishna* congratulated *Yudhishthira* for his success in the war. *Yudhishthira* then said these significant words: "O Krishna, It is you who are responsible for the success and not me or anybody else."

Still another occasion when this truth about the immanent aspect of that Transcendental Being is revealed, is when *Lord Krishna* explains to *Arjuna* how He Himself, everyday of the battle when *Karna* was fighting against him, hypnotised him (*Karna*) due to which he forgot to use his unfailing weapon, the *Sakti* which was given to him by *Indra*, and how it was He Himself who made *Karna* use it against *Ghatotkacha*.

Behind every incident in this world (whether big or small, greatly significant or insignificant) He alone is, and it is His power that does everything. He alone is the cause of the victory of the winner as well as the defeat of the vanquished. He works miracles; and every incident in our life, if only we go deep into its cause, will be seen to be a miracle. He is everywhere and still He cannot be seen as we see an

object or a person. Thus should one meditate on *Hirn*, the *saguna-Brahman*, as the ultimate cause of all that happens here in this world and the other worlds. He should not be limited as the cause alone. He is also the effect as well as that which connects the cause with the effect. The result of this meditation is gradual liberation, *krama-mukti*.

(from the Book "The Supreme knowledge revealed through Vidyas in the Upanishads," by Swami Brahmananda - A Divine Life Society Publication, Rishikesh, Uttarakhand)

AN APPEAL

The life members who have contributed for the Peace Journal for 10 or more years long ago are requested to renew their membership since the Printing cost has increased considerably. The other members are also requested to renew if they have not renewed. This is the Journal started by Pujya Omkar Swamiji Maharaj 90 years ago and still continues with the blessings and stewardship of Pujya Jnaneswari Mataji. It is our responsibility as the disciples of Pujya Swami Omkarji Maharaj to contribute to the Peace Journal by renewing the membership in the form of life membership.

The readers are requested to visit the website of Sri Santi Ashram uploaded recently on 21-1-2017, on the occasion of the Centenary Celebrations for the detailed information about the Ashram

Log on to : www.srisantiashram.org.in

INDIVIDUAL SELF AND ETERNAL SELF

-Swami Ranganathananda

In each one of us there is an individual self and eternal Self. The individual self is the "I", and the eternal Self is the witness of this "I". When we use the word "I", our finger points towards our body. Actually it implies a profound Reality hidden inside our psychophysical system. In the absolute sense it refers to the reality that witnesses the "I". That is the eternal Self. But in our deluded state, "I" is understood as the individual self. So this pronoun "I" has a profound meaning. It is an important datum needing serious investigation.

In this body there is an individual self as well as the eternal Self as well as the eternal Self. These are the appearing self and the real Self respectively. There is the "I" and there the one who witnesses the "I". The "I" is in mundane affairs, eating sweet and bitter fruits. Every time it receives a severe blow, it looks up at the one who is witnessing in silent majesty, and moves up a little, aspiring to become like that. In this way it goes on moving until one day it realizes that it is one with the witnessing Self, and that it never existed separately. What existed was the supreme witnessing Self alone. The little "I" was only a reflection of the witnessing Self.

What is that wonderful reality? We see, and, the same time, we see also our act of seeing. That is the witnessing Self, called Sakshi in Sanskrit. This Sakshi has entered even into psychology today. The supreme Self is the witness witnessing the undivided self. We have to discriminate between them and be established in the supreme Self. Our waking self is confined to the waking state. It has no place in dream and sleep. The dream self is confined to dream, having no reference to waking and sleep. Yet there is one entity witnessing all the three selves and registering their deeds. It is that which says, "I dreamt, I woke up, and I slept. That "I" is not the waking, the dreaming or the sleeping "I". That is the eternal witness

of these changing "I"s. Technically it is called "the fourth" in relation to the three changing selves. That is our true state. That is the depth study of our experience as revealed in the three states. It is the universal experience needing our penetrating investigation through which we can sift out the supreme Self from the individual self. It is a deep study of human consciousness where in we discover the unchanging consciousness behind the changing consciousness.

- from the Vision May 2016

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. C a part of the hild Welfare Fund
4. Old Age Welfare Fund
5. Library Fund
6. Peace Journal Subscription Fund :
a) India
Abroad
b) Annual - Rs. 50/-
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.
