

Happiness is an awareness of an internal state that is already a part of your very being. Once it is clearly understood that it is not a thing, then the filling of your life with things will be regarded as a great delusion.

Why should you be good? Why should you not hurt or harm? Precisely because God abides in all things, and therefore you have to treat all not only with reverence or respect, but with a worshipful attitude.

Swami Chidananda
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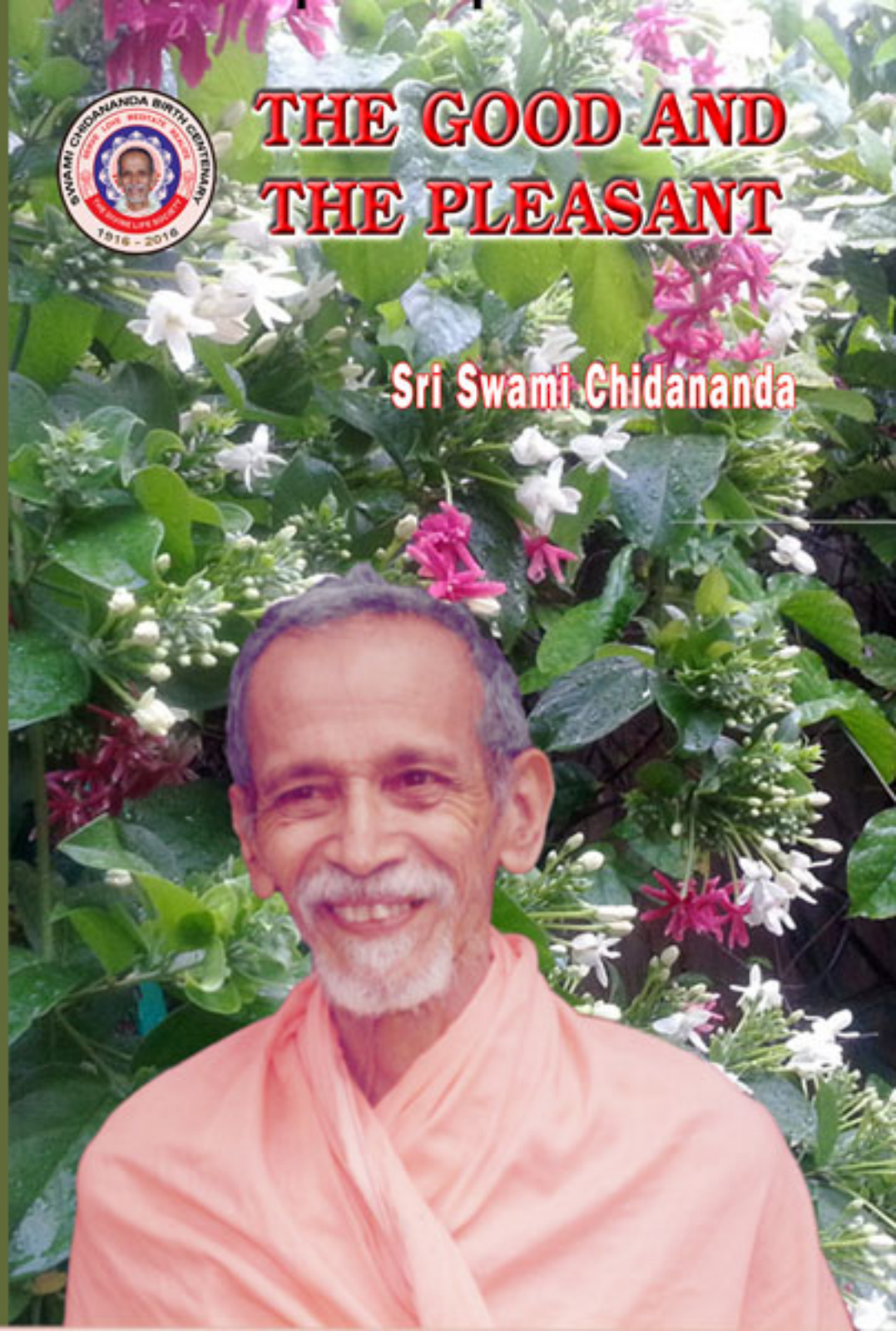


A DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY PUBLICATION



THE GOOD AND THE PLEASANT

Sri Swami Chidananda



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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

24th September 2016 marks the auspicious occasion of Birth Centenary of Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. To commemorate this sacred occasion, the Headquarters Ashram has decided to bring out one hundred booklets comprising illuminating talks of Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj for free distribution.

To propagate Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj's gospel of Divine Life, Worshipful Sri Swamiji Maharaj travelled extensively in India and abroad and showed the path of divine life to countless seekers through his spontaneous and highly inspiring lectures. His lectures, in Sadgurudev's words, are the outpourings of his saintly heart, the revelations of intuitive wisdom.

We are immensely happy to bring out some of his hitherto unpublished lectures in booklet form as our worshipful offering at his holy feet on the blessed occasion of his Birth Centenary. The present booklet **THE GOOD AND THE PLEASANT** is a compilation of his five inspiring talks, one Talk given at the Sadhana Shibir on, 23rd March,

1984, Lonavala, Mumbai during the year 1984 and the others at the sacred Samadhi Shrine.

We express our heartfelt gratitude towards Shri Yogesh ji, Smt. Minoti Mataji and the inmates of the Headquarters Ashram for their loving service in transcribing, editing and compiling these talks.

May the abundant blessings of the Almighty Lord, Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj be upon all.

—*The Divine Life Society*

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1. THE GOOD AND THE PLEASANT¹

Worshipful homage to that Supreme Eternal Reality, the all-transcending Absolute, the universal Divine Spirit! Loving adorations to revered and beloved Holy Master Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj! Radiant immortal Atman!

When we study the scriptures—Upanishad, Bhagavadgita, Bhagavata, Ramayana etc.—and when we study the spiritual books of the great souls, their teachings, their parables, their advice and guidance, we must do so with a constructive and creative purpose. As we come to know these lofty teachings and different thoughts, we gradually coordinate them; and out of these coordinated thoughts from different sources we should evolve certain principles for our life, for our thinking, speaking and acting. We should gradually evolve out of these various sublime and elevating thoughts some ideal that we can place before us, as a shining light towards which to proceed.

¹ *Early Morning Meditation Talk*

Gathering the inner essence of flowers from various trees and plants, the honeybee ultimately brings health giving and sweet tasting honey. This is the end product, the result of the essence from so many different plants, from all the ten directions. It also becomes the medium for giving various Ayurvedic medicines in powdered form. In Ayurveda, the effect of any medicine has been found to be more effective and productive of positive results in a patient if taken along with some particular ingredient—e.g. some are to be taken with Jeera Pani, some with buttermilk, some with honey, some with the juice of a particular leaf, some with a few drops of almond oil. This ingredient with which a medicine is taken is called Anupana. Certain Ayurvedic books roughly translate them as ‘vehicles’, because the dry powder cannot be taken as such, and must be mixed with liquid. And during this intake, you are asked to avoid certain articles of diet, and take certain other articles of diet. Those articles which may counteract or nullify or lessen the effect of the medicine should be avoided (Kupathya), and those articles that are helpful must be taken (Pathya).

In the same way one coordinates and creates for oneself certain principles for living, certain things to be avoided—do’s and don’ts—and certain ideals. That is the result of creative

Sravana, creative Svadhyaya and creative Manana and Vichara.

This is self-effort, naturally. We have to be our own saviours—*Uddharet atmanatmanam* (let him raise himself by his own self). In the same context Lord Krishna says that the senses are the friend of a person who has succeeded in keeping them under control. The senses include the mind also. The senses are five—sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell—and inasmuch as all these are ultimately coordinated in the mind, it is the mind that has to react in a proper or improper way. Thus, the mind is all the five senses combined. Therefore it is called the highest of all the senses.

If the senses are kept under control, they are said to be your friend. And the same senses, when uncontrolled, become your enemy—*Shatrutvat vartante*. Therefore, you should do *Purushartha*, and through that *Purushartha* you should bring about a state where the senses are fully under your control. That *Purushartha* is called *Uddharet atmanatmanam*. Only when the senses are under your control can you proceed on the path towards liberation.

This is very clearly placed for the instruction and guidance of Nachiketas in the Kathopanishad. Yama, the great teacher, tells Nachiketas, “Twofold indeed, O Nachiketas, are the paths that open up before man—the Sreya

Marga and the Preya Marga. One is that which is pleasant, and the other, Nachiketas, is the good. And one who takes the path of the merely pleasant, he does not attain; but he who knows the difference between the two takes to the Sreya Marga, O Nachiketas, that being verily attains.”

Thus, he speaks of these two paths that open up before man at every step—the merely pleasant and the good—Preya and Sreya. Therefore, we need clarity of perception to know the difference between what Sreya is for us and what is merely Preya. Just because it is attractive to you, you should not commit the error of moving in that direction. You must know which is the good. If the attractive also happens to be the good—okay—but if the attractive is not the good one, without a second thought, in spite of all its attractions, it should be left, and you should look towards that which takes you to the highest attainment. Thus, we come back again to *Uddharet atmanatmanam*. Uncontrolled senses are your enemy, and the controlled senses are your own friend. “Therefore, O Nachiketas, clearly see, perceive the path that takes you toward the supreme attainment—the Sreya Marga—and turn away from merely Preya Marga.”

We have to coordinate all these great sayings, the sources of great wisdom, and out of them evolve for ourselves a clear cut path. In doing this,

we should not delay too much, because time passes! Therefore, when we have strong will power, this is the time to do it—just as a blacksmith can fashion various implements out of the hard metal iron only when he strikes with a big hammer that is white hot; when it is cold, the iron doesn't yield. Therefore, they said—*uttishthata jagrata*—be awake, be alert, and proceed towards the highest experience which will liberate you. Hold onto the feet of those who have attained that wisdom; they will impart that wisdom to you—*prapya varan nibodhata*. Therefore, we should be alert and awake, active, up and running upon the spiritual path!

Thus have the great ones taught. They have given us an abundance of good thoughts. For our part we have to do the needful and evolve out of these various thoughts our own path that leads us to the highest good.

May the grace of God and the blessings of the Master grant you success in this noble effort. God has given us this wonderful golden chance of a human birth. God bless you all.

Om Namo Narayanaya—Om Namo Narayanaya—Om Namo Narayanaya!

Hari Om Tat Sat!

2. SADHANA FOR INNER AWAKENING²

Beloved Immortal Atman, blessed children of the Divine, devotees of the Lord, Jijnasus eager for spiritual knowledge, Mumukshus striving for liberation and Sadhakas and Yogis engaged in spiritual Sadhana upon the different paths of Yoga. You belong to a global spiritual family. There are like you innumerable seeking souls leading the spiritual life, scattered all over the world. There is a great spiritual revival practically all over the world—in the east and west, both hemispheres northern and southern, because sometimes in my itinerary I am obliged to go to all these areas.

As Sadhakas gathered together for a Sadhana Shivar, you must be keenly aware that your view of things Your view of things should be something very special and distinctive, because the basis of Sadhana is a deeper understanding of what we call Prapancha Samsara—a deeper understanding and a very philosophical perception of the actual nature of Samsara. We don't look at things as a historian, a sociologist, a politician or even as

² Talk at Sadhana Shivar Morning Satsang, 23rd March, 1984,
Lonavala, Mumbai

a humanitarian looks at things. A humanitarian looks at things with concern at human suffering, thinking to do something to relieve suffering; he has kindness, compassion. We may have an element of the last mentioned class—the humanitarian view of things—but I wish to bring it home to you that a true Sadhaka, a devotee of God, a Yogi who is upon the path, has a totally different approach. He has an understanding of things much deeper, and his sight is set upon a higher goal; while he takes into consideration the prevailing situation, at the same time he transcends this level of reacting and thinking and pitches his Antahkarana upon a higher level where the perception and viewpoints are completely different.

The spiritual aspirant's understanding is based upon philosophy, upon Darshana and upon a different evaluation of life. The Sadhaka must be keenly aware that notwithstanding the situation that prevails on the outer plane of this physical world, whether it is dangerous, alarming, threatening, he must be firmly established in this conviction that even in the midst of it and in spite of it, his prime task is to direct heart, mind and intellect towards that Reality. "I have been sent here primarily to make use of this earth life to attain that highest goal of existence"—that is a return to that experience and consciousness which is our Eternal State from which we are

temporarily alienated or separated, and we find ourselves in this present state.

This human status, birth, body, faculties have been given to you to be made use of, so that you transcend your human nature and attain an experience of divine perfection. That is the primary purpose of your being here, and the situation in the world is not your creation, and you are not responsible for it.

So do not at any moment forget the prime purpose for which you are here. We cannot do much about the world situation, we cannot change it; and if we try to do something, maybe we make it worse, because our intellect and our grasp of things is very little. Therefore, we should not commit the mistake of being too much affected by the world situation and thus getting enmeshed in this process and not paying sufficient attention to the goal of Sadhana.

Such calamitous situations have always existed. If you read the Puranas you will find how terrible Asuras started tyrannising the whole world and tormenting people until it became unbearable. Their atrocities were such, and they did so much harm and terrible havoc to people that the Earth could not bear the weight of their sins. She goes to Lord Vishnu and appeals, "Please do something!" Why don't they go to Siva or Brahma? Because Brahma and Siva are only concerned with the beginning and end of the

process; but the onerous duty of looking after and managing this whole process, is Sthitikarta Vishnu's duty. Therefore they always go to him. Unable to bear the torment of the Asuras, all the Devas joined together and led by Indra went to Lord Vishnu and said, "Please do something about it. We are simply harassed. They are tormenting us, and we are helpless. It is a terrible situation. Help us, otherwise we will be completely destroyed." So, this type of terrible situation seems to have been a common feature of this earth life—it seems to be a recurring malady, just like epidemics.

This world is imperfect, this world is Apurna. It is a product of the great cosmic power of illusion which is the Anirvachaniya Shakti of Brahman (the indescribable power of Brahman)—whom we call Prakriti or Maya. In the Supreme Reality there is no imperfection, no duality—*ekameva advitiyam brahma*—but it is through Maya, somehow, in a mysterious way, that these infinite names and forms have been projected and have come into being.

And now we must carefully grasp this subtle point. Maya, by her very nature, is Trigunatmika, characterised by the three Gunas. The Supreme Reality is beyond the three Gunas, Trigunatita and beyond the pair of opposites, Dvandvatita. Maya being Trigunatmika has brought about this world of duality, where there is constant confrontation—light and darkness, happiness

and misery, life and death, disease and health, success and failure, honour and dishonour, fulfilment and disappointment—Daivi and Asuri are always there.

The Gunas prevail in a cyclical manner; at different times one of the three Gunas dominates, subduing the other two. And when Rajas and Sattva are subdued and Tamas becomes the dominator, then these things happen. It is inevitable because this is the play of Prakriti. It is the manifestation of Trigunatmika Maya. This happens in the individual also. The truth is—that which happens in the macrocosm is duplicated in the minutest detail in the microcosm, the individual. In philosophy, they call it the Monad, and they call the macrocosm Logos.

So, the same Trigunatmika cycle rotates in the psyche of a Sadhaka, and the Sadhaka's important business is to study this constant interplay and this cyclical rotation of the three Gunas and to be alert and cautious when Tamas is working. Vigilance is one of the indispensable equipments of the Sadhaka. If you want your Sadhana to proceed unhampered—maybe slowly but always going forward in the right direction—you must be vigilant. Constantly you must be aware of what is going on within you, your emotions, sentiments, thoughts, desires, activities; you must know with what motive you say something—is it a motive based on truth or is it a motive which has some dishonest twist,

because the human mind is so mischievous. When it is just not alright, the Sadhaka will think that everything is alright, because to recognise that something is not alright is very disturbing or he may be deprived of some enjoyment or pleasure; so subconsciously, he does not want the fixed situation inside.

Unless the Sadhaka has become endowed with keen Vairagya, Vichara and Viveka, and he is established in the firm conviction that in the outside world there is no enjoyment, that all the names and forms are the sources of pain—till then he is completely governed by pleasure-seeking. The pleasures may not be gross, because the Sadhaka is always afraid of public opinion. But he will go after subtle types of sense satisfaction, desires that may not be really good for his spiritual life. When this subtle seeking of pleasure begins to catch hold of the Sadhaka, the mind blanks up that area so that even though he may be vigilant and introspective, that area is not exposed.

Why? If it is exposed, you will lose the opportunity of the enjoyment—that you do not want. It is a very intricate mechanism how the mind deceives the possessor of the mind; in spite of vigilance and introspection, what it does not want to reveal it will not reveal. The Sadhaka will find that 'I am quite alright', and will get caught, because the mind has refused to reveal what it does not want to reveal, as it does not want to lose

the sense experience which the ego is bent upon having. The Sadhaka's consciousness is still identified with the ego, and the pleasure pursuit of the ego is part of the life of the Jivatma. It has not learnt to say, "No, reject it. I am not this ego. The ego wants this pleasure, but I do not want it. I will not allow this ego to deceive me and drag me down and get me caught."

In spite of all Vedanta, in spite of all analysis, Viveka and Vichara this ego does not at all go—it persists, it prevails. It requires a very superior sort of vigilance and alertness and unceasing analysis, if one has to become free from this situation of being alert and vigilant and yet committing a blunder. The propensity for sense enjoyment is a permanent situation within—it is natural—until a very high stage of Vairagya and Virakti is generated. Then it becomes a powerful fire, it will penetrate into the most hidden nooks and corners of the subconscious mind and burn up the dross of hidden and unfulfilled subtle desires which the Sadhaka carefully cherishes. The active mind does not penetrate it. It does not want to see—so they are cherished and kept hidden inside and very intelligently covered up; the Sadhaka himself or herself does not know of their existence until a certain situation comes. Then suddenly it is too late. The awakening comes after the event. It is like trying to lock the stable after the horse is stolen.

If you want to avoid that, you must every day when you wake up from sleep, you must start your Viveka and Vichara. The alertness and vigilance must commence the moment you enter into the waking state, and it should be kept up continuously. You must form a habit of constant Vichara, Viveka and alertness. It must become your second nature. It is like a person who is in the arena fencing with a sharp rapier with an opponent who wants to defeat him. Every moment this man is agile and looking, finding out what the opponent is trying to do, how to parry it and at the same time get his advantage. Like that, he is keyed up to a state of keenest activity, active vigilance and alertness.

We have to be equally alert and vigilant regarding the way in which the outer world and newspapers, radio, television, gossip affect us—what is our reaction, are they able to overcome us and our Sadhana takes a secondary position? If these things begin to dominate us, then we are in danger. What all we have accumulated with great difficulty—Samskaras and Vasanas that are spiritual, sublime, moving forward—all of them become diffused and get lost. Once again, you'll have to start.

To show this, our Puranas bring out various types of episodes and incidents to warn us. Even after doing years and years of Tapas, Vishwamitra succumbed when Menaka appeared. Why? Because this propensity was inside, and he never

knew it was there, and also because to him Menaka was a reality. He was not able to treat Menaka as a myth, as a non-existing projection. In spite of keen Vichara and Viveka to him she was a reality; and because this propensity was there, he succumbed.

But the same situation, when it came to Nara and Narayana, it was not able to bring even a hair's breadth of change in their settled conviction in That which IS—the one and only Reality. And to disturb them and break their Tapasya, Indra sent his tempting Apsaras—not one or two—Rambha, Tilottama, Menaka and their entire troupe tried to tempt them. They were sitting serenely in Tapascharya, and when they were disturbed, they opened their eyes. They saw it, but they knew this is Mithya (unreal)—Brahman only is Satya (real). They said, “Why this Indra and other deluded people are trying to disturb us?” Then they looked at each other and understood each other: “There is only one way to stop this foolishness.” They created out of their own person a damsel so dazzling and so indescribably beautiful that these other damsels felt like glow-worms before sunrise and their confidence in trying to beguile them went—the balloon was deflated. They hang their heads and returned shamefaced to Indra and told him that nothing can alter Nara and Narayana, because they are capable of producing hundred-fold more beautiful damsels, and if they wanted this enjoyment they could create whatever

they wanted and enjoy. Therefore, the damsel Urvasi came from the Uru (thigh) of Nara-Narayana.

They are two great sages—counterparts of Lord Vishnu. They are Nitya Tapasvis and have the firm conviction that Reality is only One, and all this passing universe is like husk, it has no inherent worth—it has only a time-limited reality. The world is real as long as the body is real because the body has certain stern necessities—hunger, thirst, rest, sleep, and this world is able to provide for them. When we are able to go beyond body consciousness, that very instant the world will become a cipher to us. And those who have attained that, have declared, “Don’t be deceived by this appearance. It is the jugglery of Maya. It is like Gandharva Nagari, a city in the sky.” It is unreal like a mirage, even though you can take pictures of a mirage. If this mind can be deceived, then a camera also can be deceived. And they said that this is the actual situation with the entire universe—it is not really there, but it appears to be there. It is only an appearance and not a reality at all.

It appears to be real for the time being, like a very gripping cinema show on a three dimensional screen. You are so overcome by the happenings you are seeing that sometimes you weep; you undergo all the gamut of different moods and emotions for these shadows. When the whole thing is over, the light appears and the white

screen is there again, then you are a little ashamed.

But we don't feel the shame very much, because we are not alone, so we manage to somehow come away satisfied. In this way, it becomes a gripping reality; such is our condition. Those who have realised the Truth, are able to declare it in firm terms, but what about us? Very great sages said, "You also can realise it, you also can perceive it, if only you are a keen student of your own consciousness." Now all your senses are active, and this world is standing before you with all the things in it and all the temptations and problems—but after the day's work is over and sleep overtakes, where is your world, where is your business, where are your problems, your bank balance, your house and your family? The moment the consciousness shifts from one dimension to another dimension, here and now, even without attaining Brahma Jnana and without having transcended time and space—you enter into an experience where the world does not exist. Even time does not exist. You are not aware of your body—whether you are male, female, animal, man—nothing.

You do not experience it on some rare occasion; everyday you undergo this experience. Now try seriously to direct your attention to study this experience. You say the dream state is unreal because it is nullified by the waking state; but the waking state also is nullified by the dream state

and in deep sleep. If you apply the same standard, the waking state is as unreal as the dream state. However, you say that the waking state has continuity, because when we wake up, we find the same world again. What prevents the dream state from also becoming a serial? It is within the realm of possibility. No one has proved conclusively that it is not possible; and some people who have done studies of the dream state, have experienced that the same dream repeats itself or the same dream continues.

One very deeply analytical person made a study of this dream state. By conscious effort he was able to have a series of dream experience where each night he started from where it ended the last time. The dream was a conference of sages and seers, questions were put, answers were given by one important personality, and with "We shall now postpone it for tomorrow" the dream ended. Upon waking he jotted down the dream. The next day the dream people assembled again, and the same sage comes and says, "Yesterday we were having a discussion about this question, and this is what I have told, and now let us go further."—So he brought out a very rare volume called the 'Dream Problem', it was in two parts. I don't know whether it is available now.

This analytical process of studying the three states of consciousness is available for every one of us, and because of its recurrent nature, it presents itself before us for our keen study and

analysis. Then slowly it will begin to dawn upon you that this Jagat is not true, is not the reality, it is Mithya (unreal) because every day it is contradicted and vanishes from the area of our experience for a sufficient period of time. If I am a long sleeper, this world does not exist for me for 7-8 hours. Out of this we gradually begin to get the conviction, "What I have been thinking until now is quite erroneous. There is no real existence for these things." And if you develop Vairagya, you become firmly established and you can react to all the temptations like the sages Nara and Narayana, and not like Vishvamitra.

With this type of reoriented vision you do not become affected too much by earthly events; you understand that He has sent you with a certain assignment, "I have to move towards my divine destiny. I will react in a suitable and worthy manner as the situation demands within the limits of my ability as God has placed me here." We are Sadhakas, the world is unreal but when a hungry person comes, you should immediately give him something to eat. Don't have double standards. If you recognize the relative reality of that person and his hunger and feed him, you have done the perfect act. If a person in pain comes, try to relieve the pain. If the person is in sorrow, try to console him. If the person is in distress, try to relieve the distress. And if you do it with this philosophical background, it also becomes part of your Sadhana, because it is an

exercise in a two-dimensional consciousness, “I know this is unreal, I know Bhagavan is playing all this; but I also know that to that person it is real. I am able to see both. I must react as it is demanded by the other person.”

It is a very peculiar state of dual consciousness. A sage’s state of consciousness is that Brahman alone is real and everything else is unreal. At the same time, if a big man comes, the sage accords him the proper reception and if a little child comes, the sage reacts by giving him a sweet or something. Neither he gives a sweet to that big man, nor does he give a VIP reception to the child. He is able to perceive a distinction, even though he knows they are non-different. In this way, without being affected by whatever is happening—the world may be or not be, or whether there is conflict or peace or anything—my duty is to move straight towards the goal of life; and as I move towards it, I have to deal with every situation accordingly because the world demands it.

But what is my main status, what is my main identity, and what is my main function? My status is the status of a Jivatma having alienated itself from Paramatma. Now I have to go back to my original abode and reunite myself with the Paramatma. That is my status. And what is my function? It is Sadhana. Sadhana is the main purpose for which this body has been given. The body has got two aspects—one is, through this

body we have to undergo all the experiences which we have created for ourselves through Karma; and secondly, God has given this body to do Purushartha (effort). He has endowed us with the power to think, feel and reason, and by utilising them we can attain our goal. So this second aspect of life should receive the prime attention and emphasis.

This body is an instrument for Purushartha, and Purushartha takes two forms. The subjective aspect is related to the attainment of our divine destiny, the fulfilment of our life; and the other pertains to our relationship with world, because we are very much part of the vast throng of humanity and all creatures around us. Therefore, our dealings with all creatures should be such that it does not become an obstacle in Sadhana; otherwise it will create duality in our life which will pull us in two opposite directions. Our sages have given a Sutra (formula) regarding our objective relationship with the world—Paropakar (doing good). All activities should be based upon this one Sutra. And if you are not able to do this, at least you should not harm or hurt others. They say that Paropkara is the quintessence of the great Tattva called Dharma. Bharatiya Sanskriti and the Sanatana Vaidik system are dominated and pervaded by this great concept of Dharma. This body has been given to tread the path of Dharma, to protect Dharma and to attain God.

Live your life keeping in mind these twin ideas. The classical Sadhana should always regard the world as dream, and because I am part of this dream let me play my part. When one plays a part in a drama, one knows that this all is a drama and weeps, laughs, loves, hates and gets angry. Why? This is the law that prevails upon the dramatic stage.

So, go through life unattached, knowing that in this drama of life we have to play our part—and the part in one Sutra is—Paropakar, Paropakar, Paropakar! Guru Maharaj said, ‘Be Good Do Good’; and our great Samskriti says, ‘*Ahimsa paramo dharmah*’—from your speech, action, and your very thought let good come to others, let happiness come to others.

Kayi drishtant dete hain—vriksh phalta hai paraye ki bhalayi ke vaste, nadi bahti hai paraye ki bhalayi ke vaste, megh vrishti karta hai—aur insaan ko kya in jada vastuon se koi kami hai? The trees give fruits for others, the river flows for others, and the clouds give rain for others—are human beings less than them?

A South Indian Saint said, ‘The key to highest blessedness is Daya (mercy), and here in North India Tulasidas says, ‘*Daya Dharma ko mool hai*’—the essence of Dharma is compassion. Gurudev said, ‘Be Good Do Good, Be Kind Be Compassionate.’ Whatever was said in ancient times, he put it into modern simple language.

This is my little Seva to you this morning in the form of trying to give a right perspective of how a Sadhaka should conduct himself or herself in the prevailing world situation. This prevailing world situation is not something new—it has always been like that. The only thing is that in those days they did not have radio and TV, so they were not aware of many things. Now if something happens in New York, the whole world knows about it. It is not a very good thing—it only makes the world appear more real and more important, and for a Sadhaka it is not important. These things are wonderful in their own area. They may be of great utility for those who are sunk in ignorance, firmly caught in the darkness of Maya—but for a Sadhaka, they are great obstacles.

Ultimately, another small point will make you realize that you should not commit this blunder of giving too much importance to this outer world. You should focus all your attention upon Sadhana and Self-realisation, upon ideal living, because your relationship with the world is for a brief period and no one knows the duration of that brief period. You came into being, and after a time you will not be here.—“I am only an unattached wayfarer, and I have nothing to do with things here. I have tried to keep contact with the Great Reality, and I have tried to utilise this body in an ideal manner; and while passing through this market place I have done the best I could to make

things better.” If you have this satisfaction, then what is going with you is what you have done with what God has endowed you with. In very simple language they said that when one departs from here only two things accompany him, ‘liya hua naam diya hua daan’—the name of the Lord uttered and charitable deeds.

Don’t look here and there, don’t be fools overly concerned about Prapancha. With wisdom go through this life unattached, but fulfilling all the obligations in a spirit of worshipfulness and service, dedicating all activities at the feet of the Lord; and inside be intently engaged in Sadhana, intently engaged in worship, devotion, prayer, meditation, unbroken God-thought, keen aspiration and longing for Him. This is the Sadhaka’s life.

Hari Om Paramatmane Namah—
Parabrahmane Namah.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

3. THE GURU IS YOUR LIVING IDEAL³

Radiant Immortal Atman!
Beloved children of the Divine!

The Guru should not mean to you some sort of extraordinary, unparalleled earthly personality in the history of India or of the world. No! Then you will be doing injustice to the Guru. You will be falling far short of the requirement of a true awakened spiritual seeker and aspirant. The Guru should be a living ideal before you, to be lived once again through yourself. You must manifest within yourself all that is highest, best, noblest and sublime that the Guru was, that the Guru stood for, that the Guru declared, that the Guru urged everyone to become. The Guru called forth to the whole world: "This is what you are! This is what you must become!"

He came here to proclaim in powerful words your undeniable divinity, your perfection. You are already perfect, perfection is already there in seed form, make it blossom forth. This was his call. The Guru must be to you that call, ever resounding in

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³ Morning Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir

your heart as well as in your ear. All that he stood for should be something that should become part of you and manifest itself through you. Seeing you, people must get an idea what the Guru was, what the Being called Sivananda was. Seeing you, they must draw inspiration: "If a disciple can be like this, O my God, what might have been the Guru?" When a ray of sunshine enters into a dark room through a window, it lights up the entire room, and it gives an idea what tremendous dazzling light the sun itself would be. When one single ray is able to do this miracle of banishing darkness and bringing bright light—what to say of the Sun? No wonder, they call him the world illuminer. All these things are then realised. When you become dazzled with one single ray of the sun's light, you have to close your eyes or shade them with your hand. Thus seeing you, people should be dazzled, and they must shade themselves and say: "O my God, what should have been that being through whose inspiration this person has become like this? By following whom has this person become like this?"

So the Guru should become a living force in your life now and in future also. That would be indeed the greatest worship offered to the Guru. He should become to you a living, transforming, elevating force, never allowing you to slide back, being a rock supporting you from behind, a lamp

unto your feet, a light upon the path and the propelling force for you to move ever forward towards the goal. Make the Guru that in your life—something effective, something powerful. This is my sharing through the will of God and through the blessings of the benign Guru.

Om Namo Narayanaya—Om Namo
Narayanaya—Om Namo Narayanaya!

4. TRUE OBEDIENCE IS TRUE REVERENCE⁴

Worshipful homage to the supreme, transcendental Universal Spirit Divine, the beginningless, the endless, the eternal and the infinite! May His supreme grace be upon you all!

Loving adorations to revered and beloved Gurudev, Holy Master Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, whose wisdom teachings are to us like a reliable, helpful and strong staff upon our pilgrimage to the shrine of Divine Realisation. They are like a reliable boat to surely take us across from the individual to the Universal, from the human to the Divine, take us across from death and mortality to Immortality and everlasting life.

God is Grace. All saints and selfless holy people are blessings. They live only to bless, they act only to bless, they speak only to bless. Anything that they are doing in their transpersonal relationship with the other people and things in this world, is only to bless. They may do the routine things in their subjective individual

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⁴ Morning Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir

life: they may go to bed and sleep, they may wake up in the morning and brush their teeth, they may have a cup of tea—all this is due to the unavoidable compulsion of Prakriti: the gross physical nature. Some things in this area may not be entirely didactic or in the nature of blessing, but otherwise everything in their objective and transpersonal life of interacting with the rest of the world seems to be construed in the nature of blessings, for they are nothing but centres of blessings. This is one idea I would like to share.

The second idea is: whatever the Divine has endowed the individual soul with, when It has ordained that it must incarnate as a human being upon this earth plane, is all a manifestation of His Grace. Whatever It endows a Jivatma with is for the good of the individual soul even to minutest details—physical conditions, health, mental state, experiences, plus, minus, neutral. From the first breath until the last breath it is all meant for its good—when I say good, I mean evolution. This is the truth. God does not send anything inimical to our evolution. God has no interest in inflicting suffering upon us—by His very nature this is not possible; it is impossible. All that He sends us, all that He endows us with, is because it is necessary and good for us. This is the second thing I would like to share with you.

‘Om Namō Bhagavate Sivanandaya’—I don’t know how many have taken any interest in contemplating and reflecting upon ‘Om Namō Bhagavate Sivanandaya’? How many have tried to reflect upon what it means, why it is chanted? What does it imply? If it is taken literally and chanted sincerely, it is chanted to remind us of the divinity of the Guru. The Guru is addressed as Bhagavan just as Lord Krishna is addressed as Bhagavan—‘Om Namō Bhagavate Vasudevaya’; ‘Om Namō Bhagavate Narayanaya’, ‘Om Namō Bhagavate Jagannathaya’, ‘Om Namō Bhagavate Venkateshvaraya’. ‘Om Namō Bhagavate Sivanandaya’ is to remind us of the Divinity of the Guru. ‘Namō’, I offer you my reverence through the act of salutation; I bow my head, fold my hands and offer reverence to you, Divine Sivananda. So it implies an expression of our reverence and adoration to the Guru—‘Om Namō Bhagavate Sivanandaya’.

However, it is to a Guru who kept on saying: “Oji! Obedience is better than reverence. Offering me all the reverence, and you don’t obey me, then what is your reverence? What kind of reverence is this?” He wanted to bring to our notice that the test of true reverence lay in obedience, true reverence automatically implies obedience, and true obedience alone is the real reverence, is the real way of expressing reverence; they are

mutually related to each other. Where there is true reverence, you may be sure there will be also be obedience; it may not be perfect, but it will be genuine, it will be very deeply earnest and sincere. Where there is no obedience, it is really a strange type of reverence, for reverence and obedience go together only if the reverence is genuine.

This was the Guru who frequently brought this to our notice, 'Om Namo'—'I revere you, I adore you.' Then you must also follow it up by obedience. And by obedience Swami Sivananda does not stand to gain; he has nothing to gain from the disciple—by obedience we stand to gain. With 'Om Namo Bhagavate Sivanandaya' you acknowledge that He is equal to Bhagavan, He is Divine. All the more reason why you should obey if you acknowledge His Divinity, for His admonitions then take on the hue of divine admonitions, divine teachings like the teachings of Lord Rama, Krishna, Vyasa, Vashishta. Acknowledging His Divinity, we express our reverence to His Divinity, thereby making this expression of reverence a token of our willingness to obey. Obedience is a proof positive of the genuineness of our reverence. And as we just saw, that whatever God endows us with is for our good. Similarly, the living God that is the Guru, whatever the Guru admonishes us, whatever the Guru teaches us, is only for our good. True

obedience goes to prove that our reverence is true and real.

We may reflect upon this and be benefited to the maximum extent from our Guru, who happens to be one of these factors God has endowed us with in our life in His all goodness and His spontaneous intention of wishing our highest good. Among the things that He has endowed us with, the Guru forms the key factor. He is the diamond as it were among the gems by which our Maker has endowed us. He did not send us here as paupers or beggars. He sent us here rich and in those riches, in that wealth, the Guru happens to be like a diamond among the nine gems—all the more reason why our obedience should accompany our reverence. For it is the greatest good, it is the highest good.

May the grace of God and the loving benedictions of Gurudev make us perceive things clearly and understand them for what they are!

Om Namo Narayanaya—Om Namo Narayanaya—Om Namo Narayanaya!

Hari Om Tat Sat!

5. THE ORIGINAL DISEASE⁵

Radiant Atman! Let us all lift up our hearts, minds and vision towards that Reality and pay our most worshipful homage to that supreme, eternal, non-dual, all-transcending, timeless, spaceless Cosmic Spirit Divine! *Ekameva advitiyam Brahma*—non-dual is Brahman. Things do not exist; they are all a myth, an appearance like a line drawn on the surface of water. Duality, multifarity—all these things do not exist.

*Ekameva advitiyam brahma, neha nanasti
kinchana*

(The one all-transcending non-duality alone exists).

You are that supreme consciousness, the eternal non-dual consciousness! Become firmly established in this Truth! Be rooted in this Truth. Let all your actions here upon this earth plane spring from this Truth, and be based upon this Reality!

Due to inexplicable and indescribable delusion, we have now given a reality to this temporary physical body, which did not exist

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5 Early Morning Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir

before we were born, and which is not going to exist when we pass away. It is a temporary appearance only. It is not reality. The body is an Upadhi (limiting adjunct) to the Nijasvarupa, and it has various other Upadhis. Jara (old age) is an Upadhi, Vyadhi (disease) is an Upadhi—but it is the greatest Vyadhi; and here we have a situation of a Vyadhi having another Vyadhi.

Taking on a body is the greatest of all diseases—Adi Vyadhi—the original disease. Due to taking on a body, we come into this Bhavasagara. Therefore, they say, taking on the body is Bhavaroga. All the concomitant evils, all the sufferings that the Jivatma becomes subjected to, are the outcome of this original disease called Bhavaroga. Therefore, God is addressed as Bhavaroga Vaidya—the physician or doctor for this great disease. He has sent many prescriptions—taking the divine name, serving the saints, selfless service, compassion towards all creatures.

But here we are in a strange position, where this one disease begets various other diseases like headache, toothache, diarrhoea, arthritis, slipped disc—not to say of accidents and fractures—any number of things. So one disease gets innumerable other diseases.

And who is the sufferer? That is the big question. Who is the sufferer—we don't know. We

keep on saying “we are suffering, we are suffering”. We go to the Vaidya and say, “Please see my pulse”. We put out our tongue before a physician, and he peers into it. But Sankaracharya says there is no such thing as the separate ‘I’. Here is someone saying that the patient does not exist at all, and there is the patient saying “I am suffering from so many diseases”. Juxtapose this, and you find a mystery.

Seeking to find the solution to this mystery, to find some code to crack this mystery—that is what all seekers are engaged in. If a solution is found, then our problem is solved. We are no more bound. Once again, we come to our original supreme, ever-free, untrammelled, non-dual consciousness.

May the grace of the Supreme and the benedictions of the Master enable us to seek and find and enter into that splendorous state of non-dual consciousness, which is bliss indescribable and peace that passeth understanding. God bless you all.

Om Namo Narayanaya—Om Namo Narayanaya—Om Namo Narayanaya

Hari Om Tat Sat!

