

Always let these be enshrined within you—faith in the Supreme, hope for yourself and charity towards all.

Success or failure is something whose source you have to trace into your own nature and the manner in which you live your life.

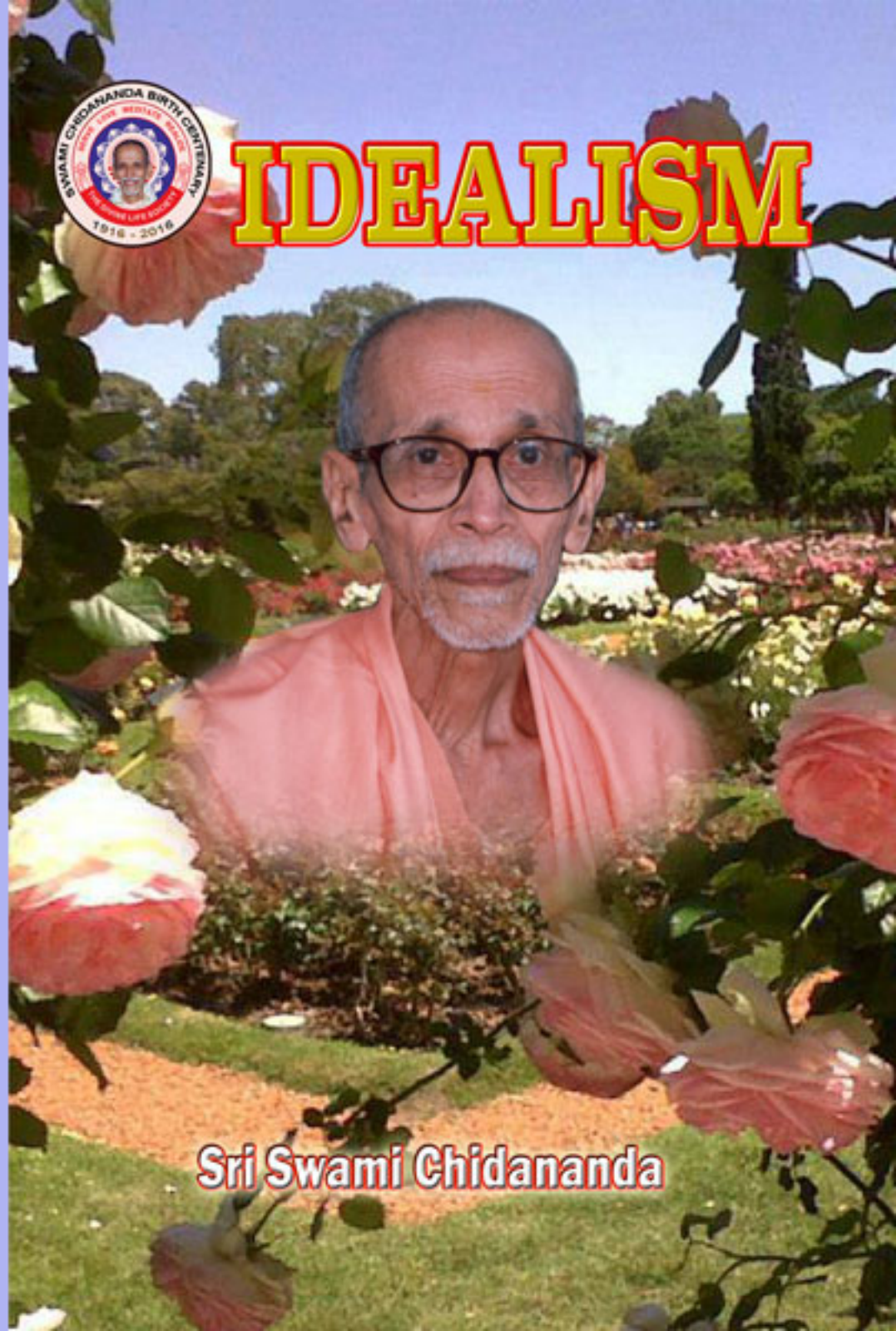
*Swami Chidananda*  
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A DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY PUBLICATION



# IDEALISM



**Sri Swami Chidananda**

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Sri Swami Chidananda



*Published by*

**THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY**

P.O. SHIVANANDANAGAR—249 192

Distt. Tehri-Garhwal, Uttarakhand, Himalayas, India

[www.sivanandaonline.org](http://www.sivanandaonline.org), [www.dlshq.org](http://www.dlshq.org)

First Edition: 2016  
[ 2,000 Copies ]

©The Divine Life Trust Society

**Swami Chidananda Birth Centenary Series—73**

***FOR FREE DISTRIBUTION***

Published by Swami Padmanabhananda for  
The Divine Life Society, Shivanandanagar, and  
printed by him at the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy  
Press, P.O. Shivanandanagar, Distt. Tehri-Garhwal,  
Uttarakhand, Himalayas, India  
For online orders and Catalogue visit : [dlsbooks.org](http://dlsbooks.org)

## **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We are immensely happy to bring out some of his hitherto unpublished lectures in a booklet form as our worshipful offering at his holy feet on the blessed occasion of his Birth Centenary. The present booklet '**IDEALISM**' is a compilation of

his five inspiring talks, given at the sacred Samadhi Mandir during the year 1993 and 1994.

We express our heartfelt gratitude towards 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

## IDEALISM<sup>1</sup>

Blessed Immortal Atman, beloved children of the Lord!

At this moment, when the all-pervading Cosmic Spirit Divine, the Paramatman, the Sarvavyapi Bhagawan, when He has drawn us all together into His Divine Presence, the prayer of this servant is that His grace may ever abide in you and the benedictions of Gurudev may be with you at every step in your sincere and earnest spiritual living.

First comes spiritual living, then comes spiritual striving—within the frame work of a life lived spiritually—then comes the ultimate fulfilment of this aspiration and striving. In this connection, we must mention that Lord Sri Ramachandra, Maryada Purushottama, did not merely incarnate in order to destroy Ravana. That was the secondary aspect. He did not merely come to do something, to perform an action. He also came to live in a certain way and to show us a certain path. We see how he represents for all mankind an ideal of human life, human

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<sup>1</sup> Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 19/4/94



relationship, human behaviour. But that was the outer objective aspect, the relation in this world with fellow human beings, with all creation, birds and beasts.

These are valuable in themselves in how your life, your conduct, your behaviour should be, how you should move amongst others, how you should relate to others. These are important in themselves. But then, personally and subjectively, how are you, what are you within yourself, that is even more important. Because the objective, outer pattern of your life is beheld by the world around you. So in terms of their perception of you, it may be important, so that you acquit yourself in an honourable, dignified way in the eyes of the world, not putting on an appearance, but sincerely being what you are. And this counts for something in one's place in society. The world beholds you from outside, and it is either inspired or debased by you, either uplifted or not uplifted by you.

But then the inner aspect, your individual aspect, is even more important, because that God beholds; He looks. He is the inner silent witness. How do you appear in the eyes of God? What does He see in you whom he has sent here in order to educate yourself, train yourself and gradually raise from a lesser to a higher state until you attain perfection? He is much concerned in what you are doing. But even more concerned with

what you are in your being. The world may not know it, and you may be not aware, but God the Antaryamin, the ever-present witness, He sees you from within, and He knows you from within.

Therefore, it is important that you do not let Him down, that you are true to His image in which He has made you; you must be true to the relationship in which you stand to Him, namely that of a child to the father, an heir to the King of kings. He is Anantakoti Brahmanda Nayaka, and you are His Amsha.

*Mamaivamsho jivaloke jivabhutah sanatanah  
Manah shashthanindriyani prakritihsthani  
karshati”  
(B.G. 15/7)*

(An eternal portion of myself having become a living soul draws (to itself) the five senses, with the mind as the sixth, abiding in Nature.)

You are a part of Him. Therefore He beholds you in this way, and to be true to His expectations of you as His Divya Amsha, you have to be Divya. Therefore we said that Bhagawan Sri Ramachandra came in order to hold a lofty ideal before all mankind, to show how life should be a sublime process of revealing your Reality, and specially in the Ashram as a Sadhaka. A Sadhaka is expected to be a Tyagi, a Tapasvi, an Adarsha Satcharitravan (ideal individual with lofty character), a Sadachari, a Sadhaka and a real

Yogi, because that is what God called for: “*Tasmat yogi bhava Arjuna*” (therefore be thou a Yogi, Arjuna!). And how such a Yogi conducts himself, how he behaves, in what way God is pleased with him, you get a very clear picture in the latter half of the 12th chapter of the Srimad Bhagavad Gita Jnana Upadesha. The wisdom teachings of the Bhagavad Gita does not leave anything unsaid. And for our guidance a blue print is placed before us in the last eight verses of the 12th chapter. After beholding the Cosmic Form of the Lord, when Arjuna comes down to normal consciousness, the Lord deems it the most appropriate time to tell Arjuna what he expects in a devotee who is most dear to Him. He keeps before him a certain ideal, Adarsha.

A person who is a Sadhaka should be an ideal example of Samyama (perfect restraint), Tyaga (renunciation), Anasakti (detachment), Tapasya (austerity), Saralata (simplicity), Nishtha (steadfastness) and Shraddha (faith). And a Sadhaka who is a follower of Gurudev is also supposed to be a Nishkama-yogi, a Bhagavad-bhakta, a Dhyani and a Viveki, ever striving to differentiate between Anatman and Atman, Anitya and Nitya, Asat and Sat. Because, Gurudev has placed before us the ideal of ‘serve, love, meditate, realise’.

And what can ensure that we rise up to the expectations of God within? “*Sakshi cheta kevalo*

*nirgunashcha*". He is Sakshi, witness. He always sees. He always knows. He always is aware of what is going on within your interior. He is the silent witness as it is said, '*Sarvadhi sakshi bhutam*'. He is the silent witness of all Antahkaranas, all inner instruments. He abides in all. What can ensure that you rise up to the expectations of God within, the Antaryami? What can ensure that you rise up to the expectations of one whom you have called Guru, what can guarantee that you rise up to the expectations of the society in which you are living?

Let no expectations of human society be belied by you, let it be fulfilled to the fullest satisfaction. Therefore what can ensure and guarantee that you fulfill the expectations of human society as an individual in that society, that expects something? That would be the sharing of today.

If there is any one factor that can ensure that you rise up to the expectations of society, God, yourself, your Guru, that can ensure that your life is noble and sublime, it is idealism. You should think, "I am a Sadhaka, I must be an ideal Sadhaka. I am a devotee of God, I must be an ideal devotee of God. I am a disciple, I must be an ideal disciple. I am a Yogi, I must be an ideal Yogi. I am a 'Nishkama Karma Yogi', I must be a worthy and ideal servant of humanity. I am a human individual, I must be an ideal human individual".

This great aspiration, this ideal, is the one unfailing and absolutely sure way of living up to the expectation of life within and without. If you do not have idealism, you are at the mercy of your lower passions and of the compelling force of the senses. In every way you become like a tossed ship in the open sea, without sail, rudder or oars. "I must attain that goal; every moment I must keep moving towards that goal, every step I must be in that direction", if you have a very well conceived goal to attain, if you are filled with this sense of purpose and you have a clear cut way, not rigid but flexible, this then is the secret of attaining what you have come here for. If there is any factor, any power that can keep your life always uplifted and prevent you from going to a lower state, it is idealism. It is a powerful upward pull, constantly being exerted upon your life and all its actions within you.

This then is to be meditated upon, reflected upon and closely adhered to and striven for. For it is that which ensures that your life will fulfill itself, that you will attain the goal, for which you have come here as a thinking, reasoning human animal. May the grace of God and the blessings of beloved and worshipful Holy Master enable you to attain success in such a life. God bless you!

*Hari Om Tat Sat!*

## 2

### THE GIFT OF THE 20 IMPORTANT SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTIONS<sup>2</sup>

Radiant Atman! Time and tide wait for no man. Radiant Immortal Atman, let this truth be ever before us; keeping this truth ever before us, let us not waste time, let us not neglect our highest welfare in vain expectation of some tomorrow that will never come. Tomorrow is a concept that ever deludes through the trickery of the mind. The truth is that there is only today by which it is not to be understood that there is only Monday the 27th of December. The truth is that every day is only a today, and what you have is only today.

Therefore, each dawn grasp with both your hands this one little period of life that you have, and that is today. If todays are taken care of, man will never regret. If today is taken care of, man will never cease to progress onward, Godward. The wise Sadhaka is keenly aware that it is the here and now moment which is the most precious of all moments. The wise Sadhaka says, "Let me take

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<sup>2</sup> Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 27/12/93

care of today, let me take care of this hour, let me take care of this moment, and at this moment let me be divine, in this moment let me be a fulfilment of Gurudev's wish for me." If that is understood and fully utilised, we have done our duty, and it is God's turn then to fulfill Himself.

Great is your good fortune to be alive and awake and to be in the light and not in darkness. Great is your good fortune that life has been given to you. Awakening has been brought to you, and light has been bestowed upon life's path thanks to the glorious teachings of the Srimad Bhagavad Gita, of the Upanishads, of the New Testament, of all the scriptures of the world and the glorious teachings of beloved and worshipful Gurudev; he has sought to place before you the down-to-earth practical admonitions of the essence of the teachings of all the scriptures of all the sages and seers. He has laboured for you that you may not labour. He has spent hours of deep study and much effort in order that you may be spared much philosophising and much effort. We have only to make use of what he has given to us. He has hewn down trees, he has scorned the timber, he has cut fire wood. We have only to light it and warm ourselves and cook and eat. All the hardest part of the work he has done for us and given to us ready to apply and to live. Knowing what he has done he has ended his teachings and practical

instructions by saying, “This is the essence of all scriptures and the teachings of saints and sages. These Niyamas or spiritual canons must be rigidly observed. Do not give leniency to your mind.”

This is Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji at the end of his compact, concise, yet comprehensive 20 Important Spiritual Instructions. Beloved Sadhaks, what will be your resolution in regard to these instructions as the old year is fast concluding, and the New Year 1994 is soon to be upon you?

Blessed Atman! Blessed Jijnasus and Mumukshus, Yogis, devotees of God, lovers of righteousness, O you all assembled here, Bhaktas, Jnanis, Raja-yogis, Karma-yogis, Japa-yogis and Sankirtan-yogis, how will you relate yourself to this quintessence of all scriptures? In what way will you receive this gift of Gurudev, the 20 Important Spiritual Instructions, as you are concluding one year of spiritual living on the sacred banks of Divine Mother Ganga in Gurudev’s Ashram? What will be your attitude? When this supreme blessedness has been bestowed upon you and you have been given this great gift from the all-loving world awakener and enlightener in whose presence you are sitting at this moment, what will be your attitude? In what way do you wish to relate yourself, and how are you going to utilise this precious gift, the fruit of



his labour, of his deep study, the fruit of his earnest desire to benefit you and take you up to illumination and liberation? What will be your attitude towards this golden gift, this divine gift? Ponder this, decide, and upon your decision will depend your fate and ultimate destiny.

Lord Krishna concluded his Gita Jnana Upadesha by this amazing remark, “O Arjuna, having reflected over it fully, act as you wish.”

It is this supreme love that gives freedom for the beloved one to do as he wishes. I do not force, I do not compel. I have given of Myself. Now as you wish, you decide and do. That was Lord Krishna. That too is Swami Sivananda. You must be keenly eager to raise yourself by your own effort to the highest state of divine perfection and blessedness.

That is what all your life is about, and in this there should be no hesitation; there should be earnestness, sincerity and serious aspiration and determination. This is the sign of a Yogi, a Bhakta, a true devotee of God, of a Sadhaka. I deem it a great good fortune that during this concluding 50 day period of glorifying Lord Vishwanath, it has been my privilege to bring to you in a vital manner the quintessence of Gurudev’s practical spiritual teachings for your consideration. For this privilege, for this great good fortune I thank the Supreme Being. I also humbly offer my thanks to

Beloved Gurudev and to all of you who, by assembling here morning after morning, have been instrumental in granting me this privilege. Life is short, time flies away. It is wise therefore, to make use of what we have now and here and not to postpone that which is the most important. All other things may be postponed, but not that thing for which you have come here as a human being. That is what endows life with a purpose, without which life is but an empty dream. Gurudev used to say, "It is like the bellows of a blacksmith. It means merely life-repairing through the lungs, inhaling and exhaling and being alive. Even the bellows of a blacksmith puffs air in and out."

Life becomes significant, precious and lofty when it is utilised for the purpose for which it has been granted to us. You are all intelligent people. You are all people with understanding and knowledge. It is therefore enough to say this in brief, and you will be able to grasp and bless yourself. God has blessed you. Gurudev has blessed you. Receive this blessing and benefit yourself and become blessed.

*Hari Om Tat Sat!*

### 3

## FOUR FACTORS THAT MAKE LIFE WORTH LIVING<sup>3</sup>

Worshipful homage unto the Divine Reality, the all-pervading, ever-present and unchanging essence of all beings, of all existence, and the source, support and ultimate fulfilment of all life. May supreme grace flow from that Being and uplift your life to the heights of spiritual realisation.

Loving adorations to beloved and worshipful Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj whose glance of grace is ever upon all sincere aspirants, who exists to support, guide and illumine all sincere seeking souls; having come into this phenomenal existence characterised by birth, growth, change, old age, disease and dissolution, they are struggling to reach a spiritual goal. Upon all such is the glance of grace of Gurudev ever ready to help and to guide them until they reach the Goal Supreme. To that Gurudev our loving adorations! May his grace be upon you all.

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<sup>3</sup> Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 28/12/93

#### FOUR FACTORS THAT MAKE LIFE

Radiant Atman! There are four things in this human world that make life worth living and that make life to be regarded as counting for something. The first is what a human being is able to do for others, to bring joy into the Lord's creation, and to remove sorrow, suffering and pain of God's creatures.

The second principle that makes life worth living is having come into this world of pain and death and having been endowed with the supreme status of a human being, is the question: are we remembering that Being who has thus blessed us and made us the crown and glory of His creation, do we remember Him or not? Are we day after day trying to glorify Him, to praise Him, to adore Him, to pray to Him and to abide in Him? If we are doing this, life is worth living. Having received everything from Him, if we then ignore Him or give Him a secondary place and regard Him as something to be remembered only once in a while, then most unfortunate are we! For we are gathering chaff and foregoing the grain, we are accumulating sea shells and forgetting the pearl in the ocean, we are accumulating pieces of glass, casting aside priceless diamonds. It is by the extent and the measure to which we keep a progressive and a positive relationship with God, that our life counts for something. Devoid of God our life becomes worthless and empty.

The third factor that makes life worth living is with what are we connected. Is our life wholly and solely a matter of being involved in Maya's market place, with this passing show, or is it related to and involved in the transcendental Reality? What is our connection, what is our state? Is it a total involvement in the outer world of passing names and forms or is it a steady attempt to connect ourselves with the reality through serene contemplation and peaceful one-pointed meditation? If the latter is the case, life is worth living, and it counts for something. If there is no progressive, ever growing connection with the Supreme Reality, day after day, if we do not strive to live, move and have our being in that Supreme Reality, then our life counts for nothing. It is as good as not living.

And the fourth factor that makes life worth living and count for something is your answer to your question. With what objective am I living my life? For what am I eating, drinking, sleeping, breathing, moving about and acting? What for? What is my goal? What is my objective? To attain what, am I living? If the answer is to attain enjoyments of this outer physical world and its things, names and forms, then we have lost the supreme gift we been endowed with. We are gathering sea-shells and foregoing the pearl. We are accumulating pieces of glass, and we are

#### FOUR FACTORS THAT MAKE LIFE

losing the priceless diamonds. We are collecting the chaff and losing the grain.

‘Seek ye first the kingdom of Heaven!’—‘The goal of life is God realisation!’ Attain this through selfless service, devotion, worship and meditation. So what are you living for? Ask the question, what is my intention, what is my objective? For what achievement am I living, breathing, moving, striving, day by day? What is my goal?

Upon your answer to this question will depend whether your life counts for something or is a cipher. There are these four things that make life worth living, that endow life with a higher meaning and deep inner significance and that make life real life. These factors constitute the very pillars of true life that has some value in the eyes of man and God. The means to approach God are selflessness and service, devotion and worship, discipline, concentration and ceaseless pursuit of the Reality hidden behind the outer appearance of names and form that veil the Reality. The curtain is to be drawn aside so that you may glimpse the Reality.

Therefore, strive for these four principles that have been declared by all the scriptures, all the saints and sages. They have been given for our following and our practice by worshipful and beloved Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj

in whose presence we have all gathered at this moment. Such is our blessedness. And may we bless ourselves by the manner in which we live our life. More than any other blessing, this is the supreme blessing—the manner in which we live our life.

*Hari Om Tat Sat!*

## 4

### **AS LONG AS YOU BREATHE, DWELL IN GOD<sup>4</sup>**

Worshipful homage to the Almighty Spirit Supreme, the eternal Divine Reality, ever present behind all these vanishing names and forms that constitute what you call this world, this phenomenal appearance. May the divine grace of that all-pervading, ever-present Divine Reality be upon you!

Loving adoration to beloved and worshipful Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. May his glance of grace and hand of benediction be upon all you sincere seeking souls. May Lord Viswanath bestow upon you all the four Purusharthas. This is the sincere prayer at this moment when we are together in the spiritual presence of Gurudev.

Jagadguru Adi Shankaracharya who is installed between Gurudev upon the Samadhi Shrine and Lord Viswanath in the Viswanath Mandir says, “O Man, there is no trusting the breath in your nostrils; you cannot rely upon it. Any moment it may stop.”

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<sup>4</sup> Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 29/12/93



Any moment it may stop, and life will also stop. Breath is a fleeting phenomenon, there is no guarantee that once it has come in, it will go out again. Knowing this, wise people have admonished us, '*Kalakshepo na kartavyam*', time should not be wasted. Life becomes shorter moment by moment, and when the last moment comes, the one who is to take you to the beyond, he will not listen to your pleas to concede some more moments for you within the body, so that you may call upon the Lord or go down on your knees and pray. That moment is exact, precise, correct to the split second. Therefore, one should ever be dwelling in the Divine, one should chant His Name, remember Him, direct one's mind towards Him; one should be linked up with Him and enquire about the reality of appearances and of that which is beyond, through dedicated action of the body, through devout love in your heart, through constant Godward thought of your mind and through discrimination, intellectual enquiry. Constantly dwell in the Divine, be linked up with the Divine.

Every moment life ebbs away. Why? Because we never cease breathing. Yogis, the great ones who are mystics, they calculate human life not in terms of years, months, weeks, days, hours, minutes. No. They calculate it in the number of breaths that has been allocated to each Jivatma

from the moment of birth. Each Jivatma is allocated so many inhalations and exhalations. Therefore the great Yogis advised us, “Engage in activities in such a manner that breath is not expended excessively. Abstain from such activity where breath is expended rapidly and in an excessive way. Anger is something which makes the breath come fiercely in and out. Any type of emotional upheaval, working yourself up into a state of excitement compels one to breathe forcefully. Carefully you have to watch: what are all those actions, what are all those moods, those inner states of mind which cause one to expend breath in an excessive manner? They taught the science of breath control, of breath restraint, by which one would carefully preserve one’s breath and regulate it, so that it is not excessive. One should make a careful study of one’s inner and outer states and the state of breath during a typical 24 hours or several typical 24 hours. Studying this, one soon comes to know the behaviour of the breath, the way in which breath acts in the body. Rapidity of inhalation and exhalation, except in specific Pranayamic exercises like Bhasrika and Surya Bhedi, is to be avoided, and any emotional state or condition which compels a rapid state of breathing should be limited. In these ways our great yogis have told

us the precious nature of life, the great gift of God, and how one can preserve it and prolong it.

They also stressed the need to constantly dwell in God. For this breath never stops. From the time you are born you start breathing. That is the one function over which you have no control, which goes on and on and on. Even when you are resting in deep sleep, even then breathing goes on. It does not stop. Twenty-four hours around the clock, whether you are active or inactive, breath is constantly moving. It is inexorable. You cannot stop the advent of that ultimate day, when the last breath is to leave the body. That is something you cannot stop. Therefore, the great ones said, "What is your duty? To think of the Lord, to chant His Name, to remember Him, to dwell in Him, to be ever united with Him inwardly and outwardly by dedicating your activities to Him, remembering Him and engaging in activities with the Bhava of worship; make Him part of everything—your eating, drinking, sleeping, working, moving."

For God is present even in the midst of activity. So engage in action in a worshipful attitude, remembering and dedicating your activity to God at the end of the activity. Make activity a way of connecting yourself with the all-pervading presence of God in whom you live, move and have your being. This truth should be

constantly contemplated. It must become part of your awareness. The great need is to dwell in God.

Then alone you will be engaged in total Yoga all the time. Then no part of life will be disconnected or unrelated to Yoga. For everything that you do each moment is directly linked up with God and done in His presence. That is the inner truth taught by Gurudev, focusing our attention upon action, devotion, meditation and realisation and linking them all up together in His concept of Divine Life. May such a divine life be yours! May God bless you to live such a divine life, live in Yoga, live in close proximity with God. May Gurudev's grace enable you to succeed in this inner endeavour.

*Hari Om Tat Sat!*

## 5

### IN 1994 CONTEMPLATE THE FOURTH DIMENSION<sup>5</sup>

Worshipful homage unto the supreme Eternal Reality, the one unchanging, all pervading, ever present, immanent and indwelling Reality that is behind and beyond the ever-changing and perishable, vanishing names and forms that constitute this external phenomenal appearance we call the universe and the world. May His divine grace bestow upon you all the four Purusharthas and grant you success in your pursuit of an ideal life of supreme illumination and liberation.

Loving adorations to beloved and worshipful Gurudev in whose presence we have gathered here on the last day of 1993, the third year of the Divine Decade. As we enter into 4th year of this Divine Decade, may you contemplate your Reality

You are the fourth beyond the three states of consciousness, waking, dreaming and deep sleep. You are beyond these. You are the ever present awareness—*shuddha chaitanya swarupa atma*

.....  
5 Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 31/12/1993

*tattva*. You are transcending the three bodies, Sthula, Sukshma and Karana (gross, subtle, causative); transcending the three states, Jagrata, Swapna and Sushupti (waking, dream and deep sleep); transcending the three Gunas—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, you are Gunatita, you are *sharira trayatita vilakshana, shuddha chaitanya, kevala satchidananda-svarupa- brahmatattva*. That is your unchanging, eternal Reality. May you be rooted in that awareness. Rooted in this awareness, may all your life and its movements, and actions be an expression of that all-perfect Divine Nature, Shuddha Sattva, Trigunatita, divine nature, beyond time, Kalatita, beyond past, present, future. You shine eternally.

Therefore on this last day of the present year 1993, let not merely the calendar year move into its fourth numeral, but let your consciousness also move into the fourth state which is your native state, your ever-present state and the substratum of your very being. Thou art That. What you are, That may you be. That may you express and manifest. This is the sharing at this most auspicious, beautiful and blessed hour in closeness with the Spirit that shines resplendent in this last resting place of him who was Guru Bhagavan, Swami Sivananda. The great beauty

and the blessedness is your ever-present Reality, to which the Upanishads woke us up with the call, "Arise, awake, know thyself". May your life be a glorious expression of the Divinity that you are!

May the 1st of January dawn with this awakened awareness. May all the 365 days be filled with the light of this awakened awareness. May your life once and for all cease to be a half drowsy state, but let it be an awakened state. We are stepping into a new year at midnight, and may it be for you an emergence into a new dimension of consciousness which is your native state, the fourth dimension, beyond the three states.

This is your great occasion and the opportunity of answering the call of the Upanishads. "Yes, no more shall I slumber; awake I am at this moment, hearing your call and awake I shall continue to be. No more shall I slumber." At every breath, at every step, each moment, may your inner being respond to this call and slumber no more. Awareness, wakefulness and dynamic manifestation of this awakened awareness shall scatter divinity as you walk this path towards the great Goal.

Thus may the year 1994 be. May you be blessed and may you continue to be blessed; may

you bless all beings you come into association with by providence and Karma. Rejoice in this great occasion. Unparalleled is the value of this precious moment and occasion. May you rise upon the crest of this wave of spirituality that Lord Vishwanath has created, that has been building up over these 12 months and that has been building up over these 50 days specially; and today, the 50th day, this wave has reached its peak point, and so may you rise upon the crest of this wave and elevate yourself, into a higher state of consciousness to be established in it for all times. May there be no turning back.

May thus the Supreme Divinity that dwells within you and pervades everywhere, may that Divinity bless you that your life may be such radiantly divine. May beloved and worshipful Holy Master shower his benedictions upon you and respond to your aspiration and grant your longings. The divine grace of Lord Vishwanath and the loving benedictions of Gurudev, may they achieve this miracle of miracles of your inner transformation here and now.

This is the enchanted day, this is the enchanted hour when we move towards the meeting point between the 12 months of the year that has just gone by and the year that is now



nearby. *‘Uttishthata jagrata prapya varan nibodhata.’* May each dawn be an awakening not to a sound from outside, but to this eternal call from within. May each morning be an answering to that call, an awakening upon the inner dimension of your essential divinity. May each day therefore be an awakening to that ever recurring call of the Upanishad!

*Hari Om Tat Sat!*

## 6

### THE VALUE OF AN ANCIENT PRAYER<sup>6</sup>

Radiant Immortal Atman, beloved and blessed children of Light! Sadhaks, Yogis, devotees of the Lord, Lovers of righteousness, Satsangis assembled together here in your daily morning hour of silent spiritual fellowship in the spiritual presence of Gurudev!

Some time ago, maybe last year, we mentioned some great man having said, “Even if all the religious books of the world were to be lost due to some great catastrophe, if humanity were to lose all holy books, all scriptures, yet the situation is not hopeless. Man would still be able to lead a lofty life and attain the great goal if only one little verse of our Upanishads remained alive in the memory of man.” Many persons would have in their memory these great Upanishadic thoughts. If in some person’s mind this one little Upanishad Shloka is still enshrined, still remembered, then all is not lost. Mankind will find

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*6 Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 22/5/94*

a way, it will be shown the way, and there is still hope.

And which was that Upanishad and which was that Shloka? He said that it is the Isavasya Upanishad and its very first Shloka:

*Isavasyamidam sarvam yatkincha jagatyam  
jagat  
Tena tyaktena bhunjitha ma gridhah  
kasyasvid dhanam*

(All this, whatsoever moves in this universe and that which moves not, is covered by the Lord. That announced, enjoy. Do not covet the wealth of others.)

If this one verse is still available, hope is not lost. Once again humanity will find its way to enlightenment. Spiritual idealism will be there. Life will still be divine. It is possible, if this one Shloka is there.

It occurred to me that this statement is very true. This one Shloka is filled with so much meaning, so much significance and of such immediacy to the human individual, such vital working value; it is such a compelling fact of the now and here existence, that it can transform human life every moment, every day; it will give a divine vision to man, a noble radiant ideal to live

by. Everything it will achieve. Such is the power of this one truth.

Then it occurred to me that there is another equally valid concept that is even briefer and more ancient. The above Upanishadic verse has got four lines; this other great idea has three simple sentences. If this great idea is not lost, everything is not lost. And what is this other equally significant, deeply meaningful and most wonderful concept of your ancient prayer? The first verse of the Isavasya Upanishad may not be so much invoked, and all may not be familiar with it. But who is not familiar with this other idea?

In Gujarat, every child, every young student, in every school it is chanted in the morning. This prayer is:

*Asato ma sadgamaya*

*Tamaso ma jyotirgamaya*

*Mrityor ma amritam gamaya*

Lead us from the unreal to the Real;

Lead us from darkness to Light;

Lead us from mortality to Immortality.

If all the sacred books are lost, but mankind manages to remember this prayer, then humanity need not despair, there is still hope. For this great prayer tells us what we should ask for from the

Supreme Being, what we should strive for by our own effort, for what we should appeal from the Supreme Being, pray to Him, and what we should live for. It gives us in these three lines the key to the life sublime, the secret of spiritual unfoldment and gives us an ideal to live by. It tells us the way our ancient men of wisdom saw the human family on planet earth, saw life. They said that it should be an ascent from darkness to light; it should be an ascent from unreality to Reality; it should be an ascent from this body-bound consciousness to the infinite eternal consciousness, God-consciousness. That is what life should be. Knowing this to be the real life, we must try to make our life an ascent towards the great Reality, towards the light of wisdom and towards immortality. For, we are the children of Immortality. We are created out of that great Reality or Truth. Ekam sat vipra bahudha vadanti (Truth is one, but is spoken of in many ways). That 'Sat', that Reality, is our origin. Therefore, this concept should throb in the hearts of you all. This concept should fire the minds of you all and pervade your thoughts and your daily life. Every morning when you wake up, you must say, "Today I must proceed still further in this process of

banishing the darkness of Maya, Avidya, and move towards the brilliant light of Vidya, Jnana”.

Every moment you should strive to go beyond the petty level of human consciousness with this ego, selfishness, failings, defects, with its anger, jealousy, with its temper and its greed, with its cunningness and crookedness. We should try to shake this off and arise into Divine Consciousness with its truthfulness, reality, purity and sublimity.

A train of thought arose in my mind while discussing the sacred thread ceremony of several young boys here in this Yajna Shala on the 29th of this month. It was invoked in my mind as I heard the chanting of Mrityunjaya Mantra Japa going on,

*Om trayambakam yajamahe  
Sugandhim pushtivardhanam  
Urvarukamiva bandhanan  
Mrityormukshiya mamritat*

(Om, I worship the three eyed God Siva, who is fragrant and who is the nourisher of all beings! May He liberate us from death for the sake of immortality, just as the cucumber separates from its bondage to the creeper.)

The Pandits were repeating the Mrityunjaya Mantra in the Yajna-Shala and hearing that, I suddenly remembered another Mantra.

In the same Yajna-Shala on the 29th we are going to have the thread ceremony of several young boys. And then the Mantra that would be imparted to them would be the Gayatri Mantra, the Brahma Gayatri Mantra. And in this Gayatri Mantra, the central thought is an appeal to Surya Narayana Bhagawan to come and remove from our heart, mind and intellect the darkness of Ajnana—*‘tamaso ma jyotirgamaya’*. *Tat savitur varenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi dhiyo yo nah prachodayat*”. Come, remove the darkness of all that is implied by the terms Ajnana and Avidya and bring a flood of light into my interior. May my interior become radiant, effulgent, filled with light, with all that is auspicious and blessed—*‘Satyam, Shivam Sundaram’*—all that is beautiful. Let my interior become filled with that divine radiance. That is the central supplication in the Gayatri Mantra, *‘dhiyo yo nah prachodayat’*.

These concepts, Light and Jnana, are central to our culture, central to the Indian approach to life. Our view of life is life with a movement towards Light, Jnana. It is a movement towards Jnana, movement towards Sattvikata. Sattva Guna is bright. Our concept of life, given to us by

our ancients is a movement towards Light, a movement towards Reality, Truth, Immortality. If this central truth is always borne in mind, always kept before us as our ideal, then this has the power to transform our life and make it divine. This one prayer alone contains the quintessence of all prayers.

Our Parsi brothers, the followers of the Zoroastrian religion have the symbol of blazing light as the central concept of Godhood, and their shrines or temples are called 'Fire Temples'. Zoroastrian temples always have a perpetual blazing fire, Akhanda Agni-Jwala, that burns away all impurity and spreads light in all the ten directions and does not allow darkness to prevail.

Those who have to work in the forest either in the Himalayas or in Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, people in the forest department and also Sadhus living in the forest have learned one thing: even in the darkness of night, when jungle animals prowl about, they are safe if there is a fire where they are sitting. Because these jungle animals do not dare to approach fire; they shun fire and run away from it.

And so where there is this awareness of life being a process of ever moving from darkness to light—'*tamaso ma jyotirgamaya*'—nothing gross,



animalistic can approach that Sadhaka, that seeker, that devotee of God, that Dharma-Premi who always has in his heart this idea: “I must live and strive to rise from darkness to Light. I must banish all darkness out of my heart and nature and my life, so that I shine with the light of God, the light of Sattva.” If this one concept is there, everything will take care of itself. The whole life will go in the right direction. Our thoughts, words and deeds will be of the right quality, and our life will lead to enlightenment.

This is the great call of this ancient Vedic prayer.

*Asato ma sat gamaya  
Tamaso ma jyotirgamaya  
Mrityor ma amritam gamaya*

Let us live to fulfill this prayer in our heart, in our own life, in this very body. Let our heart have but one aspiration—to be a source of light, a source of effulgence, a source of divine brilliance.

*Hari Om Tat Sat!*

