

Behold the world as God. In this lies our liberation.

Detach your mind from the petty pursuits and fleeting perishable objects of this world and attach it to the lotus feet of the Supreme.

You are never alone. If at all anyone is constantly with you, it is that being who is called God.

Swami Chidananda
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A DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY PUBLICATION



KEEP CONTACT WITH GOD

SWAMI CHIDANANDA



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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We are immensely happy to bring out some of his hitherto unpublished lectures in booklet form as our worshipful offering at his holy feet on the blessed occasion of his Birth Centenary.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 '**Keep Contact With God**' is a compilation of his four inspiring talks at the sacred Samadhi Shrine during the year 1996 and 1998.

We express our heartfelt gratitude towards Shri Mukund Jere 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

1. HOW THE EGO PRINCIPLE IS FORMED¹

Worshipful homage to the sourceless source of all things! Worshipful homage to that causeless cause of all things that exist! Being beginningless, eternal, without itself having any source or cause, it is nevertheless the source and cause of all things. You are in reality that absolute, non-dual transcendental Reality, which alone is. You are not the unreal, ever-changing aspect of your gross, visible human personality, your external features and hands and feet, but you are the invisible aspects in the deep subjective centre of your essential nature; you are a part of that supreme cosmic Being. That is the heart of Vedanta. That is the ultimate declaration of the Upanishads. Not to realise that real Self of yours becomes the source and the cause of all the dual experiences of this world, pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, elation and depression, rejoicing and grieving. You don't have to look for the cause for these ever recurring emotions in your psyche, because they are all caused by yourself.

Of the three afflictions this is the self-caused, the self-generated experience that comes and plagues you and bothers you no end. It arises from your inside and appears in the form of endless desires (Kama), anger (Krodha) avarice (Lobha), delusion (Moha), arrogance and aggressive ego (Mada) and envy and jealousy (Matsarya). Kama, Krodha,

¹ Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 21/7/98

Lobha, Moha, Mada, Matsarya constitute the true inner afflictions. These self-generated afflictions are neither discomfort nor disease of the body nor mental illness; but they constitute this invariable, inner content of all human psyches, invariable because it is present in this entire human world, in global human society. This phenomenon is the common feature in man throughout the world, in all races and nations and in all sections of people. These inner afflictions become not only a source and cause of botheration and loss of peace to your own self, but it becomes the prolific source of trouble to others with whom we have to deal in our daily life while doing our duties and fulfilling our obligations.

We are meant to be a source of service, of goodness to others and solace to others; in all ways, we are meant to be a constant source of giving, relieving, healing, helping, benefiting and bringing cheer into the lives of all, be a light in the darkness. For that is our Dharma. This is what God does to all mankind, and we are part of God. *Tat Twam Asi*. You are not what you think yourself to be, but you are no other than That, the great Reality. This is the central declaration of Vedanta and also the supreme experience Vedanta points to, "Attain this experience of your eternal oneness with the supreme Reality. In that you have to be established. This is your birth right." Yoga Shastra also says the same thing. The gradual process of discipline, self-control and inner concentration ultimately culminates in the supreme heights of meditation. One goes beyond duality and breaks the chains of one's false ego principle; this is the result of identification with the non-self and failure to identify yourself with your

true unchanging Self. That bondage is shattered when you reach the supreme oneness of Yogic meditation, Jnana. Ultimately you know yourself as the supreme Purusha, beyond all afflictions, delusion and phenomenal appearances created by Maha Maya, untrammelled, above afflictions and untouched by Maya.

The same ultimate experience is bestowed upon one who follows the devotional path and tries to attain the supreme Reality in its aspect of the personal God. The path of devotion through various processes, maintaining a dual attitude of devotee and God and expressing this attitude through prayer, worship and adoration ultimately leads to a culminating point when the devotee is aware only of God. God-awareness becomes the ultimate experience in the approach through devotion and love.

Thus all paths, seemingly at variance with each other and proceeding along different processes, all Sadhanas, apparently moving in diverse directions, ultimately they all merge into the same experience. This is therefore what we should strive for.

The Supreme Being is ever ready to help us at any step upon this glorious path. Hold on to this Sadhana till the last breath in your life, for that is why you have been sent here by God, due to your own aspiration you have come here and are living on the sacred banks of Divine Mother Ganga in this holy Uttarakhand. Being a seeker of the Supreme, being dedicated to this quest, that is how you will justify your existence here. In this way you will be fulfilling the prime

purpose for which you have come here by the will of the Supreme Being.

Loving adorations to revered and beloved Holy Master Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji. In order to facilitate our smooth progress towards the goal, in order to provide for us a field, a scope for engaging in diverse Sadhanas according to taste, temperament and ability, he has brought about this set-up, which we call Ashram.

This is an Ashram just as there other Ashrams around, in Tapovan, Swarg Ashram, Rishikesh and Haridwar. And in common terminology Ashram means a group of buildings, a temple, a Satsanga Bhavan, residential quarters for monks, Brahmacharis, Sadhus and holy people and seekers and of course a central kitchen, because Prasad needs to be offered to the Deity after being worshipped, and all the inmates have to take the Prasad after chanting 15th chapter of the Srimad Bhagavad Gita and reciting 'Brahmarpanam'. All these things put together is called an Ashram.

But the true and invisible Ashram is a blessed area, filled with spiritual fervour, a blessed area where there are vibrations of great aspiration, great longing for the Lord, where there is a keen and determined spirit of, "I shall seek. I am determined to find, and when I thus do Purushartha, then suddenly the Lord will open the doors to me. He is the bestower of the fruit of actions and among other things Bhagawan is Karma-Phala. And, therefore, certainly He will most graciously bless me with the supreme fruit of my spiritual action."

An Ashram is filled with spiritual fervour, and the translation of this quest is actively and dynamically lived. This is the true invisible form of the Ashram pervaded by holiness. There is nothing negative; all is sanctity, spirituality. Karma, Bhakti, Yoga, Dhyana comprise the lives of individuals living here. The real Ashram is a blessing in contemporary times. And who is it, who makes an Ashram such a blessed centre? It is the inmates of the Ashram. It is you people who persevere in your spiritual life and add this sublime quality.

May the grace of the Supreme, the source-less source of all existence, the causeless cause of all existence enable you to fulfill this role in the highest measure for your own benefit and for the benefit of one and all. May the loving benedictions of Holy Master bless you and enable you all to fulfill this privileged and most fortunate goal. You must be a shining ideal for others to follow, by the manner in which you live and pursue your day-to-day activities. Thus, may the grace of the Supreme and the blessings of Master enable you to be really what you are, and that is no other than radiant divinities. That is what your ancients declared you to be on the basis of their own experience. Thou art That, that glorious reality, that eternal and infinite reality.

Bring your consciousness to that reality level and shine with the light of the Divine and radiate it in your daily lives. May God bless you. This is the sharing by the grace of God and Guru.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

2. SPIRITUAL FELLOWSHIP TO OVERCOME ILLUSION²

Worshipful homage to that Supreme Eternal Reality, the one non-dual Existence absolute, that transcends all manifestations, that is beyond all names and forms, the one that is imponderable, infinite and supreme, the one and only Reality that is. To that Being, which is your origin, your support and your ultimate fulfilment worshipful homage at this early morning hour when you are all gathered together in a most blessed spiritual fellowship by Its motiveless grace and Its divine will!

Loving adorations to beloved Gurudev who has made possible this coming together morning after morning of all of you sincere seeking souls whom God has chosen to draw in His direction. The whole world is made crazy; unthinkingly it is rushing towards petty perishable objects, rushing headlong towards momentary experiences of superficial sensations that the world has to give, pleasant sensations of a deluding and enslaving nature, that are like a flash in the pan; one moment it is there, the next moment it is not there. Because it is not continuous, it creates an unending hankering in the deluded individual soul to perpetuate it by repetitive experience, but it ends in greater slavery, more delusion, and in the meantime time flies away. The allotted life span is

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2 Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 8/5/96

rapidly depleted for it is rushing like the river waters under the arches of a bridge.

This is the behaviour of the vast majority of unthinking world-bound individual souls. They think what is visible is real. They think what is a momentary sensation is happiness. So they try to preserve the momentary, and the only way to make it seemingly continuous is to go on repeating it. As we go on repeating it, life goes away. The delusion becomes stronger, slavery results, and from it issue a whole host of sorrow, disappointment, fulfilment, elation, depression, jealousy, envy, clash and conflict, fights and quarrels. When there is one bone and two dogs, there is always a battle. And there are only a few treasures and more human beings, and it creates within the human mind the sense of a solid reality of this seen physical world which is an ephemeral dream. But the repetitive experience of momentary sensations gives it an appearance of something substantial, something real. If you put a stick into a blazing fire, the end of stick catches fire. And if in a dark night you shake the stick and the flaming end becomes fiery red; and if you whirl it in the darkness, it creates the illusion of a circle of fire. The more rapidly it is whirled, the more it gives the illusion of a circle of fire, and it can be photographed. You can photograph a circle of fire which does not exist! That flaming end of the stick is not there always. But you can take a photograph because the camera is even more rapid than the whirling stick.

So this is how the delusion is created that there is happiness to be experienced in this world. It is as real as the unending lights of red and white that are seen in an aerial

picture of the night traffic in Manhattan or some other highway, when automobiles are taking their owners home after office and night entertainment; they are moving in opposite directions, and in the darkness a snap shot registers a continuous unending line of red tail lights and a continuous unending line of white head lights. There are no lines! There is only a centre of light in each tail light or head light. But the continuous movement along a highway shows on the photograph unending ruby and diamond chains, an illusory effect!

That is the reality of this world. It is there, but not what it seems to be. What it seems to be is created by us and having created it, we endow it with a sense of reality, and we get caught in this illusion, this sense of reality we ourselves have created.

The one way to rise above this web of illusion and get a taste of what real happiness is Satsanga, taking recourse to the company of those who have tasted the higher experience of true happiness, true inner bliss which is objectless, independent of any external source. It is not the result of any contact of the senses with sense objects. Nothing compels you, forces you, urges you in any particular direction. You maintain your independence, your integrity, and you do not depend on any outer source for its experience. And what is more, it is ever present. It is perennial, requires no inducement and it is always there. And those who have been blessed with this experience, they call upon us, "Come, come, there is a state of bliss, there is this true happiness. Why are you running after petty pleasures? It ends in sorrow,

disappointment and a host of other complications. Whereas here is this perfect bliss. It is within you, it is yours, it is perennial. It does not deprive you of your independence. It is free from the origin of desire, of the temptation of outer attractions. It is natural, ever present, has no adverse reaction, does not at any time cease to be, for its source is the eternal Brahman, the supreme eternal unchanging Reality!" To turn towards that Reality is the highest good. It is the greatest wisdom.

It is the central purpose of being endowed with the human nature. You were brought into this existence so that you may attain that supreme blessedness, the greatest of all things. You will therefore not turn away or escape. On the contrary you will be fulfilling the purpose of your existence. You will be making the highest and the best use of your existence.

All other things constitute un-wisdom. All other things constitute opting for number 2, 3, 4, 50 or 100. All other things constitute the lesser, *Alpa*. This alone constitutes the right choice, the true wisdom. This alone constitutes a positive step, a movement towards light and not towards darkness.

Therefore all the great ones who have entered into the Experience Absolute and returned to human consciousness to behold the human world, they raise their voice aloud and call upon all humanity to partake of that blessedness. That is a central voice of religion and of all scriptures. That is the central message of all great messengers of God, prophets, illumined and liberated souls.

Get into contact with them in whatever way, either by actually meeting them, sitting at their feet or acquainting yourself through their wisdom teachings or by spiritual fellowship with other sincere seeking souls, talking about these great ones, discussing matters of the Spirit and the Reality. All these put us into direct contact with the great Reality. Then life starts to be true life and you will feel, "Great indeed is my good fortune and blessedness to sit in the company of such souls who are leading the true life, who are walking the way of wisdom." You will yearn to spend a little more time in the company of such wise, awakened, seeking souls, who are putting their life to the highest use morning after morning. Thanks to this Holy Ashram instituted by revered and beloved Holy Master Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji right from the earliest times when he started this divine Life Society!

Understand its value and come together day after day in silence, in spiritual upliftment, in meditation, chanting and listening devotedly to the selfless sharing with good intention of anyone who shares for a few minutes. All these constitute benedictions of Holy Master. All these constitute grace from the Divine, the source of all grace that we call God. You are graced and blessed indeed. May you realise this. May God continue to shower grace and Holy Master continue to shower benediction. May you continue to bless yourself. God bless you!

Hari Om Tat Sat!

3. MOVE AHEAD WITH NO REGRET³

Worshipful homage to the eternal, the transcendental, the infinite, imponderable Universal Spirit Divine, the be-all and end-all of our existence! If we could only reflect upon it with wisdom, with discrimination and discernment, for which alone that Being has endowed us with the supreme faculty of the intellect, to ponder the imponderable, to reflect upon that which cannot be thought about!

Reflection itself becomes a process of Sadhana, for it gets you dwelling upon that Reality. To dwell upon it is to gradually keep moving in its direction. To dwell upon it is a means of opening ourselves to its transforming divine power. Also it has the additional result of keeping the mind from straying towards things that lead to attachment and bondage. If you determinedly keep moving in the right direction, this very process ensures and guarantees against moving in a direction that is not right; it means that its ultimate result is not good for you, not good for your evolution unto perfection which is your divine destiny. Anything that encourages the upward progress towards the fulfilment of the divine perfection that liberates should be diligently cultivated and taken into your being.

³ Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 2/3/98

In this process we ought not to be swayed by other people's opinion. "Oh, you have neglected your duty, your duty towards the secular world. You have failed in fulfilling your worldly obligations." These comments and arguments are only too familiar. We cannot determine what people think or say about us. But by our very life we can determine what people ought to think and say about us. This is within our power by the sheer adherence to certain noble principles and by adhering steadfastly to a lofty ideal. This life is too short and too precious to be wasted away in worrying what people think and say about us.

Worrying in this manner is a futile exercise. It is a misdirection of your energies, a misuse of this precious thing called time or life. Therefore, always establish yourself in a positive state. With absolute humility and meekness submit yourself to God and say, "I am whatever You have made of me. Let me move forward with this as my asset, with this as my tool. Making use of whatever You have endowed me with, I can move forward."

Rather than regretting that one is not like someone else—regret never helps anyone to move forward – sincere repentance and remorse is a purifying and transforming process. It generates energy from within. Wallowing in regret is a non-productive and useless process and can never help you to move forward. Gurudev used say, "Do not brood upon the past. The past is finished, consign it into the hands of God and be at peace."

Breaking up shackles at every step, that is the inner content of Sadhana. Not to allow yourself to get shackled. Sometimes you fall in love with certain states and conditions of your inner being and do not wish to move out of it. This is an all too familiar phenomenon in the life of human individuals. We wish to nourish and cherish that very thing which is our affliction and not an endowment. Life is too short and too precious to be misdirected into this process. You must look straight ahead and move forward with determination. As a poet put it, "Heart within and God overhead."

May the divine grace of God and the benedictions of revered and beloved worshipful Holy Master, Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji enable us to be discerning individuals, determined Sadhaks, keeping our eyes fixed upon our great destiny, not allowing anything to divert us into a wrong direction, keeping our eye fixed upon the goal and ever diligently striving for it. This is spiritual life, the essence of the inner spiritual life. May God and Gurudev transform our interior into this state of a determined dynamism in the direction of our divine destiny. This alone endows our life with meaning and with a value that cannot be measured in terms of earthly achievements. All earthly achievements pale into insignificance in comparison with this aspiration and determined inner movement toward the fulfillment of the central purpose of our existence on this earth. This is not a plane into which you have come to dwell in. It is a plane to be

passed through wisely and to go beyond, leaving it behind as it has served its purpose and is no longer necessary for us. Go beyond it where the dimension of our eternal Being is. God and Gurudev help us to do this. God bless us all!

Hari Om Tat Sat!

4. KEEP CONTACT WITH GOD⁴

Worshipful homage to the eternal Universal Spirit Divine! Loving adorations to revered and beloved Holy Master Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj whose spiritual presence calls you here morning after morning into close proximity with him, to contact him through Bhakti and Bhava, the feeling of your devotion and heart's love. He calls you to spend a period of sanctifying fellowship, to bless you so that your spiritual life may proceed with greater inner force, with a greater longing in the direction of the supreme goal. We supplicate the Universal Being who is within and without, we turn to Him, appeal through prayer, through supplication, through surrender, through taking shelter.

“You can do all this and you will be liberated. Do not worry, do not sorrow”, thus the Supreme Being has given a standing call, a standing invitation. “Abandoning all, you must come unto Me.” This is an eternal call, ever present for our accepting it, listening to it, answering it even today. It was not only in the age of the Gita. The call might have originated there, but it does not limit itself to that age or that set-up. Yes, it has an origin, but it is for all times, forever, this great call.

“You are wandering about in this dense darkness of self-forgetfulness, repeatedly receiving knocks and blows.

4 Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 27/6/98

You are coming again and again into this wheel of birth, death and rebirth. Enough! Put an end to this. I will show you the way, by giving this direction. Now it is for you to take to the way, to follow that direction.” This means, ‘Now cease your meaningless contact with this multifarious, temporary manifestation, this ever-changing carnival around you. Now come, put yourself into contact with the Eternal.’ It is like extending a hand and saying, “Come, grasp My hand!” And putting yourself into conscious, purposeful contact with the Supreme is the very essence, the central factor of the entire matter. Once you put yourself into conscious contact with the Divine, then you are worry free, carefree. He takes upon Himself everything concerning you and your spiritual life and your ultimate success in life, everything. He does not do things by half.

But you have to put yourself into contact. It is in this context there is a feelingful popular Bhajan of Surdas where he says, “Drain-water that flows and is regarded as unclean, polluted, the moment it comes into contact with the Ganga, it becomes holy water. One moment it was drain water, but from the moment of its entering into and becoming one with the sacred waters of the holy river Ganga, it becomes a thing to be treasured at home and worshipped.” It is the contact that does it. And taking this analogy further, he says, “One moment an object is a little piece of iron, but the moment it

comes into contact with the philosopher's stone, it is pure gold, the most precious of all metals." That is an indication.

Contact with this created universe, we have enough. Willy-nilly each morning when you wake up, you are part of this phenomenal universal show. The physical body is part of this earth show and therefore whether you want it or not, it is already in contact. It cannot be helped.

If God's plan for you was not different, He would not have brought you here, and He would not have created Uttarakhand, Himalayas, Ganges, Gita, Upanishad, Bible, Koran, prophets, Avatars, saints, sages. By all these things and many more He proves that He has other plans for you. You belong to Him, He belongs to you. You are His own and therefore, He is calling His own back to Himself. Allow Him to work out His plan, and on your part, in the midst of all contacts, keep the most important contact. Keep close contact with God within. Keep close contact with God everywhere.

Everywhere He is around you. Not for a split second are you removed from Him or far away from Him. Thus, base your life and attitude upon this truth, for God is here and now God, this is the truth. Keep in close contact with Him by and through as many ways as possible. That is Sadhana. That is Yoga. That is spiritual life. When the contact breaks due to forgetfulness, distraction, anything else, again renew it. Keep

contact with God, deeply, intensely. This is the one important thing.

God help you to do so. May the divine grace of the Supreme and the benedictions of the Master help you to do this most important thing, help you in your efforts to consciously and constantly keep an inner spiritual contact with the Supreme Being.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

