

That Being who has endowed us with grace watches and waits patiently for our response. This response is called Sadhana.

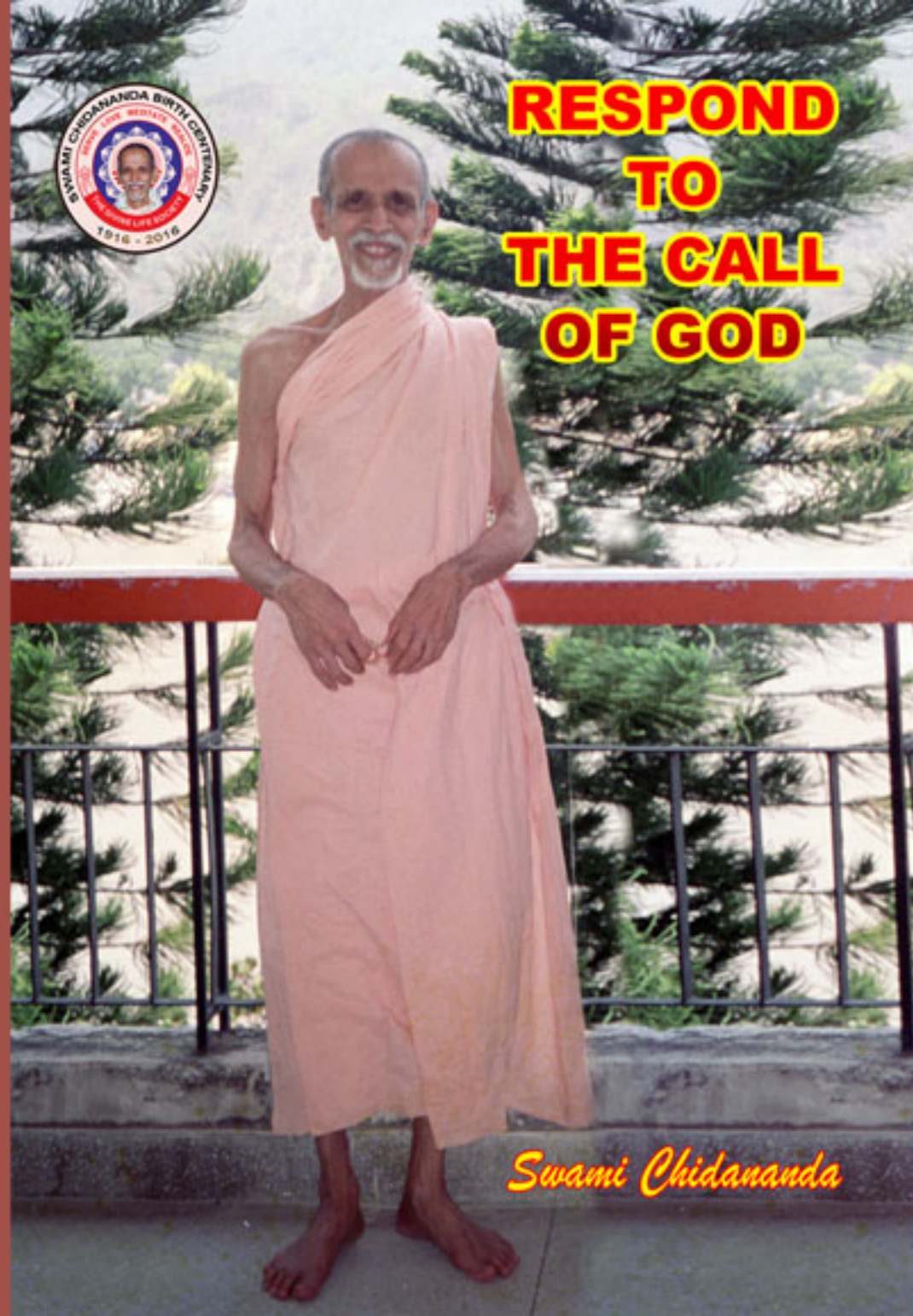
The Cosmic Being gives Itself to one who has totally given oneself to the Cosmic Being.

Give your mind to God and hands to work. This is the secret of success in life.

Swami Chidananda
30th



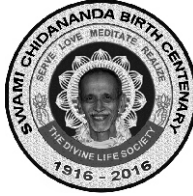
A DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY PUBLICATION



**RESPOND TO
THE CALL OF GOD**

RESPOND TO THE CALL OF GOD

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We are immensely happy to bring out some of his hitherto unpublished lectures in a booklet form as our worshipful offering at his holy feet on the blessed occasion of his Birth Centenary. The present booklet '**Respond to the Call Of God**' is a compilation of his four inspiring talks, one at Zinal, Switzerland in 1988, another at the U.K. Retreat in 1989 and two talks at the sacred Samadhi Shrine during the year 1995.

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*

1. RESPOND TO THE CALL OF GOD

Radiant Immortal Atman! Beloved Sadhaks and seekers, Jijnasus, Mumukshus, devotees of the Lord, lovers of righteousness, assembled here in the spiritual presence of worshipful and beloved Holy Master Guru Bhagawan Sri Swami Sivanandaji, the light of our life.

I wish you a very happy, holy, healthy and awakening Christmas. Let us awaken to the fact that every day we can see the birth of a new aspiration, a new discerning of the presence that we had lost sight of, if only we remember Jnananjan – the ‘cataract removing collyrium’ of the Guru:

*Ajnaana timirandhasya,
Jnananjana shalakaya,
Chakshur unmilitam yena
Tasmai Sri Guruve namaha.*

I prostrate to that Sri Guru, who has with the collyrium stick of divine knowledge opened the eyes of him who was blinded by the darkness of ignorance.

‘*Tat Tvam Asi*’ - ‘*Thou Art That*’ —the imperishable, ever blissful, ever peaceful, ever perfect, ever free Atman! Thou art That. The perfection of your Father lies within you, only awaiting **your** attention: ‘Be ye also perfect even as your father in heaven is perfect.’ This is this servant’s way of saying: “A happy Christmas, an auspicious Christmas, an awakening Christmas to you all!”

At this moment we ponder the meaning of Jesus coming into the world, becoming one of the human family, Jesus, the 'Christ-spirit' entering into the human nature to purify all levels—from the lowest unto the highest. There is in the human nature something unenlightened, something of the low-level of consciousness, that is amply provided for in the nativity setup: a dog, a sheep, and a cow, a calf, and then a number of shepherds and cowherds and village people, and at the same time there was a sensitive mother and a sensitive father—Mary and Joseph—and then came the Magi, the three Kings. They were high above the rest of their brother fellow beings in their depth of understanding and their great heights of scholarship and philosophical thought. They had an intuitive consciousness so that they were able to get the message of the advent of Jesus. And therefore, travelling great distances by day and by night, these three learned mystics arrived to pay homage. At the same time angels rejoiced and trumpets sounded in heavenly heights, and if it said in the Hindu language, 'Gods showered flowers over Bethlehem, the stable and the whole area.

So Jesus's advent was on all levels of the human nature, bringing about a purification and uplifting. In the midst of darkness Light came; in the midst of lowliness the highest and the greatest came. In the midst of simplicity there came Majesty. And into the human level descended Divinity to transform the human factor into its own divine condition. Jesus the Christ came to lift all beings into the state of Christhood. He said, "I represent what you are. I am the son of God. No less are you. He is my Father, who has sent me

here, and He is your Father too, and the perfection with which He has sent me here dwells within you as the sleeping Christ consciousness. The Father would have you to be as perfect as He Himself is.”

That is not only a possibility, but it is your birthright! And if you, out of your folly, reject your birthright and go down into a lesser state, all is not lost, for you have only to stand up and say, “I shall go back to my Father. I did wrong to have turned away from Him.” And once you have resolved, then you are no longer fallen, you are no longer far away from your Father. From that moment onwards, the distance between Him and you begins to lessen until you stand before Him who runs out to welcome you, embraces you and rejoices that you have come back, and then there is a festivity, a feast. That is Jeevanmukti, the liberation of the being. Jesus, the divine Master, assures us, this is what ought to be. This is what you have to do. “Come follow Me.” First seek That which is your destiny, which is your inheritance, and you have only to ask for It. It is waiting for you and it shall be given unto you; it will not be long before you find It, if only you seek sincerely.

Therefore, what is required on the part of the son is seeking and asking and not being daunted or disheartened by a closed door. A door is not closed to keep you out, but is waiting to be opened, and the opening is done by knocking. That is Jesus for us. That is what He wants the wanderer on earth do. Far have you wandered, far away from home and the further you go, the more vexed you are and greater is your distress. Now come back, enough of this wandering! “Come

unto Me all ye that are weary and heavy laden.” With open arms this call has gone forth.

And Lord Krishna says:

*Sarvadharmaan parityajya maamekam sharanam vraja
Aham tvaa sarvapaapebhyo mokshayishyaami
maa suchah.*

(Srimad Bhagawad Gita Ch.18/66)

Abandoning all duties, take refuge in Me alone: I will liberate you from all sins. Grieve not.

It is that same Eternal Being calling to all life and persuading, keeping on calling again and again, until the deaf ears have to open and listen and say, “Yes! I respond.” Not only does He call Himself, He sends messengers to call us back. And one of these glorious great teachers who came to sound the call of the eternal Father for all His children to glory, joy, peace, liberation, to their native state is the divine teacher Jesus whose advent we are just now celebrating.

May His grace and benedictions be upon all of us, all sincere souls who have answered the call. Otherwise, life would not find you here at this moment in Uttarakhand, the holy land, on the banks of the sacred Mother Ganga, in the holy Ashram of Sri Gurudev, sitting with fellow seekers and Sadhakas and observing the advent of this great and wonderous teacher - what a joy, what a wonderful good fortune! God has already called you, you have responded and you are already seeking and searching and asking. And no one who really, sincerely asks from the heart, is ever turned away empty handed. Never! But **you** have to ask from your

heart, not with words or from the lips or tongue. And this assurance is there, do not doubt. Even on earth, if a child is asking his father for bread, would the father instead of bread give him a stone?

Therefore have firm faith. Man may fail man, but God will not fail man. With absolute faith, with total trust go on seeking, go on asking, and maybe you don't even have to knock. Gurudev has said: "The Lord is waiting with outstretched arms to embrace you with His divine love if only you turn and go towards Him. And if you walk two steps towards Him, He comes running ten steps towards you." That is Gurudev's way of putting what already Master Jesus has amply declared to us. So be firm in faith. Let your trust be total. Ask from the heart and seek sincerely. He knows even the rustle of a leaf in the breeze.

May we all be deserving of His Grace. In this Iron Age, we do not have to perform severe penance and mortification and austerity. Even a little, a fraction of what our ancients did, what the early Desert Fathers did, what our ancient Rishis did in the forest and mountain caves, even a fraction of that will immediately fructify. It is the mercy of God that in this age it is far easier to realize him than it was in bygone ages. That has been the declaration of recent Saints.

May the Grace of the Father, the son and the divine spirit, the Holy Ghost be upon all of you and the benedictions of the Divine Master Jesus who came to show the way of attaining the Supreme Being and He embodied the way.

What was the way? The way of prayerfulness, of simplicity, of purity, of compassion and kindness, the way of making God the sole goal, the highest value in your life and to occupy the central place in your life. 'God first; everything else afterwards.' Attain Him through ceaseless prayer, through moderation and also ceaseless being good and doing good. Jesus has shown the way by his own life of being good and doing good. Ceaselessly pray, ever aspiring and centering yourself upon God as the supreme goal, the highest value, occupying the central place in your heart. That is what we try to bring out in His highest of all commandments.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

2. IN THE SPIRITUAL PRESENCE OF GURUDEV¹

Worshipful homage unto the supreme, eternal, all pervading Divine Presence. May Its divine grace be upon you all in this morning hour in the spiritual presence of beloved and worshipful Holy Master Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj in the Samadhi Hall.

Loving adorations to revered and beloved Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji, into whose presence you are fortunate to be drawn day after day before you commence the activities of the outer world. You first of all awaken the awareness of your inner being which is divine. With this re-awakened awareness, after a period of total oblivion to the gross material world in the silence of deep sleep, you are spiritually made ready to go into that false world again with the consciousness of the divinity within you. You know, what I see, hear, taste, smell, touch, what is spread out before me, the Maya bazaar, well, well this is it.

Day after day, the Jivatma, the individual soul comes under the sway of this delusion and enters into the net of taking the fleeting names and forms to be realities, to be important, to have value. To be drawn into this net, one's thinking and reasoning is overcome by some mysterious power which makes you feel that the seen is the real as it

¹ Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 3/6/95

appears to you, not as it is in its essence. It is a projection of the Satchidananda consciousness. Each thing as it appears to your sense perceptions becomes the reality having a special meaning for you and you having a special relationship with it. All this creates the deluded condition of moving away from the awareness of the unseen reality, and getting caught in the compulsive reality of the seen, the changing scene which has once and for all been discovered and declared to be perishable, passing—*yat drishyam tat nashyam*.

Whatever is perceived is perishable, subject to decay and dissolution. This is known in the intellect, but plays no part in your actual day to day experience. This truth does not govern the level of your consciousness. It is the impact of a temporary reality that governs, compels attention, governs your consciousness and pulls it down to a lesser level. And this impact is carried right to the close of the day when you enter into sleep.

Therefore, Gurudev said: “Do not allow this to happen; otherwise it will affect your dream state also. Bring a break, let there be an effective gap between the whirl of your daily activities and the moment of your entering into the serene calm of the inner state of sleep. Put a gap, have a period of calm meditation, negate the world - “Nothing exists, nothing belongs to me. I am neither mind nor body, immortal Self am I. Nothing exists, nothing belongs to me. Immortal Self am I. Om, Om, Om, Om; Om Tat Sat, Om Tat Sat, Om Tat Sat, Om Tat Sat; Om, Om, Om!” Thus shake from your consciousness, from your mind all vestiges of this deluding influence of the

dawn to dusk world experience, of these fleeting names and forms. Be like a worshipper entering into the sacred precincts of a holy shrine, who sets aside his sandals and wipes his feet and then enters into the sacred shrine. Even so, before you enter into the serene silence of the inner shrine of the sleep state, bring a gap, leave the dirtied sandals of your day time, the name-and-form-consciousness, and invoke from within the awareness that the non-dual Supreme alone exists: “Ekamevadvitiam Brahma, Om, Om, Om! That is peace, That is silence, That is bliss, That is the reality, That is the eternal.” In that way, invoke from within a strong awareness of this great truth. And remain in that state sufficiently long to be purified of all the dross in which you act and move about from morning till evening, so that no vestige remains. Once again your consciousness is made subtle and pure, and you enter into sleep. Then your dream state will be subtle, it will not be dominated by the gross experiences of the material fleeting world. It will be pervaded by Sattva and from there you go into deep sleep where there is only awareness of bliss, awareness of peace; there is no awareness of fighting or quarrelling, love and hate, tragedies, nothing Rajasic and Tamasic.

Thus from this serene state of the silence of sleep when you emerge into this world again, do not get thrown into its contrary state of world perception. Say, “No, let me first emerge from this serene state into a consciously created state of God-awareness. Let me go into the spiritual presence of Gurudev, sit with sincere seeking souls who aspire for the

same experience. In these uplifting spiritual vibrations may I keep up the same current of peace and joy. May I invoke from within a spiritual awareness, become awake in that dimension where I am what I am and remain in that state in prayer, in deep silence and meditation. And thus equipping myself let me enter into this new day, into this gross field of sense perceptions and impelled activities.” You should safeguard the integrity of your inner identity. Be in the world, but not of it; be in it, but let it not touch you, even as a lotus leaf is not touched by the muddy water in which it grows.

Be rooted in Reality, dwell in God, giving only a part of your mind to the outer exercise of your sense awareness and your sense perception. Give just as much of your mind as it is necessary, so that you attend sufficiently and satisfactorily, but leave part of your mind in the proximity of a spiritual powerhouse. That part becomes your anchor within the turbulent waters; you are anchored in the Self, the Atman. Unto that end is this period of contemplation at this dawn hour, so that it may set the right note for a day filled with the same quality of your awareness, your approach, your perception. “I behold God in all names and forms. My eyes do perceive the deceptive outer appearance, but it is also aware that within this dwells the ultimate Divine Reality. The world is pervaded by God. The world is a revelation of God. It is a manifestation of the Divine that I am seeking. The goal is here and now. Let me live in the awareness of the ever present Reality That will lead me to the experience of the Great

Reality”. Thus reasoning, we will be able to enter into this new day with a fully illumined interior.

That is the purpose and the fruit of the communion with Gurudev’s spiritual presence and the one God who indwells all beings, who is present in all those who participate in this morning hour. Your living becomes divine living, because you enter into this day with the awareness of your divine identity. “I am divine; I am filled with the quality of truthfulness, politeness, soft speech, friendliness towards all creatures, compassion towards the lower beings, reverence for all life and a bright awareness that Divinity is immanent in the entire universe. If you enter into the new day and its activities with this vision, you bring an uplifted perception into your environment. Everything that is seen, heard, tasted, touched or smelt is realised to be what we are seeking. Entering into your activities, your field of duties with this heightened perception, you purify, you uplift, you bring light wherever you go, and vibrations of peace and joy pervade any place where you are present. Because you are a centre of Divinity. The hallmark of Divinity is virtue, is character, spirituality, purity. That is the greatest ornament for the child of God. That is the greatest ornament for a disciple, a seeker, a follower of Holy Master Gurudev Swami Sivananda. Seek to adorn yourself with this divine ornament of Dharma. Shine with the inner beauty of the Spirit. Rejoice in the fact that God has made it possible for you to renew this awareness day after day, so that it is always fresh, strong and vibrant.

Thus should be known the meaning of this daily drawing near the spiritual presence of Gurudev. It has a purpose. The purpose is to prepare yourself to enter into another cycle rooted in Divinity even when you go through the outer processes, doing your duties and pretending to be taking part in this drama of life. Be like a skilful actor, Daksha, Karma-Kushala, living in the world knowing you are not of it and yet enriching it. Understand this and utilise this hour to this end. In this may God and Gurudev grant you success!

Hari Om Tat Sat!

3. WHY IS THE GURU REGARDED AS GOD HIMSELF?²

The way of life of the Monastics, of the Yati-Sannyasins, has long been a tradition in India. But it is not unique to Hindu culture only. All people in any religion are told to honour renunciates. If you go to the Vatican, you kneel down and kiss the ring of His Holiness the Pope. The Christian world honours its priests and monks, and they are addressed as 'Reverend Father', 'Your Holiness'. In Islam the Fakirs, Darveshies and Sufi saints are very greatly revered and honoured by the lay people. In the Buddhist tradition, if a monk comes, immediately everyone stands up and welcomes him, and the householder regards it as a great honour if a Bhikku comes to his door and begs of alms. It is regarded as a great honour and merit to give Bhiksha to a Buddhist Bhikku in Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Japan, and until recently even in China.

And so it is a part of all the existing world religions. Everywhere monks are honoured as people worthy of reverence because they had taken to a holy life. They had turned away from the pursuit of worldly ends, and they had dedicated themselves to the attainment of the supreme spiritual goal of human existence. Therefore they were a special chosen sector of human society, and as such they are seen as worthy of reverence.

² Talk Given On 20th September, 1989 U.K Retreat

But in India, the concept has been taken one level higher, one step further. The Indian genius, the devotional attitude of the normal Hindu went to the extent of deifying the Guru, regarding the Guru as God Himself, and even setting up a special day in the year for the worship of the Guru. It is the full Moon Day which usually falls in the month of July or August. They worship all the Gurus from the most ancient times, and there is an unbroken line of these holy people who had kept alive the spirituality which is the real India. They are all remembered, invoked in our memory, and as a token of our unending gratitude they are worshipped.

This day is also known by the term 'Vyasa-Puja' or 'Vyasa-Purnima', because one of the greatest illumined sages of ancient India is the great Sage Vyasa Maharishi. He started with putting down the Vedic wisdom in writing, which was upto his time only imparted by oral teaching. He undertook the stupendous task of classifying the entire 'then known knowledge' of the Vedas into four great books: the Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda and the Atharva Veda. Therefore he came to be known as Maharishi Veda Vyasa, and it is he who wrote the 18 Puranas, the Mahabharata, the great Srimad Bhagavatam and the Aphorisms of Vedanta known as Brahma Sutras or Vedanta Sutras.

He is regarded as the father of Indian culture and spirituality. Therefore, this holy day is called 'Vyasa-Puja Day' or 'Vyasa-Purnima'. But it is also called 'Guru Purnima' because each group of seekers worship their particular Guru, and simultaneously they worship all the great Gurus, starting from Vyasa.

Why there is in India this unique lifting up of reverence for a Sannyasin or a spiritual preceptor from the ordinary honouring to actual worship can be understood, because the ultimate vision of the ancient sages was that the Supreme Reality is not merely a remote transcendental reality, but it is an immanent Reality. There is nothing and nowhere where that Reality, that Divine Principle, is not present. They had the vision that it inheres, it permeates, it pervades all that exists, and it indwells everything. And in the light of this vision everything is sacred, everything is divine. A glimpse of that vision was imparted to Arjuna in the Yoga of the Cosmic Form expounded in the 11th chapter of the Srimad Bhagavad Gita.

It was very clearly expounded and expressed in the first of the ten principle Upanishads, the 'Isha Upanishad'. It begins with the declaration:

“Ishavasyamidam sarvam yat kinchit jagatyam jagat.”

Everything in this entire existence is permeated by the Divine Presence. Everything is therefore a receptacle of the Supreme Divine Reality. And that has been wonderfully elaborated in the Srimad Bhagavad Mahapurana and in all the 18 chapters of the Srimad Bhagavad-Gita, particularly in the 11th chapter. Therefore, based upon the experience of this truth the Indian law-givers had admonished us: “Divinity pervades everywhere.” All the five elements are God:

*Jale Vishnu sthale Vishnu, Vishnu parvatamastake;
Jwalamalakule Vishnu, sarvam Vishnumayam jagat*

But it is specially present in certain places and certain beings and things.

God is the ultimate concept of man's idea of help; He is the one source of all help, all protection, all nourishment, all care, all love, all comfort, all solace—He is the Supreme Being. He is an ocean of compassion, of love, of goodness.

To a human individual soul born into this life, the first experience of the great love of God is through the mother. The child knows nothing; its world is in the enfolding arms of the mother, in the loving gaze of the mother; its experience is completely filled by the mother-experience. Therefore, the Upanishadic sages said, "Regard your mother as God."

And the next experience of the growing child is the father figure. "Regard your father as God."

As the child grows up, who helps the unfoldment of the intellect? It is your teacher in the school, stimulating your intelligence, teaching you knowledge, and the value of knowledge, giving you the answers to your questions. He helps to unfold and develop that in you which makes you superior to the animal kingdom. And therefore, "Regard your teacher as God."

But the one who gives you an opportunity to serve, to set aside your selfish considerations, who gives you an opportunity to rise above yourself is your greatest benefactor. A chance visitor at your door at the time of your taking food, he gives you an opportunity to serve. Service elevates; service is the only way by which we can shed our selfishness, purify our heart and grow in devotion. It is selfless service without

expecting any reward, for the love of God, with the only idea to serve: “I don’t want anything out of it, not even thanks.”

The Guru of Swami Vivekananda, Sri Ramakrishna Dev, used to say, “When you have the opportunity to serve someone, don’t think you’re doing something from a higher pedestal to someone who is lesser. On the contrary, thank the being for giving you an opportunity to serve, thus evolve yourself spiritually.” He said, “Service is a grace conferred by God, and anyone who is the channel for bringing you His grace, thank him first, and then in a spirit of humility eagerly do the service.” He is also to be regarded as God.

This is the ancient teaching. “*Matrudevobhavah; Pitrudevobhavah; Acharya devobhavah, Atithidevobhavah.*”

This is the basis for deifying the Guru. When you regard as God even persons who confer upon you earthly benefits, the Guru is a being who confers upon you the supreme benefit of removing the darkness of ignorance and giving you the light of a spiritual vision; ultimately such a bestowal will enable you to attain liberation itself. This is not an ordinary thing. All other helps: father, mother, teacher, guest, are within the bounds of earthly life. But here a being comes into your life and imparts to you a spiritual awakening and grants you the gift of spiritual knowledge, which makes you aware of your real Self and puts you on the road to Self-realisation or God-consciousness, liberating you forever from the bondage of this earth life. He brings you face-to-face with God. One who confers this is to be verily worshipped as God Himself.

Therefore the Guru is worshipped as God. There is a very interesting incident in the life of the famous mystic Kabir Das. One day the Guru happens to visit him, and as he is receiving the visitor, God appears before him! The disciple is now puzzled. Both of them are in front of him: Guru as well as God, and the disciple is wondering, "To whom should I bow first?" What to do?" Then suddenly he decides, "I will bow to the Guru first, because it is the Guru who enabled me to see God; through Guru's grace only I came into contact with God." That is the concept with which the Guru is regarded as God Himself.

I am very happy for this opportunity of sitting amidst you all and spending some time here in Satsanga. God be thanked for this great grace of spiritual fellowship. God's presence is here in a very very special measure. Let us lift up our hearts and minds and thank him for this great grace.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

4. MESSAGE OF HOPE

*(Talk given during the yearly Yoga Week of the European
Yoga Associations in Zinal, Switzerland on
10th September 1988. Swami Satchidananda from USA and
Swami Satyananda from Munger were also present.)*

Blessed Immortal Atman! Beloved children of the
Divine!

My message to you is briefly to bring the Master to you
so that you may understand what He is and what He
represents, and thus open the doors of your hearts and receive
Him! Holy Master Swami Sivananda is the world Yoga
teacher of the 20th century.

Swami Vivekananda brought the message of Vedanta,
the great philosophy of India, to the Occident; he did this in
the year 1893.

After Vivekananda's advent and after he passed on, a
great change came into the Western world. After a long
period of peace and prosperity the world was plunged into a
very savage war from 1914 to 1918 which practically involved
all parts of the world. This was a very soul-shaking experience
for humanity in the West but also in the East, because
England had colonies everywhere, and so troops from India,
Nepal, Bhutan and Burma were all involved in it. The message
of Vedanta was forgotten and the focus and attention of

mankind was forcibly drawn to earthly affairs! Then after some years, the great financial depression plunged the world into a very, very sad state!

It was into such a world and in such a situation that the message of hope, of awakening and of a higher purpose for human life was sent by Swami Sivananda from his quiet little hermitage on the banks of the holy river Ganga. This message was a universal message. It was a spiritual message that went beyond any religious theology, dogma or doctrine. It was addressed to man as a member of the human global family. Holy Master Swami Sivananda chose to name it 'The message of Divine Life'. It is a message that directly declares that your true nature is divine!

Your human identity is only a passing, superficial identity. What you think yourself to be, that you are not! You are an eternal, imperishable, indestructible being without birth, without death! Birth, infancy, childhood, adolescence, middle age, old age, decay—all these pertain to the body. These changing conditions of the body and the different states of the mind cannot touch you, for you are divine and immortal! Therefore, being divine, divinely live your life. Assert! Affirm, and manifest your divinity! Let your thoughts, feelings, words and actions radiantly express this divinity in your daily life! Let everything that you do through mind, speech or body express this inner essential nature of yours! Lead a life of truth, purity, compassion and love. Be

kind, be compassionate. Have a noble character. Shine with virtue and good conduct.

To be divine and live divinely is your birthright! That is your real mission on earth! To be aware of your divinity and to make your daily life filled with the divine quality—that is the Divine Life message of Master Swami Sivananda. Such a life is a life of Vedanta and Yoga in actual practice. The practice of Yoga is to be adopted in order to bring about this inner awakening of your essential nature. And to make this awakened divinity manifest is the purpose of all Yoga practice.

The various types of Yoga and Yoga practices were brought into being in order to suit the different temperaments and abilities of human individuals. It is for you to use your common sense and intelligence and see what the practices are and which path suits you most, or you allow your Spiritual Master to make this selection for you. Once this has been done, you must seriously take up the practice of unfailing daily Sadhana.

Human life has been given for you to practice spiritual Sadhana. This was the heart and soul of Master's message. He said, "Do real Sadhana, my dear children! This body is an instrument for spiritual Sadhana. It is an instrument for Yoga practice."

Give up egoism and selfishness and serve all with a selfless Bhava. Regard this selfless service as an offering to the

Divine. Know that the Divine Being is the indwelling presence in the hearts of all! Your body is the moving temple of the living presence of God. Therefore, offer up your selfless service at the feet of this indwelling Presence. This was the Holy Master Swami Sivananda's message:

“To live all your life as a continuous offering at the feet of the ever present divine Being. Cultivate faith and devotion for the Supreme Being, and express this devotion in daily prayer and worship. Remember the Divine Being constantly even in the midst of your daily activities. Give your hands to your earthly duties and work. Let your heart ever be filled with love for God, and let there be a constant, unbroken stream of God-thought in your mind. Establish a deep, inner connection between you and the Cosmic Being. Discipline your senses. Conquer the desires of your mind. Observe moderation in all things, and concentrate and meditate upon the Divine daily. Ever discriminate between the non-eternal and the Eternal. Discriminate between the changeful outer appearances of this world and the Supreme Reality which is its origin and source. While living in the midst of the non-eternal and passing things, seek the eternal Reality.”

These seven principles constitute the very essence of the Master's message of Divine Life:

1. “Truthfulness;
2. Purity of conduct and character;

3. Renunciation of anger, hatred and ill-will by the cultivation of kindness and compassion;
4. Sincere service with absolute selflessness;
5. Daily worship of the Divine;
6. Unfailing regular meditation upon the eternal Reality;
7. Constant pursuit of the realisation of the Absolute through philosophical enquiry, discrimination, analysis and meditation.”

These seven principles are like the seven colours that coalesce together and bring forth brilliant white light. In whichever life these seven principles combine together, that life will shine with the radiance of Yoga and of Vedanta. It will shine with the light, radiance of divinity which you are!

Beloved and worshipful Holy Master, Gurudev Sri Swami Sivananda was born in 1887. Providence soon arranged things in his life as to mould him into a Prophet of this present age. In the early thirties in India, only the English educated, middle-class and the upper-middle-class people knew about him and his teachings. It was much later that his original English writings were translated into the different Indian languages.

But in Europe his teachings became translated first. Jean Herbert of Geneva translated his earliest books into French,

and then appeared translations in German, Spanish and Italian.

In the early thirties in European countries there were groups of earnest people practicing Yoga and corresponding with Gurudev Sri Swami Sivananda, getting instructions and practicing Yoga. One of his foremost disciples and European Yoga teachers was a Latvian called Harry Dickman. Another great being in those days was a wonderful Raja Yogi called Boris Sacharow. He had advanced so highly in the practice of Raja Yoga that he had many of the Siddhis mentioned in the Patanjali Yoga Sutra in his own life. He could see without eyes, hear without ears and could cognize things from far away; all his Yoga practice was under the written directions of holy Master Swami Sivananda from Rishikesh. There were many other great Yoga practioners who were directly guided by Gurudev, but with the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939, the link was broken. For about 7 or 8 years we did not know the whereabouts of all these wonderful people. After 1946, slowly some of them started to renew their contacts with holy Master Gurudev Swami Sivananda.

Thus, in Swami Sivananda you have a man who was nurtured in the Oriental way of education and life, and gave his teachings in a language which was directly accessible to the Occident. Therefore it is no wonder, that many feel him to be the patron of the Yoga movement in the West. And above all, he was a man of deep love and great compassion. He

considered himself not as a world Guru but as a cosmic friend and a cosmic servant. He declared very plainly: “My beloved friend! I live to serve you all.” And he serves you all by bringing you the message of Divine Life. He declares to you the pre-eminent role of spiritual Sadhana in daily life. As Swami Satchidanandaji Maharaj said during his talk this evening, he called upon all to live a life of the fourfold Yoga of Service, Devotion, Meditation and Divine Realisation. Gurudev Sivananda’s Sadhana was a beautiful and harmonious synthesis of these four paths, and the entry into this life of Yoga-Vedanta was through Truth, Purity and Compassion. May this message find a place in the heart of each and every one of you here! This will raise your Yoga life unto a sublime, higher level. God bless you all! May the spirit of Yoga and Vedanta pervade your entire life!

Let your home be the true center of the Yoga way of life. If you are a married, regard your family status as a spiritual partnership with another soul. In addition to being a mere social partner, let your other half be a spiritual partner. Thus bring holiness into your matrimonial life. Be partners in selfless service, in devotion, prayer and meditation. Be partners in seeking the great Reality and attaining illumination. Practice Yoga at home; practice Yoga in your professional life. Be aware that you are a Yogi even when you are in the midst of society. Never forget this central identity of yours!

Let me express my gratitude for giving me this wonderful opportunity to bring the message of holy Master Sivananda to you all! This servant feels it a great blessedness to have been able to do this tonight! Let your life become radiant with divinity and divine living. Let Vedanta be the awareness present in your heart! Let Yoga be the spirit with which you live and act! Let your life become a Sadhana for attaining Self-realisation! This is the real and true way of paying homage to this great-hearted being, Holy Master Swami Sivananda! He lived to bring the benefits of that ancient wisdom and science to each and every one of you, and he still lives in and through His servants like me in order to keep on bringing messages to you!

Hari Om Tat Sat!

