

Yoga is a positive system of knowledge to face yourself and to deal with yourself and to go beyond yourself.

The greatest overcoming is the overcoming of oneself. This is the ABC of yoga—in possession of oneself, not possessed by oneself!

Swami Chidananda
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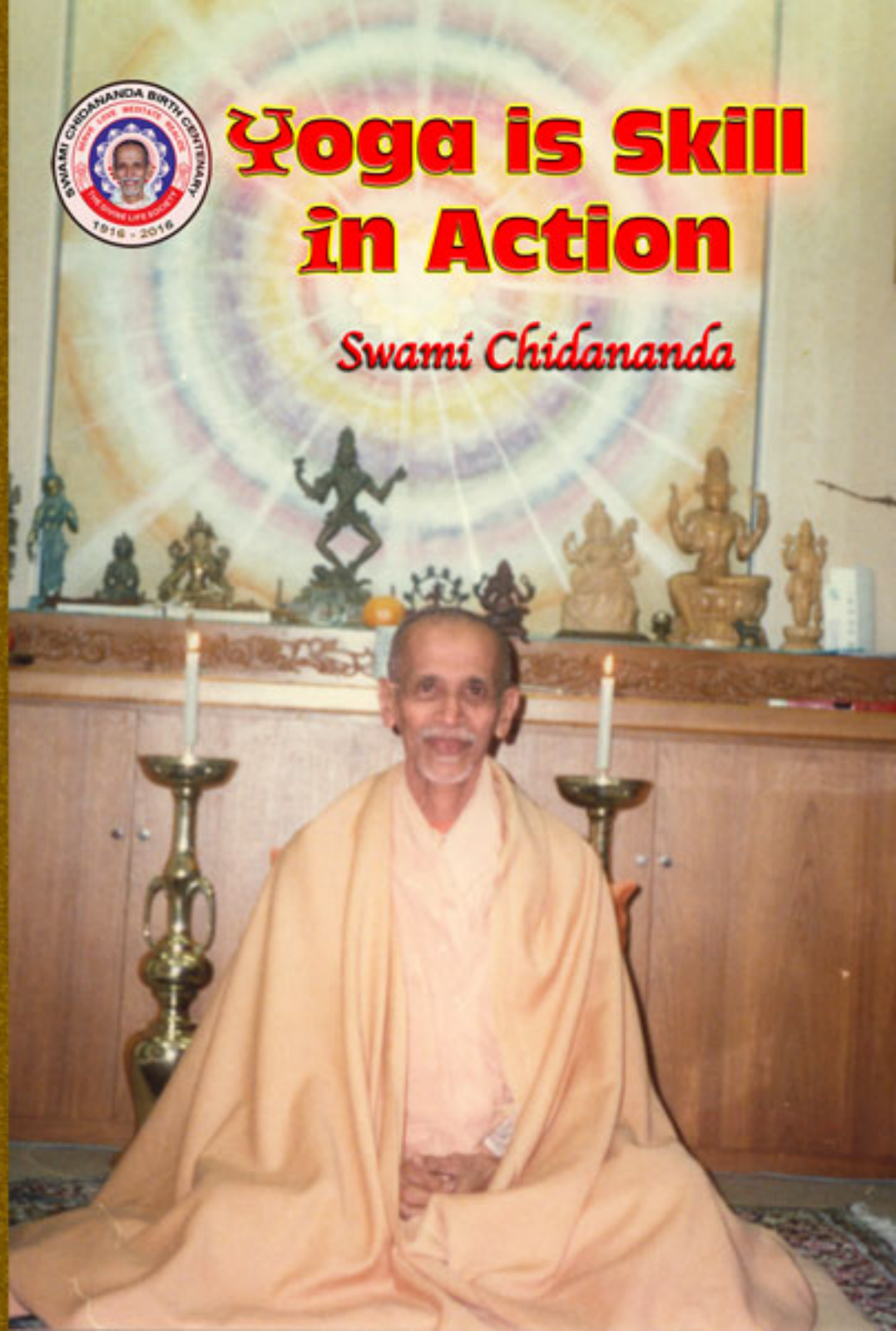


A DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY PUBLICATION



Yoga is Skill in Action

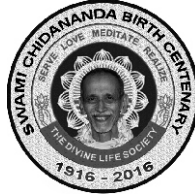
Swami Chidananda



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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We are immensely happy to bring out some of his hitherto unpublished lectures in a booklet form as our worshipful offering at his holy feet on the blessed occasion of his Birth Centenary. The present booklet **'YOGA IS SKILL IN ACTION'** is a compilation of his five inspiring talks, given at the

sacred Samadhi Mandir during the year 1994 and 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

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1

YOGA IS SKILL IN ACTION¹

Worshipful adorations to the eternal all pervading Divine Presence, the indweller of all, the ever-present Divinity that is an ocean of compassion, grace and love! To that eternal omnipresent Being our worshipful homage! Loving adorations to the spiritual presence of Guru Bhagawan whose light, love and power instils and moves all things in this Ashram, this Ashram of his, which he brought into existence with the power of his penance and prayer, his illumination and Self-realisation.

The spiritual field is that area of one's living, being and doing which you call the life spiritual. We have given it a designation so that we may be in a position to understand its distinction within the common set-up of what is known as life in general, which is a life made up of the three principles, or the three factors.

The first one is the individual soul in a state of deep self-forgetfulness, and it is sense-led and desire-dominated. The second one is God, which,

¹ Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 28/5/94

to that individual soul in this state, means someone from whom we can obtain all our mundane wants and needs, our earthly and secular supplies. For that we pray to Him, we observe penance, worship, we fast and keep vigil. We do charity, we bathe in sacred waters, we do Japa, we do worship with flowers and sandal paste—all this with the expectation that this Deity would help us live our secular life in a satisfactory, problem-free manner. The third one is this world, containing all that we require, all that we desire, all that we feel if we acquire and keep and enjoy—then life will become meaningful.

So this is an aspect of the life of the Jiva in this material world of things and one's relationship with all these things and one's daily encounter with God in order that the world may yield what one desires and make one's life full. This is the dimension made up of the world, God and you, where the world is the only reality that you know.

As distinct from this we spoke of the individual soul aspiring for God, for the Supreme Reality, and this world being considered as a field in which one may strive to approach nearer to God. It is called the spiritual life as distinct from secular life. But is it different? Is it completely unrelated and unconnected? Fortunately or unfortunately, we have to admit that, even though

these two may be distinct from each other, but they are not different from each other because it is the selfsame individual who has to function in both these dimensions—the inner subjective dimension and the outer objective dimension of one's life.

You cannot escape the fact that day by day, morning till evening, we live, move and have our being in both these dimensions. They are part of life. Day by day, we have to function upon the irrefutable fact of this world of things, of our requirements here, of its very much being here. You cannot just conjure away the world, its people, its things, its occurrences, its situations which is your 'field of life', physically speaking. Prapancha is the only reality we know. Paramatma is something we have heard of and we believe. Prapancha we cannot dismiss with the wave of a magic wand. One cannot climb to the roof without the help of a ladder.

All our spiritual faculties have to be exercised and developed in the secular setup of this material universe. Because that is the only field we have. It is due to this ever present fact that the Purna Avatara Lord Krishna incarnated. He made the high point of His Avatara-lila the imparting of the Gita Jnana Upadesha to the whole world for all times through His immediate disciple who was in a desperate condition, trembling, with palpitating

heart, head whirling, in a state of deep distress. One cannot conceive of a mental and physical state more pitiable, more anxiety causing, nevertheless more real than that of Arjuna at the end of the first chapter of the Srimad Bhagavad Gita. If only you take the trouble to study with keen attention the abject condition of Arjuna, you will understand how very serious the situation was. Making use of this occasion, the ever-present friend of mankind, Lord Krishna, imparted His unparalleled Gita Jnana Upadesha to humanity and to posterity. He taught the gospel of the here and now situation of man to Arjuna in his immediacy and showed him step by step with great sympathy and understanding the way to liberation. He taught him gradually how to make this involvement in the secular life a success. It became a method of communicating with the Divine in the midst of strife and struggle, action and occupation.

*Yogasthah kuru karmani sangam tyaktva
Dhananjaya (B.G. 2/48)*

(Perform action, O Arjuna, being steadfast in Yoga, renouncing attachment.)

*Yat karoshi yad ashnasi yajjuhoshi
dadasi yat,
Yat tapasyasi Kaunteya tat kurushva
madarpanam (B.G. 9/27)*

(Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer in sacrifice, whatever you give, whatever austerity you practise, Kaunteya, do it as an offering to me.)

Here he gave a formula of securing our spiritual evolution right in the midst of multifarious preoccupations and activity. He was pragmatic. He says, "There are these two distinct dimensions, and your material situation is something that is inevitable; you cannot simply ignore it. Be brave. Recognize it, and, O Arjuna, you are on the field of battle. You cannot hesitate. You cannot afford to vacillate. You must have all your perceptions clear, alert, geared to action. And you yourself have to engage in this. But I give you a philosopher's stone which will transform all that you do into an additional process of helping you to attain; it is in addition to your Bhakti, your Bhajan, your meditation, your Yoga."

Therefore, Krishna taught us to synthesise these two apparently different aspects of our life; seemingly distinct for the simple fact that you yourself have to function in both, the secular and the spiritual, the outer and the inner, Vyvahara and Paramatma. Knowing this, he said, "You have to know the key of fusing them into one". He gave us a formula for this fusion of our actions, bringing them together into one concerted movement towards the Divine. He spoke of all the

Yogas—all the 18 chapters are designated as Yogashastra.

Tasmat yogi bhava Arjuna (Therefore Arjuna, be thou a yogi.) That is the Adesha. Keeping close to Me, if you fulfill all your duties and obligations in this world, I shall see to it that nothing will happen to you. *Kaunteya pratijanihi na me bhaktah pranashyati* (O Kaunteya, know for certain that my devotee never perishes.)

In this fusion or recognition of the oneness lies the unique vision of the Gita, the unique doctrine of being in the world but not of the world; knowing that the differences are apparent, and an inner deeper identity is the truth. So we have to know the secret of being where we are and attaining what we wish to attain. To this end Lord Krishna brought to our attention an unknown dimension of Yoga. *Yogah karmasu kaushalam* (Yoga is skill in action.) He did not separate Yoga from Karma. He did not separate meditation from activity. He showed us how both these constitute Yoga, must constitute Yoga; they should be synthesized, without losing Yoga or neglecting Karma. *Tasmat yuddhasva vigatajvarah* (Therefore fight, free from mental fever.) Due to your misunderstanding you have thrown yourself into a ferment, an agitation. You are weeping. Let go of all these temporary, self-created conditions and engage in action.

While functioning in the field of activity, be centred within. Be non-distinct from within. *Samatvam*. Such balance within is Yoga. *Samatvam yoga uchyate* (Evenness of mind is called Yoga.)

These great immortal and eternal truths should be our basis, our very centre, our firm ground in which we are rooted while moving towards God. *Samatvam yoga uchyate—Yogah karmasu kausalam*.

This lost or neglected concept has caused a great deal of confusion in the Indian Hindu society over centuries. Sri Swami Vivekananda and Gurudev Sri Swami Sivananda Maharaj have once again given back to us this intuition and insight, this knowledge of the essential non-differentiation of the two dimensions of our life; they pointed out the possibility of their synthesis and gave to us the path of integrated Yoga. Serve, love, give, purify, meditate, realise—this is integrated Yoga. It is the integration of the outer and the inner, the dynamic and the static; it is the relationship with the world and the relationship with God, making your life co-exist with the concept of Yoga. May His grace enable us to understand what Jagadguru Adi Shankaracharya could not say in so many words, because he lived 1200 years ago. Many of the modern situations of life did not exist in his period. They came into being later on. And it is in

this new field that Gurudev made his advent, entered and had to function. Therefore, he gave his realisation, his vision and wisdom to us, to apply to us and the practical Sadhana in life. Thus he has enriched us, blessed us!

Hari Om Tat Sat!

2

THE BEGINNING AND THE END ARE INSEPARABLE²

Worshipful homage unto the Eternal Supreme Reality, the timeless eternal Cosmic Spirit Divine! The Universal Soul is beyond the perception of the senses, beyond the thoughts of the mind, beyond the reasoning faculties of the intellect; transcending senses, mind and intellect, it is the supra-mundane, transcendental Absolute Reality. It pervades everywhere and it is present in all things as their very essence. It is the essence of your very existence and being. To that all-pervading, ever-present Reality worshipful homage! May Its divine grace be upon you all!

Radiant Immortal Atman! Sadhaks and seekers, Jijnasus and Mumukshus. An important fact of spiritual life, an important fact of the unfoldment of your personality and the evolution of your consciousness is that the beginning and the end are inseparable; they are inter-connected and inter-dependent. When you start some project, the end is not there. But you cannot say

² Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 5/8/94

that when you reach the conclusion of the project, the beginning is not there. While the first statement is a fact, the second statement is not a fact. The beginning is in the end also. When a child is born, in its state of infancy the adult child with its greater height, greater weight, greater strength and many other features is not there. In a small child the fully grown teeth of the adult boy or girl are not there. But at six, seven, 14, 15 years, 25 years, 35 years, something of the child is always there. Right up till the last breath leaves the body, this infant is there in the adult, the middle aged, the old and the dying person. The dying person still calls his mother, mother. He feels like a child towards mother. He may be 70 years old and the mother may be 95 years old—the infant in him recognises the mother in her. This is the truth.

A seed is sown in the soil, the water is poured over it and the seed breaks; the sprout comes out of it and simultaneously a root comes out and goes in the opposite direction of the sprout. The sprout leaves the soil and surfaces. The root goes down deeper and deeper and the seed becomes a sapling, then a plant and a tree. It may be towering 50 feet, 60 feet, 80 feet. The root is still there. The root that has sprouted may be on the second day or third day after seed was sown, and that root is still there. And not only is this

beginning—Adi—still there in the final stages, but it has grown stronger, and it supports the big tree. The Adi becomes the being.

All education, all instruction starts with the alphabet. No one is foolish enough to say I do not want or need the alphabet anymore; the alphabet is the basis of his learning in kindergarten, primary school, high school, in college, graduate classes, research classes, and even the thesis is based on this alphabet. Even to express his highest knowledge, which was not present when he started to learn ABC, the scientist also takes the support of the alphabet.

So there are certain fundamentals that are not only fundamental, but they are foundational. When you build an edifice, it is the structure on the surface of the ground that you want. You build it for that which is on the ground level, which you can enter, dwell in and then put structure after structure over it—first, second, third, fourth floor. But it does not affect the truth, the terrible truth that the foundation with which you started the structure is important all through, even when you are building its 20th or 50th or 75th storey. The foundation is something that cannot be dispensed with. It is connected as much with the 20th floor as with the ground floor; the foundation is connected as much with the 75th floor as it is with the ground floor. Because if there is an earth quake and the foundation is destroyed, the whole

building will collapse, the entire structure will come to the ground and will be a heap of rubble.

Therefore, the beginning may not be apparent, and the end may not be apparent in the beginning. It may be dormant, but the beginning is present right throughout the entire process; even when the Gopuram of a temple tower is completed and built over the main shrine, it is the foundation that holds it. This important truth is also vital to spiritual life.

A ladder rests upon the ground, not upon its rungs. It rests upon the two side posts of the ladder. The rungs are necessary to climb higher and higher; but not only for that purpose, the rungs also hold these two side posts together. And the integrity of the ladder as one unified thing is made possible if all the rungs are intact. If you climb from the first rung to the second rung, you cannot afford to knock away the first rung. As you climb up and you knock away the rungs below, soon the ladder will collapse. It is the rungs that hold it together. And if the side-posts collapse, they come apart, then there is no ladder, and you will also be down.

Thus other practices may be helpful in the raising of the structure, the various rituals and ceremonials and the outer forms of religions; outer forms of religion may be temporarily required like scaffolding. They also go from the ground right up to the top floor. As the building

rises, the scaffolding also rises. But when the building is complete, they are all taken apart. However, the foundation is not taken apart because it supports the building.

This truth is about all evolution, all growth, it is something that is to be deeply reflected upon and understood in its essence. Every step of your progress, your evolution and your growth, your upward ascent requires the support of the preliminary basis, the commencement. It may go in the opposite direction; nevertheless, it is important. To shoot an arrow, the hunter first draws the bow string backward. The arrow is to go forward, but he draws the bow string backward in the opposite direction. Every time an arrow has to be shot, he does this. Likewise seemingly the foundation goes downward, but the intention is to erect a structure that progresses in the upward direction. This primary process, the laying of the foundation makes it possible to do the vertical progress of the structure. The foundation is the strength of the completed edifice.

This is to be deeply pondered. You have to reflect upon it again and again and try to grasp the meaning and the significance of this truth in terms of your spiritual life, your ethical life, your health and strength, your personality development and unfoldment; your total evolution as a human individual depends upon your understanding of this fundamental fact. Wherever

there is a growth, it requires a support to make it permanent. Spectacular is the upward soaring movement of fireworks in the darkness of the night's sky, it is a beautiful sight, the source bursting into a sparkle. But afterwards there is nothing. Why? It does not have a foundation.

As I said fundamentals are also foundational. This truth has to be reflected and properly grasped in terms of your total evolution, whether it is physical, whether it is your personality or whether it is spiritual in the highest sense. Throughout the entire range of your unfoldment and development as a human being, as a seeker, as a Sadhaka, as a Yogi, as a spirit wanting to liberate itself from bondage, this truth has to be considered. This truth is the very secret of success in that particular field, in that particular aspect of your evolution, of your progress and of your perfection.

Therefore consider it, deeply reflect upon it. Try to grasp its implication, deep significance, and be benefited thereby through your deeper understanding of this central truth that the beginning is present in the end, that the fundamentals are also foundational and that they have to be carefully guarded and kept right through our journey to the highest perfection, liberation and supreme blessedness. This is the truth.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

3

OUR JOURNEY MUST HAVE A DIRECTION³

Worshipful homage unto the supreme Universal Reality, the eternal, all powerful Brahma-tattva, that is your support, source and goal ultimate. Loving adorations to beloved Gurudev into whose spiritual presence you have come at this hour for this early morning spiritual fellowship. May his benedictions be upon you all!

There cannot be a real journey without a specific destination. For unless there is a real destination, there cannot be a direction. Unless there is a specific direction all journeying will be an aimless wandering. There will be a lot of activity, a lot of movement. But it will not be directed in a self-chosen, meaningful direction. It leads nowhere. If a destination has not been well conceived of, chosen and fixed, you cannot move in its direction. All movement, all activity becomes aimless.

It is so even in the ordinary sense for this journey which we call our life on earth. We are not talking about philosophy, religion, metaphysics,

³ Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 26/5/94

Vedanta, or evolution unto perfection in the higher sense. We are talking about the normal level of human life and the living of it. Even at this humble simple level, unless and until a person conceives for himself or herself a specific achievement which is very clear and meaningful in terms of benefitting oneself and others, life becomes an aimless wandering. It has to be gainful if it has to be meaningful to others also.

By eating green grass and freshly cut leaves, cattle flourish. They are benefited, they grow. Therefore, when a housewife of a hill family goes out to gather grass and pluck leaves and comes home, brings fodder and puts it before the cow, all activity becomes very meaningful to the cow eagerly awaiting her return. She has not laboured in vain that day. Because the hungry cow is able to appease its hunger, it is meaningful and gainful to it. It gets nourishment; it gets fulfillment. Therefore, the activity of this good lady becomes gainful, meaningful, valuable, because the children get the milk of the cow, and there may be surplus milk and the hill farmer is able to get some money also. The entire family is benefited—the man, the children and the cow. This hardworking, good, simple lady gets a certain satisfaction in going with a cutting implement, gathering grass, climbing up a tree, cutting down twigs and feeding the cow. There is an all-round value in this simple, unsophisticated action, and

when she gets up in the morning, she has something to do. She is eager to wake up early, so that she may gather more grass and more leaves. She is looking forward to the day, for she has a definite aim and a purpose. It may be humble and simple, but it is beautiful. It gives value to her life, gives meaning to her day and gives a purpose to her activity and leaves no room for a sense of emptiness. She knows what she has to do. She is propelled with a sense of confidence and sureness, for she has a destination in terms of certain duty for that day.

A destination therefore, need not be high-flown and highly idealistic. It has its value even in its immediate gain and significance to your own here and now piece of life on that day. Therefore that day is found to be full and satisfying; it adds to one's sense of usefulness and to one's self-respect. That indeed is the essence of recognizing your Divinity, recognizing your worth. If you have self-respect, you salute yourself. You say, "I salute myself, for I am created by the all perfect Being. I salute myself, for I am a child of God. Within me is something that is worthy. I am not in vain."

In this context, ever since the year 1932-33, two poems of Rabindranath Tagore have played a prominent part in my vision:

*And give me the strength to surrender
my strength to thy will with love.*

These two thought patterns and images have got a touching relevance, a beautiful, vital relevance to our own lives in terms of a destiny and for the formation of our own personality, our Svabhava.

Your life is no longer aimless, if you have something to live for, something to work for which is definite and specific. You know in what direction to move. You look eagerly forward to each day because you know there is a task to perform, a certain thing to attempt. You are at peace with yourself. "Something attempted, something done has earned a night's repose", thus the poet says. It is not only a night's repose in the biological sense, it is also a heart's repose in a psychological sense; the heart is at rest for it has moved in a specific direction, engaged in a meaningful and gainful activity. It is not a tangible thing but it is felt and experienced in everyone's life. It may be an unseen benefit, it may not be tangible in terms of bank notes in a wallet or a purse. But it is a value in that you can feel your self-respect being enhanced, and it has a value that others experience as they gain a healthy respect for you. Through that value which you produce and make others experience, they find you valuable. There is no negative thought anymore.

How can you expect a sense of satisfaction, a sense of elation, a sense of self-respect unless there is a specific destination and a sense of moving towards it? Even if it is not achieved, moving towards it, getting nearer is itself an achievement in its own way. For each step nearer to that destination brings you closer, and as we said the destination need not be something over the head, above the sky. It need not be transcendental. A rural wife from a hill family finds fulfilment because of a definite purpose which is gainful, which is meaningful, not only to herself, but to others, to all of us, to man, child, animal. Wherever you are, life should be meaningful. And in terms of the higher reality, the whole of life assumes a meaning and a value if there is a destination.

Therefore, we have to make use of what has been inherited from our past; we have to make use of what has been given to us by the great souls from our very recent past. Mahatma Gandhi, Tagore, Swami Sivananda, Swami Vivekananda, saints, thinkers, poets, sages—they have been providing for us a meaning in life, providing for us values and goals to live for, to work for, to find a sense of elation and satisfaction in great abundance. They have laboured in order to make our life enriched, to make it deeply meaningful, highly significant, most valuable. This is the truth. May God bless you!

Hari Om Tat Sat!

4

HOW DO YOU RELATE YOURSELF TO THE GITA⁴

Worshipful homage to that supreme eternal all-pervading and indwelling Reality, the great universal Spirit Divine—within which everything exists and which exists in everything and within whose infinitude all of us live, move and have our being. This is the great Truth, and one who strives to live in the awareness of this truth becomes inseparably bound up with the Divine Spirit.

*Yo mam pashyati sarvatra sarvam cha mayi
pashyati*

*Tasyaham na pranashyami sa cha me na
pranashyat (B.G. 6/30)*

(He who sees Me everywhere and sees
everything in Me,
He never becomes separated from Me and I
never am separated from him.)

With these words the Divine World Teacher Lord Krishna lets us into the secret of the mystery where the sincere seeking soul is ever bound up in intimate spiritual oneness with Himself. “I let you

⁴ Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 5/4/95

into this secret. See Me in all things and behold all things existing within Me, for I am everywhere and in all things. Then there is a divine link between you and Me. We are inseparable. You will never be apart from Me. I shall never be apart from you. This I tell you so that you may know and be blessed, for I have given you direct access into a divine secret—how to ever be in a state of Yoga with Me”. Being in this state of Yoga, you will be untouched by Maya.

In success and failure make your mind one. Such oneness verily is declared to be Yoga. *Siddhyasiddhyoh samo bhootvaa samatvam yoga uchhyate* (The same in success and failure—evenness of mind is called Yoga.)

This is the secret of being established in inner Yoga by the awareness that all things exist in the Divine and the Divine exists in all things. It is a great grace that the Gita Jnana Upadesha has to give to each and every one who is ready to receive. Wherever you are, in whatever condition God has placed you, amidst whatever work, in all conditions, circumstances and situations you can keep up this inner union with God if you awaken to the awareness of this great Fact—God in you, and you in God. This is the eternal unchangeable Fact. The whole universe dwells in Him, and He dwells in the universe; countless billions of universes dwell in Him, He dwells in all the

countless billions of universes, in all things that exist. This is the central spiritual truth of the living experience of your ancestors born in the land of the Vedas, Upanishads and Bhagavad Gita, born in this land of Vyasa, Vashistha, Yajnavalkya and Janaka.

Living thus, people are able to dwell in God, while living in this world. There is no need for separation between you and Me. And where God is, there is peace, prosperity, victory over all things and success. This is the concluding assurance, the culminating declaration at the very end of the Srimad Bhagavad Gita. All these teachings, all these admonitions and all these instructions become useful to you only if you connect yourselves with the Lord. If we have to benefit from them, we must obey them, we must incorporate them in our life. We must place them on our head and in our heart with reverence, for this is a divine directive coming from God. They are sacred, they are to be venerated. In this way we get a deep feelingful Bhava towards every word that is uttered in the Srimad Bhagavad Gita wisdom teachings. Then alone the Gita will be to us mother, father, protector, guide, friend, philosopher, light on the path, armour, a fortress, a weapon and everything. Gita will become to us everything that a person needs to go through life and come out with success, attainment and with

blessedness. Gita has it all. Gita is the fullest of divine teachings for humanity, for all times. Gita gives complete assurance.

But if you read the Gita, master the Gita and spurn the advice, the Sandesha, Upadesha, Adesha, if you treat them lightly, neglect to keep them in the heart and follow them, then you will be in no better position, even if a 100 Gitas existed. During the time of Jesus He was rejected and crucified, during the time of Mohammed He was ill-treated, and in the same way we shall be rejecting and refusing to accept the existence of Lord Krishna as the Jagadguru.

*Ahamatma gudakesha sarvabhutashaya-
sthitah
Ahamadishcha madhyam cha bhutanamanta
eva cha
(B.G. 10/20)*

(I am the Self seated in the hearts of all
beings, O Arjuna;
I am the beginning, the middle and also the
end of all beings.)

That indwelling Reality is our greatest benefactor, greatest Hitakankshi (well-wisher). And even as Arjuna rejected the advice of Krishna in the beginning, we also will be in the same state as Arjuna, because we will have rejected Lord Krishna and His teachings, being ruled by

something that is not a principle of *tadviddhi pranipatena pariprashnena sevaya* (know That by long prostration, question and by service.)

The great World Teacher is an eternal World Teacher. In the wisdom teaching of the Gita He is an ever-present, ever valid, ever-relevant and ever-available light on the path for us. But if our attitude towards this ever-valid, ever-relevant, ever-existing and ever-available teaching is one of taking it for granted and feeling satisfied that we know it, this dangerous attitude will leave us poorer and deprive us from all the enrichment which the Gita is capable of giving us.

It exists in order to bring all this enrichment. If we cut ourselves off from it, we will be deprived, not because of anything lacking in the Srimad Bhagavad Gita, but because we have not cultivated within us the right appraisal of it, the right attitude towards it.

This therefore is the all important question: “How are you related to the Gita Jnana Upadesha, the great path of wisdom, the illumining teaching, capable of guiding you till the ultimate goal is attained? How are you related towards these teachings? Are you related towards it like Arjuna of the first chapter or like Arjuna of the last chapter?” This is the decisive question about the

value of the Gita for you today, at this moment and at this point in your life.

Ponder this well, and decide what you will make of the Gita for yourself today. God bless you, and may the benedictions of Holy Master be upon you all and show you the right path and take you along the path that leads to your highest welfare. We should not live in poverty with riches available to us right at hand.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

5

TWO GREAT IDEALS—PAROPAKARA AND SAKSHATKARA⁵

Worshipful homage unto the Eternal Reality, Anadi Ananta Brahma Tattva, Bhagawan—Jehova of the followers of Judaism, Ahura Mazda of the followers of the Zoroastrian religion, Nirvana of the followers of the Buddhist philosophy, the state of perfection or Siddhavastha of the followers of Jainism, the Almighty Father in Heaven of the Christians, Allah of the followers of Islam, the Supreme Tao of the ancient Chinese philosophy—the Anadi Ananta Parabrahman Tattva, the beginningless and endless, the eternal Brahman of the Upanishads! To that Eternal Reality we offer worshipful homage at this solemn morning hour at the conclusion of your blessed spiritual fellowship. May the light of that Supreme Being manifest within you as a new awareness of your essential, imperishable divine nature. May the light of that Supreme Being illumine your intellect. May the light of that Supreme Being

⁵ Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 1/6/94

shine upon you. May the light of that Supreme Being manifest from within you as numerous, sublime spiritual divine qualities expressing themselves through your thoughts, feelings, words and deeds.

Loving adorations to beloved and worshipful Holy Master Gurudev Shri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj in whose spiritual presence we have gathered here. His lofty teachings show us the way and give us the practical method of how to awaken the light within, how to obtain the light of grace of Parabrahma, of that supreme Eternal Reality.

It is said in the Kathopanishad: *Yamevaisha urinute tena labhya.*—(That Being is attainable and accessible only for those whom It chooses.) It is not a plaything in the hands of someone to give. You reveal Yourself to those who You feel are ready to receive.

The Srimad Bhagavad Gita wisdom teachings contain 18 chapters. The Lord did not choose to impart the vision to Arjuna until he had finished ten chapters. It was only in the 11th chapter that He thought, “Now is the right moment to give Arjuna the vision so that he may behold the truth.” Only after the midpoint He chose to give, because Arjuna agreed to accept. One agrees to accept when one begins to know that “I do not

know, therefore I require to be taught and shown the way.” Arjuna did say ‘*sishtyaste aham shadhi mam tvam prapannam*’ (I am your disciple, please instruct me), however, in the earlier chapters Arjuna was listening, but he was not prepared to receive. He was arguing, and he was trying to bring his logic to bear to prove Krishna wrong. ‘*Aho bata mahat papam*’—“Alas, what a sinful action, O Krishna! Why are you goading me towards this?” In this way, he was arguing, disagreeing, questioning Lord Krishna’s attempt to bring him out of his delusion. It went on in the second chapter, third chapter, fourth chapter, fifth chapter, and in the sixth chapter he directly contradicts Krishna. He says, “What is the use of You describing me all these techniques of concentration, meditation, stilling the mind—it is as impossible to control the mind as it is impossible to control the wind.” He was ready with his opposing views to whatever Krishna taught even in the 7th, 8th and 9th chapter.

I am trying to tell you what the Upanishads have declared: ‘*Yamevaisha vrinute tena labhya*’. And the true devotee says, “My habit is to go on working for that attainment and waiting.” Work for it, pray for it and wait. You have to work for it, you have to pray for it and wait. What is this working and what is this praying?

We have to follow two great ideals, Paropakara (service of others) and Sakshatkara (direct realisation), Bhagavad Sakshatkara (Brahmajnana). What is the Swarupa (essence) of Paropakara? What is the Swarupa of Sakshatkara? The Swarupa of Sakshatkara is obtained by rejecting all things within us that are untrue, that constitute ignorance and again and yet again affirm, assert the Truth, the Reality. This is the Sadhana, our ancients have said, which leads to Sakshatkara. And the essence of Paropakara is Tyaga. Tyaga—renunciation—is for everything that holds us bound to our present state of Vipareet Jnana (false knowledge), of Dehatmabuddhi (body consciousness) which constitutes the essence of Avidya and Ajnana. All that binds us to this present state of a false human consciousness has to be rejected, if you want to be a Paropakari. Our Tyaga should result in the good of others, in the happiness of others. Tyaga is for the manifestations of Avidya and Vipareet Jnana of Dehatmabuddhi. First of all is Ahamkara (ego; arising out of Ahamkara is Swartha (selfishness); arising out of Ahamkara and Swartha is Asakti (attachment)—the chain has been described in the Srimad Bhagavad Gita. Through Asakti you dwell upon things of this passing world, this Anitya, Asukha, this Ashashwata (not eternal). You dwell upon them

only. You take them to be Nitya, Shashwata, Satya. Dwelling upon them you have desires for them. Desire leads to anger. Anger leads to confusion. Confusion leads to loss of wisdom. Loss of wisdom leads to losing whatever you are trying to gain. And all these spring out of Dehatmabuddhi. Paropakara means giving up the manifestation of this primal ignorance, the Dehatmabuddhi. Tyaga can be only manifested through Nisvartha (selfless) Paropakara, Nisvartha Karma-Yoga, Nisvartha Seva. Tyaga of Avidya, Ahamkara and Swartha results in widespread benefit and happiness to God's creation.

Swami Sivanandaji made such a Tyaga more than 60 years ago, out of which the whole world benefited. First of all his immediate patients benefited, the sick and the suffering in Malaysia. Later on the Sadhus of Swarga Ashram, the villagers and the pilgrims benefited. Later on all of us have been benefited. And then the whole world is benefited. Out of his Tyaga came *Maha Maha Paropakara, Loka Kalyana Janahita* (great benefit to the whole world).

Sakshatkara is the constant affirmation and assertion of your true nature and rejecting all that is contrary to it. Out of this the highest benefit comes to you. These two are linked together. Tyaga and Paropakara are linked to Abhyasa and

Bhagavad-Sakshatkara, Atma-Sakshatkara; they cannot be treated apart. Out of Gurudev's Tyaga came his Tapasya, Sadhana, Vedanta and Sakshatkara. And he shone as a great illumined and enlightened sage of India and a Yogi of the Himalayas and became established in the hearts of millions due to a combination of Tyaga and Abhyasa.

Vairagya and Sadhana are the two great ideals. Shaving the head or changing the name or the colour of your cloth is useless, meaningless, if you do not work for the real inner transformation. Gurudev worked for it, and his Tyaga became meaningful and fruitful and his Bhagavad-sakshatkara became a fact. How much he worked and for whom you can read in his 'Autobiography' where he speaks of what Sadhana he did; you can read 'The Light Fountain' and the chapter dealing with his Swarga Ashram Sadhana days. Then you will get a glimpse of the makings of Guru Bhagawan Swami Sivananda Maharaj. May His glance of grace and hand of blessings and benedictions be upon one and all.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

