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SWAMI PREMANANDA

SPEAKS ON THE ART OF LIVING

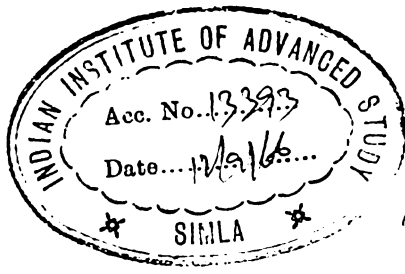
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SWAMI
PREMANANDA
SPEAKS ON
THE ART
OF LIVING

AWAKE 'O' MAN CENTRE

3C/22 ROHTAK ROAD NEW DELHI



29/12/87

Compiled by
Dr. Ananda Bhavanani
Yoga Life Foundation
Vancouver
Canada



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I N V O C A T I O N

UNTO THE HEAVENS BE PEACE; UNTO THE SKY AND
THE EARTH BE PEACE; PEACE BE UNTO THE WATERS;
UNTO THE HERBS AND TREES BE PEACE. UNTO ALL
THE NATIONS BE PEACE: UNTO ALL BE PEACE, YEA,
VERILY PEACE. MAY THAT PEACE BE UNTO ME.



D E D I C A T I O N

TO GLORIOUS ATMAN IN THE FORM OF MY BROTHERS
AND SISTERS, SONS AND DAUGHTER OF IMMORTALITY.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The publishers gratefully acknowledge the donation by M/s Harilela Brothers of Hong Kong, in memory of their father Late Mr. Naroomal Lilaram Harilela. This generous donation has made the publication of this book possible.

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It is a great pleasure for me to compile this brief volume on the "Art of Living" of Swami Premananda.

The material compounded herein in questions and answers form, is actually taken from lectures Swamiji gave while on his world tour and visiting Vancouver, Canada. It has been put into this form for easy reading, memory retention, and for further quick reference; because Swamiji's teachings are so practical that they are usable in every day life, and in some situations one may want to look up a topic or find a ready answer to one's problem—it can easily be accomplished in this way.

Only a few items are included, but this is in no way indicative of his repertoire of answers or his depth of philosophical understanding. It is enough to give the reader reason to seek out the teachings of this young, poet, philosopher of India.

Swami Premananda is the most influential of all the young swamis in India today. He has a legion of followers, but has no organization, except the open doors of every group and organisation throughout the world. This non-attachment has led him to be held in the highest esteem; his feeling of non-competitiveness has taken him to the feet of Sages and to the throne of Kings, to conferences with Presidents, Prime Ministers and to the sides of the needy and fallen, without distinction on his part.

I feel I have had a better opportunity than anyone else to observe him in every type of environment and predicament—I know him to be "the Changeless One" of his teachings.

He is unlike many of the Saints of the past and present; indeed he may be the prototype of the saint of the future. Swami is practical without doubt and has little time for theories; he himself is too dynamic for the stationariness of theory.

He is fiery in his oratory, and can hold a tremendous audience spell-bound with his delivery in speed and song. He is frank, witty, and fearless as to the topics he will tackle. There are no taboos in Swami's mind, and the clear light of his reason sweeps away any feelings that may be held such as prudence and reticence. He will attempt anything. He is unphased by any event or happening. He is as happy cooking a meal as doing some chore, or administering to the needy. Swamiji is generous to a fault, especially with chocolates to children. He is affectionately called "the Chocolate Swami," because of his habit of giving candy as a present.

He is referred to by a variety of names. The "Practical Swami" is an obvious misnomer while the term "Military Swami" may need some explanation. Because of his disciplined life, his "to the minute" punctuality and his perfect obedience to the Orders of his Commander—the Lord—he can rightly be called "Military Swami."

He is spontaneous, and requires no study or preparation for his lecture topics. In fact, many times, minutes before he was to address an audience, he would ask me: "What am I to speak about?" His poetry and songs flow even more freely, if this is possible. He may break into rhythm or song at any time—day or night—in any situation or condition. His numerous songs or Bhajans are well known throughout India and are daily recited in thousands of homes by millions.

I have dubbed him the "Story Telling Swami", for he has a practical story to explain various philosophical or knotty points. His wealth of stories is truly amazing. A seemingly inexhaustible supply is available to his mind, many of them I know he makes up on the spur of the moment to fit the occasion. Indeed the memory of convulsive laughter rings still fresh in my ears as I recall the many occasions on which the "story-telling Swami" decided to entertain with story and song. His story of "The Owl Convention" is included here in this volume, but you will have to await the pleasure of his company to ask him to sing his "Train Song" in Pidgin-Hindi for you. Don't miss it if you ever have the opportunity! He has that wonderful sense of proportion that comes only with good humour.

Swami will nudge more people into Realization with healthy laughter, than were ever forced in through fear and long-faced piety in generations past.

Where some inadequacy in form or answer is felt by the reader, the fault is mine and mine alone for I have edited heavily and cut drastically the material available to me.

If this volume blesses you as it has me in its preparation, then my service is completed, for we, the reader and I, are both blessed by Swamiji.

420 West 22nd Ave
Vancouver 10, B.C.
Canada.

DR. ANANDA BHAVANANI
Director, Yoga Jivana
Yoga Life Foundation

L I F E S K E T C H O F
S W A M I P R E M A N A N D A

Swami Premananda was born in a very respectable devotional and wealthy family of the West Punjab (now part of Pakistan), on the 18th of November 1930. He spent the early part of his life in the valley of Kashmir. A natural scholar and a brilliant student he graduated from the Agra University in 1949. He took an M.A. from the Punjab University in Urdu and an additional M.A. in History from the Agra University. On the completion of his post-graduate studies he was appointed a professor. He was, however, destined to guide humanity on a much higher plane.

In 1952, he began intuitional changes in his life which took him to the Himalayas to practise 'Sadhna'—the Indian System of "Self-finding." There he met the Master or the Spiritual Preceptor, who recognising the worthy disciple, imparted the Divine knowledge to him. The Master left his mortal body, immediately after transferring his light. Swamiji underwent a complete life change and his life became a life of 'Love Infinite for Eternity.' The philosopher sang with ecstasy because he was now in a new world—the world of Truth, Divinity, Reality, Immortality, Purity and Eternity.

From that day, the 14th of May 1952 Swamiji decided to dedicate his life to the service of mankind and through mankind to the service of Divine. Swamiji has travelled all over the world to share his experiences and to uplift and awaken humanity. Realising that every man is potentially divine, Swamiji feels that he is not to teach the people but just to awaken them and remind them of their own true nature.

From 1952 to 1959 Swamiji stayed most of the time in India, except for a short visit to Europe in 1954. Swamiji used to

spend eight months of the year in spreading his message in the different parts of the country and the remaining four months in contemplation and quietude in the Himalayas and pilgrimage to holy places such as Gangotri—the source of the Ganges, Badrinath, Kedar Nath, the Kailash and the Mansrover Lake in Tibet. Since January 1960, Swamiji has spent most of the time travelling abroad to share his joy and love with the whole universe irrespective of religion, caste or creed. It has been his real craving to make man realise the 'Reality within' so that all can enjoy the true happiness. By his universal love and inspired ideas he has brought peace to the minds of all those who sought his guidance.

A poet of some note, his works have been published in Hindi, English, Urdu and Punjabi. The well known publications of Swamiji are "Manav Jag" in Hindi—a collection of his lectures in India, "Prem Tarang" and "Prem Ganga" in Hindi—collections of his poems and bhajans "Raz-i-Mohabbat" in Urdu, "In the Moments of Silence" in English and "The Waves of Mansrover" in English—an account of his pilgrimage to the Kailash and Mansrover in Tibet. His poems and bhajans—divine songs, have also been published in Sindhi. The magazine, "Awake O' Man", which is trilingual—English, Hindi and Sindhi, has been founded by him and is published every month, this is the medium through which 3,000 readers all over the world are kept in touch with his message and programmes.

During his travels abroad Swamiji has attended international conferences and visited universities and cultural institutions and appeared in Radio and Television programmes. He has given talks on a variety of subjects; Science and Religion, Universal Love, The Message of India, World Peace, Moral Values, Human Life, Vedanta and How It is Practised, Secret of Success, Aim of Life, Life—How to Live It, Unity in Diversity, Yoga the Reunion, Seven Realities, Religion in the Age of Science, Science of the West and Spirit of the East—and so on.

Swamiji's first visit abroad was in 1954. Round the world tour which took him to 42 countries started on 25th January, 1960. The Asian countries covered during this tour were Ceylon,

Singapore, Malaya, Thailand, South Vietnam, Cambodia, Philippines, Hong Kong and Japan. In Japan Swamiji attended the World Religions Conference and lectured in the universities. The Japanese were very much impressed by his Divine message and he was honoured with the degree of Doctor of Divinity by the University of Hiroshima.

From Japan Swamiji went to Canada via Hawaii. Dr. Ananda Bhavanani of the 'Yoga Jivana' and 'East West Culture Institute' described Swamiji's visit to Canada as follows:

"The fresh breath of air, both physical and Divine, was manifest in Sri Swami Premananda of India, arriving from Japan, via Hawaii, to visit Canada on his world tour. No other smile could aptly describe his fresh, forthright, simple, yet profound, approach to philosophy and the problems of man. Loving, humorous, dynamic, he has endeared himself to all who met him."

In the United States, from 25th May to 3rd September 1960 Swamiji visited 35 states including Seattle, Washington, San Francisco, California, Portland, Oregon, Los Angeles, Hollywood, Sedona, Arizona, San Antonio, Texas, New York, Alabama. He delivered over 100 lectures on human values and spoke on radio on numerous occasions. Some of the glimpses of his tour to the USA as published in the local press were:

"Swami Premananda is on a goodwill tour of America in an attempt to build up a better understanding between the Eastern and Western World." "His 'message', he said, is not religious, but more philosophical—about human and moral values. I make people happy by my happiness..." Speaking on advancement in the scientific age, the Swami said, his main aim is to create a blending of science and spirit. Science should serve mankind and not destroy it. If we don't neglect the human values, science can be a wonderful thing."

"The travelling teacher said he came here to prod Americans into thinking as much about themselves as they think about science... He said he wants the Western World to overcome its negative attitude towards scientific advancement. 'The messages of Gandhi and Albert Einstein can be united.'

"How can I relax in these hectic times"? was the question he said most of his listeners here asked. He told them to sit

down each day for a few minutes and 'get to know themselves.'

From the U.S.A. Swamiji went on to the British West Indies and British Guiana. He had a very crowded programme in Trinidad and delivered lectures to mammoth gatherings on Vedanta and its practice, World Peace, and Science and Religion. He also spoke to the students of the Naparima College at San Fernando. The highlights of his lectures as reproduced in the local newspapers were as follows:

"Degrees in themselves did not matter but, what did matter was the wisdom and understanding behind them. If the students won all the degrees possible and did not learn how to live in wisdom, understanding and harmony, then life would be difficult and it would be easy for the seeds of hatred, jealousy and ill-feeling to affect their lives. With education they must be able to lead a life of truth and reality...The students were to be the leaders in every field of human endeavour in the future and that was why it was necessary for them to decide on the best foundation. He was sure that if they laid the foundations on the principles of understanding, compassion, love and harmony then they would better be able to serve in the professions of their choice...The Swami advised that if they wanted to eclipse the performance of another, they were not to make the other person's performance look small by criticism, but by doing better themselves. The Swami advised too, that as students they should not trouble themselves about abuses. Returning an abuse, he said, was multiplying it, while ignoring it completely meant that it remained with the person who made it.

"Diversity is the law of nature but unity is the law of life", declared Swami Premananda. "There was not, nor could there be any harmony in this world in matters physical, mental, social, religious philosophical and political. It was his belief that the first necessity in the search for world peace was for the individual to search himself and get to know himself. The end of this self-examination was to acquire internal harmony in the individual. This was important because only a man at peace with himself who enjoys inner harmony, could extend the same to others and by the extension of the process bring about peace between different societies and nations and ultimately world peace."

He started his European tour on 19th September from Madrid. He visited Spain, Gibraltar, Morocco, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, U.S.S.R., Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Netherlands and England. He revisited Gibraltar on 5th December, left for France on 11th December and reached Lagos (Nigeria) on 22nd December for two weeks tour of Nigeria and Ghana. He returned to India on 18th January via Cairo and Beirut.

During 1961 Swamiji attended three important Congresses. He went to Japan in May to attend the First Congress for Cultivating Human Spirit under the auspices of the International Foundation for Cultural Harmony. He took part as an expert on spiritual values in the Congress on "Unity of Mankind in a Divided World" held at Davos, Switzerland under the auspices of the IARF—the International Association for Liberal Christianity and Religious Freedom. He was the chairman of the Panel which drafted the Resolution on Spiritual Values and Technology. Again in October he went to Japan to take part in the Second Congress. He was a member of the Executive Committee of the Congress and was the Chairman of the Sub-Committee 'F'.

From Japan he left for Canada on the 27th October, 1962 and toured extensively for two months all over U.S.A. and Canada. On his return journey to India Swamiji visited Fiji, New Zealand and Australia with stopovers at Hong Kong, Singapore and Bangkok. Swamiji arrived in India on the 18th of February, 1962. He again left for Tokyo on 1st May, 1962 as the head of the delegates from India to attend the Third Congress for Cultivating Human Spirit.

During the world tour, the main theme of his lectures was World Peace and the secrets of happy joyous life. Here are a few extracts from his speeches reported in the leading newspapers of the various countries he visited :

"Man all over the world is craving for peace. We will not find peace just by crying for it. Instead, the world will only find peace when man begins preparing for peace, not for war. Is there such a thing as a war for peace? Why couldn't nations sign a peace treaty before instead of after a war? If a war should come in the near future, there might not be anybody left to sign such a treaty."

“Man should look into the inner space of himself rather than the outer space of the universe. Peace can come only from the inner peace of man. Each person must find his own peace of mind before any lasting peace occurs in the world. The greatest obstacles are ego building and the ever present search for power by man. Religion alone, so far has not provided the answer. It has caused hatred, jealousy and even wars. Science alone also does not fill the bill. It has been a blessing but has produced such monsters as nuclear bombs. Scientific and spiritual values must be integrated to provide the true answer to man’s problem.

“Evening Post”—New Zealand

“The Swami, believes the common man in every country dreads the idea of war, and he is optimistic that there will be no war. ‘Man is a conflicting personality today and my message is to awaken him to realise his own strength, beauty and health; to integrate material prosperity and spiritual richness.’ Religion and Science were not anti-pathetic and the blending of them was very important in solving the world’s problems.”

“Dominion”—New Zealand

“West had neglected the philosophic side of life for the material side. This was probably not a conscious neglect but I have found the Western peoples are most responsive to my teachings. The Eastern peoples have in many cases failed to apply their philosophy to the everyday world. Were East and West to integrate their outlooks it would do a lot for the good of mankind.

“Daily Telegraph”—Australia

“The man who has been touring the world for seven years, telling people ‘keep smiling’—the man is Swami Premananda, who wears an apricot-coloured robe and perhaps the most flashing smile I have ever seen. The Swami, a philosopher and poet from Agra, is visiting us to tell select audiences how to make a success of life.”

“Free Press”—Singapore

“The present world is in a state of acute tension. It is riddled with physical and psychological conflicts. The present war of nuclear explosions is a great cruelty to the masses because of serious and damaging repercussions. In spite of this, the Swami expressed optimistic hopes of peace provided that the negative side of science was eradicated.”



I.

Some Important Steps

S E E K E R O F T R U T H

Swami, can you tell us some steps which can help us to live a joyous happy life?

S W A M I P R E M A N A N D A

In the art of living there are four steps of achievement—I am, I can, I will, I do. Everything I do depends upon my conception of what I am, my realization that I can do that which I will to do, and my determination to do it.

S E E K E R

What do you mean by 'I am'?

S W A M I

It is a conscious realization of the true nature of 'I' in me. That is why the moment I say 'I am', the question comes what am I? Not what I am personally, but as a member of the human race. It demands our most serious attention because spiritual nature of man is of paramount importance and commencement of everything in the universe is spirit. Now what do we mean by Spirit? Spirit has been called God, but that does not explain what Spirit is, nor does it explain what God is. Emerson says "each one ultimately forms his own conception of God."

S E E K E R

Then what in your personal opinion can be the definition of 'I am'?

S W A M I

Scientists have arrived at the conclusion that so far as they can judge, the whole universe consists of thought, and thought is energy, as all matter is now proved to be energy in differing forms of vibration. To me it makes sense that Spirit thought the universe into being, because I realise that if I want to bring anything into being, it is necessary for me to first think about it. Spirit then is Primary Cause. It is the I AM. The foundation of Being : it is That which thinks. Spirit is the Great Creative Consciousness that thinks the universe into being, by conceiving the idea of a universe. When man realises that his consciousness is one with this great Power, he will realize the tremendous power that is at his disposal; power that he uses at all times, even now, consciously or unconsciously, for good or ill, according to the nature of his thought. The first thing then is to realize that I AM whatever I think I AM. The one who contemplates himself as Spirit is released from the bondage of flesh. His first thought is not "what does my body need"? It is "How am I as Spirit expressing myself?" Am I fulfilling the law of my being and expressing love, for that is my primary function. Having mounted the first step and accepted the truth that I am a spiritual being, then Spirit instructs my intellect and I say "I CAN".

S E E K E R

Swami, I understand this now clearly that I AM and I must realize my own Divinity and potential strength. Now what is the next step ?

S W A M I

The next step is to realise that my intellect is part of the Great Intelligence that Spirit has imbued with power to carry out its instructions to create. This intelligence which is sometimes called Subconscious Mind, has all knowledge and all power to create anything that Spirit has in mind as an idea.

S E E K E R

But Swami, we generally understand that Spirit and Intelligence are two separate entities. What do you say about it?

S W A M I

No. I think Spirit and Intelligence are not two separate entities; they are two aspects of the one Creative Principle—Spirit known as Divine, Intelligence as the wisdom. There is something within me that refuses to think of Divine as “He or Him”. To me the personal pronoun has a belittling effect, somehow restricting into form that which is formless. I cannot conceive something so vast and all-embracing as Spirit as person at all.

S E E K E R

But Swami, I can do what? What are the things I can do and what are the things I cannot do?

S W A M I

All things, whatsoever I desire. Because Spirit I am, I use the method of Spirit. I contemplate, I think I think positively, and I think I can. When I think I cannot, I am using the great Power in reverse, that is why I do not do the things I think I cannot do. “I can, because I think I can” that is the fundamental law. I have the courage to think I can, because I realise that I am an expression of the Originating Creative Spirit, whose power of thought is limitless, and is never thwarted because there is nothing outside of itself in opposition to it. I can because I AM, and only because I AM. When I lose sight of that great fact, then it is that I cannot.

S E E K E R

But then what is the hindrance to things that I want to do? We generally feel that we fail to do many things that we want to do. What is the reason for that?

S W A M I

The greatest deterrent to accomplishment in anything whatsoever is fear. If I fear, I cannot. If I have no fear I can when I am

still and know that Divine I AM, and know no fear. Whatever trouble may assail me, the omnipresence of Divine is “my joy and strength”.

S E E K E R

Intellectually I accept what you say. What is the next step now?

S W A M I

After the intellectual acceptance of the Truth comes the emotional urge which says “I will.” It is not sufficient to know that I can be or do anything, without mounting the next step and saying “I will” The emotional body of man is very powerful and can get him into all sorts of trouble if he does not bring it under the control of his intellect and spirit. He must either control his emotions or be controlled by them; but he has the power of choice and can if he wills, direct his emotions.

S E E K E R

But don't you think Swami, that this confidence in the Self varies in different persons. There will be a number of people who will not be ready to accept your statement even intellectually. And also when a man fails, we generally say ‘Oh he didn't put his heart in this work so he failed’. How far we are right in making this statement?

S W A M I

O yes—I agree that all will not accept my statement. Many won't understand it. Some will be so conditioned by their own thought that they will reject this statement outright. That is why I feel it is necessary to recognise that men are at different stages of *growth and unfoldment*. The human race does not move along at one pace. It is as though there were those in the rear and those in the vanguard and there is nothing which predetermines where one will be. The last often takes the lead and the least becomes the greatest. Consequently it is impossible to judge what another should do. It often seems desirable to us that others should exercise more control over themselves or use their will in a different direction, yet may be they are doing more with their limited

understanding than others in comparison to their larger vision. Our concern is not with others. Are we directing our wills along the right avenues ? What is our deepest desire ? If we recognise ourselves as spiritual beings, are we directing our will towards spiritual attainments? Or are we allowing our emotions to swallow us up and drag us lamenting along?

S E E K E R

What do you think then, Swami, is the most important thing for us to do—so that we can achieve what we aspire to achieve in life?

S W A M I

The important step we need to take then, is to put our full emotional force behind our will to be or to do. Everything one does can be done better than we think we can do it, when we take Spirit into account. Even without consciously relying upon Spirit, scientists are for ever proving the truth of that statement. Many scientists do consciously rely upon the Spirit, and it would seem true to say they are doing so unconsciously as they are always investigating the unseen and the unknown. Mental scientists are proving that mind can do exceedingly abundant above that which we can ask or think when we use our will to direct it aright.

S E E K E R

You mean to say that if we have a strong will-power, we shall be able to make others do, whatever we want. Don't you think it will create many complications and will make men very egoistic?

S W A M I

No, I do not mean that. By strong will, you may think, it is the sign of a strong will to make other people do as you wish, when you can bend their wills to yours and override their wishes so that you can fulfil your own. That is not a sign of a strong will at all, it is a sign of weakness. Strength of will is shown of the one who wills goodwill for all and one who wills goodwill for

all will not be egoistic but definitely humble because he thinks that he is expressing the Divine through him and feels very much blessed and thankful for this gift.

S E E K E R

But, Swami, there are those who accept suffering and limitations saying "It is Divine's will, so I must accept it and make the best of a bad job". What sort of a Divine could it be who would will a "bad job" upon any creature?

S W A M I

Nothing that is bad is ever the will of Divine. Divine is the spirit of perfection and love, therefore, the will of Divine cannot possibly be anything but good. When we will to accept the will of Divine, we are accepting that which is wholly good for the whole race. Man suffers because he wills only that which will benefit himself, or perhaps only of benefit to his family or business. Strength of will and continuing strength of purpose are essential for all achievements; whether it be spiritual, intellectual or material; and we are all called upon to achieve, more or less along each of these three lines.

S E E K E R

Now what is the last step. Will you explain it?

S W A M I

So we reach our last step and say "I do". What do I do. My well-being, my health, my place in life all depend upon the previous steps I have taken. Am I willing to do all that my intelligence tells me that I can do? Am I recognizing that as a spiritual being it is incumbent upon me to use all my individual gifts for the uplifting and the onward surge of the human race? Do I understand that as a manifestation of Spirit, I have a particular and unique function to perform. This physical life of ours is something that cannot be ignored by saying "I am a spiritual being", and letting it go at that. Spirit has to be expressed. How far we are going to climb up the ladder of achievement

depends upon our desire, our willingness to climb, and our purposefulness in climbing.

S E E K E R

We understand it well now. Would you say some more words to strengthen our understanding?

S W A M I

Whatever it is we hope to achieve, we cannot hope for success unless our ladder is firmly grounded in the belief that we each, one and all, are one with the Great Creative Spirit. What we each accomplish will be according to our particular talent, our desire to be, our faith in our ability and our will to progress. So it is. "I AM, I CAN, I WILL, I DO."

2.

Yoga the Re-Union

SEEKER OF TRUTH

Why do you speak of Yoga as a Re-Union when other speakers and writers continually refer to Yoga as Union?

SWAMI PREMANANDA

The Whole is already in a great Yoga or Union; but the human seeker has fallen away from this Oneness by divided or dual thinking, and for man his duty and purpose is to re-establish the re-union and not the Union itself, which is already existent without him. Human life is striving towards that re-union, consciously and unconsciously. Every man and woman in this world is trying to achieve happiness, which is this re-union, trying to achieve some goal, which is this Re-Union. This re-union is with the Reality within. Whether the search is in the outer or the inner life—whether it be considered in light of the theory of right and wrong—whether the actions leading to that goal appear to others, as right or wrong—all are working towards that achievement of Re-Union and we must be careful not to judge another's actions or motive because it is so difficult even to judge our own actions and motives.

SEEKER

Will you explain Yoga more fully in light of this definition?

SWAMI

There are many schools of thought, practices and disciplines known as Yoga. There is : *Hatha Yoga*, the Yoga of Health and Hygiene, which is achieved through a complicated system of body postures called asanas, pranayamas or breathing regulators and body cleansings. *Gnana Yoga*. The Path to Wisdom

by study of the Scriptures—and the development of the Buddhi or intellect, which brings right viveka or discrimination between the Real and the unreal. *Karma Yoga* : The Yoga of Action, teaching us to be busy and to be engaged in activity and to do all things as an offering to the Divine desireless of the “fruits” of our actions. *Raja Yoga* : The Royal or Princely Yoga, which has eight main branches of study and practice dealing with the ethics, morals and philosophic pursuits and right activity of the Yogi. I can tell you of many; more phases of Yoga study, but what of Yoga—the Re-Union ? All of the Yogas, each and every path as seen in the multitude of religions is to open the door to this “re-union”. Re-union with the inner “Self” the Supreme Consciousness, *God, Al Haq* or whatever man wants to call it. Re-Union of the “Self” with the “Supreme Self” is the ultimate goal of the yogi—Perfect Union. At first, the goal of Perfection so dazzles man that he wavers, falters and perhaps fails. It is better to start with the integration or re-union of the Conscious Mind with the Supra-Consciousness; so that a Yoga is created between the Mental World and the Spiritual World, then progress to the deeper states when you are really and fully prepared. Mankind is running after “this” thing and “that” thing today and fails to see that the way to highest or deepest things of the Spirit are only accomplished when the reversal of this pattern is achieved. The faster a man runs the more trouble he suffers. It is always more comfortable to walk than to run; more comfortable to stand than to walk; more comfortable to sit than to stand; more comfortable to lie down than to sit; more comfortable to sleep than to lie and still more comfortable if you are able to sleep forever. To sleep forever, serenely and safely in the arms of Life.

S E E K E R

But is this really what we are striving for? Is this the goal?

S W A M I

Mankind enmasse thinks that we are to go faster and faster, do more things, achieve more. But for what I ask? The faster the mind runs the more concerned and worried we

become. Then, even if the mind stops thinking for a few moments there is no rest, no peace. We wonder what has happened and are apprehensive, filled with inner fears and conflict. Sometimes we are able to absorb the mind in some activity for a few moments and we find what we now call happiness or bliss. Still, something does come from within during that time to convince us that greater states exist, in mind if greater absorption is achieved. When the mind is completely absorbed in the inner "Self", ego is completely lost, you can consciously then declare, "I now have no mind," no individuality will mar your universality and when that time comes "Perfect Re-Union" is there.

S E E K E R

What is missing in our lives when we are unable to see the necessity or practicality of Re-Union?

S W A M I

I call it Re-Union because the Union is already there ; what is missing then is the "realization" of Union. This realization is the Re-Union. Let me tell you a story to illustrate this point. There was a very rich lady who had a very precious jewelled necklace. One day while wearing it, it became reversed on her neck so she could not see it. As she was getting ready to go to a party she searched her jewel-box for the necklace, forgetting that she had it around her neck. No necklace was to be found and she became terribly upset, searched again here and there but to no avail. She phoned her husband at his office and upset his whole day, then he in turn phoned the police to report the apparent theft. Now everyone was terribly upset. In the midst of this confusion a lady friend came to call and naturally enquired what all the uproar and trouble was about. She was told of the loss of the precious jewels and all the upset it had caused and the alarm which had been spread. The lady friend saw at once that the necklace was about her friend's neck and pointed it out. "Oh, I must have forgotten; I didn't realize it was here !" Now she had to take the telephone and inform her husband who had to tell all the others that the necklace was found. The "finding" of the necklace is the Re-Union, the realization through mind

that the Union has always been. For getfulness alone had caused its loss. As soon as the realization was present, then the necklace was found. In reality, only the Realization was ever lost.

S E E K E R

Why do we get so involved and upset in the unreal events and happenings just as the lady in your story?

S W A M I

It appears that man has made something normal out of negativity. Consider the common greeting of people "How are you?" If the person answers, "terrible", you at once want to know why, and with all the details. Has someone died? What was the sickness? For how long? The moment you hear of sickness, death and trouble you ask "why"? But you never question when you hear of something good or of Life. The How, What, Where, When, and Why are saved only for the negative things of Life. If the answer to your greeting of "How are you?" happens to be "fine," then you cease to query, to asking how he was able to achieve his fineness and how he is able to maintain it. Do you ask a healthy man how he achieved his health and how he preserves it? No! Not even Doctors or Scientists ask these kinds of questions. They, too, are lost often in the negative pursuits alone. Perhaps because health and happiness and bliss are part of the naturalness of life, we do not challenge them. We question unhappiness, disease and death because they are so un-natural to our natural Divinity, so un-natural to our Natural Immortality. That is why Yoga doesn't promise to bring you something from Heaven or somewhere—Yoga unfolds that which is already there. Yoga is the great eternal path to Realization of what is already within, the real health, happiness and Divinity which all men seek.

S E E K E R

But what of the demands made upon us by our environment, family, society and way of life? Should these be neglected?

S W A M I

In human life there are many demands I grant you. There are the Physical demands. Man wants something for his stomach, a nice place to live, a nice home, a family and the wherewithal to enjoy them. There are the Emotional demands. He wants someone to love him and someone whom he can love. He needs to be "needed" and his needs must be met. There are the Social demands. He wants a place in society, a place in life, but in spite of all these demands, he still finds that something is still missing in achieving them. What is he missing? The "SELF," which cannot be bribed by the satisfaction of material demands. The Atman or Self cannot be realized by that man who satisfies only his basic needs and neglects the call of the higher Life. Keep them in proper perspective and then you will find you do not neglect anything.

S E E K E R

You feel then that we have put "the cart before the horse" so to speak ?

S W A M I

Surely I do. If you are taking care of your spiritual responsibilities, your Dharma, you will not neglect anything. Let me tell you a story so you can understand better. I was once invited to the home of a very rich man. He invited me into his bedroom to show me a bed that he had imported all the way from Germany which cost him Rs. 32,000. I marvelled at a bed costing thirty-two thousand rupees and expressed that such a costly bed must make sleeping alike to being in Heaven, whereupon my host informed me that he could hardly sleep two hours at any given time unless he took an intravenous injection. Imagine Rs. 32,000 and only if he took an injection—better off was the man who had to sleep on the footpath but got six hours contented sleep than the man who had the Rs. 32,000 bed! Ask yourself this question: "Is the sleep more important than the bed or the bed more important than the sleep," and you will be able to conclude yourself the answers to your questions. No! No! Life is

Duty! Life is Love! Life is Service! The Master's call is "*to Life—not away from it!*" In one of my poems express this fully with :

Life is Duty. Life is love,
Life is the holiest gift from above.
Life is not only to eat and drink,
Or to gratify passions and die,
Life is given to pray, act and think,
And to come out successful by and by.

3.

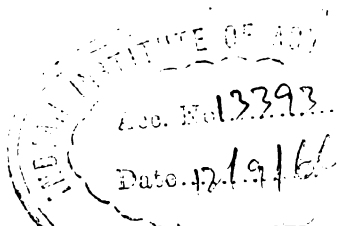
Transmission of Love

SEEKER OF TRUTH

I wish you would explain or discuss Love and how we transmit love as some one said we feel the vibration of hate and you used the mirror as an example. Would you explain?

SWAMI PREMANANDA

You see, I was just telling last night that to see your clear face into the mirror you need two or three things. The mirror must be constant. The mirror must be clean and there must be light in the room. When the mirror is made constant, first of all we have to make it constant because if it is in motion we cannot clean it properly. We make it constant, then we make it clean. Then it takes one second to put on the light and the reflection and projection is there. In the same way to have the reflection of the Cosmic Consciousness into your own mirror of mind, you have to make it constant and make it clean. Now what happens in the process of cleaning, when the mirror is clean, somebody else comes before us and his thoughts are projected in our mind. A man comes with a hatred and the mirror of my mind which is getting clearer and clearer and I feel, what is there. He is sending me the vibrations of hatred and I feel the vibrations of his hatred. Now if along with my mind's purity, my wisdom and my inner consciousness is not elevated and developed what I will feel, here is a man who has hatred against me and I want to retaliate. Because till now I was his friend for a long time but his thoughts could not project on my mind, because my mind itself was very dirty. And today when it has got little cleaned and I can have the projection of his hatred, I start retaliating his hatred because he hates me. So by retaliation I start



covering again my mirror of mind by more dirt and ugliness. But if my consciousness has developed when the projection of his hatred is on my mind, I want to transmit the positive force of love on him, because he needs my love much more than anybody else needs. He has got hatred only in stock and I have to transmit my own positive thinking and by the positive force of love not only I intensify my purification but I start his purification also.

S E E K E R

How are you going to do that?

S W A M I

Well; that you have to do because of your own elevation and by transmission of your love.

S E E K E R

How are you going to transmit it? I mean without telling and saying anything, how are you going to get your message through his soul.

S W A M I

Well; you see it is not a question how to do it. You should know how to remove the layers that are covering his conscious mind to go deeper in the sub-conscious mind so that he is consciously not aware that you are transmitting your love to him. But his sub-conscious force forces him to accept your love and one day his whole hatred is washed away and it is done. If you start doing that and vibrating that, you have not to speak, you have not to say anything, you are not to make him conscious of that....

S E E K E R

What is to be done when people rebuff or retard your efforts or vibrate hatred? You don't have to put your own claim that listen brother, I want to love you because I want to change you, because telling them this would be a barrier to the receptivity of your thoughts.

S W A M I

You have not to tell anything. Your best language at that time is silence.

S E E K E R

It means just to return good for evil and to think in your own heart or your own soul that you love that person and in doing that the barrier is broken down.

S W A M I

You see, I was telling someone in the morning in answer to the question : what to do with the other people's emotion? We have to make a two-sided process in our human life. On one side, my mind should become so balanced that it should not accept the negative emotions of others. Somebody abuses me, I listen to him, but my mind does not accept that abuse, because if the mind accepts it then the pain is there and the retaliation will be there. Now this is one side, the negative process—not to receive the negative thinking. On the other side, you have to transmit the positive thinking. I mean, one side you make your mind so much evolved that you do not accept the negative thinking of others and on the other side you make your mind so elevated that you have the power to transmit your positive thinking over others. So both-sided processes—the negation to the negative forces and transmission of the positive forces, if both processes go on there, you achieve one day.

S E E K E R

I have a long way to go because if somebody disagrees with me or when I am trying to put across my problems, somebody just blocks my efforts or somebody takes the other side or more or less the opposite of what I am going to do and I take a pinch to it, although for a little while, but takes me a long way to get over it.

S W A M I

Now you see what I do, my approach is completely different. If somebody disagrees with me terribly so he says "O Swami,

I cannot agree to what you say.” O.K. friend. Now you start putting your negative vibrations. I will not accept—I mean I will not reject what you say? If you do not agree with me let us make the agreement to disagree for the moment. Let us agree to disagree for the moment till either you agree to what I think or I agree to what you think. Now you apply your forces and I apply mine. We don’t close the doors only because you do not agree with me. I don’t agree with you. Let us agree to disagree for the moment till either you are convinced of my love to love me—so let us agree to disagree and work on our own plans till either I am convinced to hate you and I would retaliate and come to you that I am prepared to fight with you or you will come to me that I am ready to express my love to you. By love everything can be done and another person’s mind can also be changed. Love is a positive force but at the same time you have to develop in such a way that negative forces don’t affect you, I mean—because if negative forces affect you it will be very difficult for you to transmit the positive forces because the negative forces will vibrate you to retaliate.

4.

Realization

SEEKER OF TRUTH

What do you see as the bondage that keeps us away from Realization of our True Nature?

SWAMI PREMANANDA

It is the bondage of ignorance, superstition, and deliberately perpetuated falseness and superimposed ego pursuits. We are bound by avarice, by greed and desire, from the slavery of our minds and senses; from the control of our passions and desires and away from the animal instinctive life into a life of the Realization of Spirit. Yoga gives you the Realization that you are Chief Priest of the Temple, the Master of your life, a Freeman. These are the higher or deeper values of life. They bring true happiness. Poverty or sickness are not happiness or unhappiness. They have their reality and you can realize their place in your life. Wealth is not bad. Scientific comforts are not bad, but control them! Material values are a necessity in the modern world. You can enjoy your journey through this world in a much better way with a sound mind and body and the realization of the Re-Union with the Reality within. This Reality is the Truth of the philosopher and that which mankind is seeking through its religions and worship. Yoga takes you to that "truth."

SEEKER

Is this Realization you speak of a part of the Intellect or is it deeper than that?

S W A M I

I will illustrate my point with a story so as to enable your further understanding. One day I gave a lecture on "Self-realization" and following my talk a young man came to me and asked, "Swami—what is this God and this nonsense you talked of today. How can I realize these things you talk about. Show me God! I want to see God, and I have only ten minutes before my next class, so be quick about it." I told him if he would like to see God he would have to make an appointment. He wouldn't expect to see even some lesser government official without an appointment but he was wanting to see the "Director of the Universe" right here and now, and without an appointment at that, without any prior arrangements being made or the necessary preparations attended to. I asked him to give me his address so that I could arrange the appointment for him as his ambassador and he began to write on a card, his name, house number, street, etc. I told him that this was not his real address and was of no value to contact him when the appointment was arranged. He retorted "What do you mean by that?" I answered that I meant exactly what I had asked of him—what is your address—what is the place or state in which you live? The psychological place and the mental state—not some material figures. Realization will give you your true address. I will give you a formula to use so that you are never fooled into thinking that you are only a material manifestation: "A thing which is mine cannot be me". If I say this book is mine, it is different from me. I am not the book. If I say this watch is mine, it is also different from me. I am not the watch. The watch and I are separate things. So also the address is not "You". You and the address are different. In this way you will have to analyze your life, I told him. You have your existence in the world but you are not the actions. Actions and "You" are different. We fall into a language trap as soon as we learn to speak. We say, "I am" as a child, as a teenager and an adult we still say "I am." Meet a man after 20 years and he will insist that "I am the man you knew 20 years ago." He will insist he is the same man, but he is not. He has changed, he has grown and

aged, and his wear of life has left the tell-tale marks of the passage of the years. How is it possible for a man to declare that, "I am the same man," when science declares that every cell of the body is changed every seven years. The question of life is not "What have I"? but "What am I"? Think this point over in your mind. The most important question you have to ask is, "What is Existence"? devoid of Me and Mineness.

S E E K E R

But Swami, when we are troubled and ill we feel it is the "I". How does one overcome this?

S W A M I

I do understand what happens in trying times but you must evaluate every situation; question every thought. When you say, "I am ill and the whole body is in pain", question—my body? I am not the body. If I am not the body, then I am something else. Then, what am I? Or you could say, "My mind is very disturbed, I am very upset." My mind? I am not the mind. Or you could have said, "I cannot hear, I cannot see, I cannot feel, I cannot speak, my senses are not working today. My eyes, my ears, my vocal apparatus", My senses? I am not the senses. Then what am I? One could say, "My brain is not working on this problem or my intellect is not functioning properly. But I am not the brain or the intellect. Then what am I? Still the question is unsolved and one must go further in the quest. One may pray for deliverance, cry out for mercy in one's pain, "O God, take away my life; I do not want it. I cannot live in this world." But I am not the life either. Then what am I? In wakefulness I say, "I see this and that, while dreaming I say the same thing and after a sound sleep I wake up to say, "I was completely unconscious of the whole world." In effect one says that, "I am now conscious of my unconsciousness." What a complication we make of the "I" without ever realizing the "I". The "I" is the Supreme Consciousness, the One, without a second, which is to be realized. The "I" principle is realized upon the extinction of the ego "I", when you re-unite the inner "Self", the Real "Self", which knows no sex, caste, creed or

condition, nationality or any other label. The "Truth" of the "Self" is not Mr and Mrs, Indian, American, Canadian, Japanese or African, nor is it Hindu, Moslem, Christian or anything else. The "I" is Reality!

S E E K E R

It is not easy to gain this realization of the difference between the ego "I", the illusionary, and the real "I" of Reality. Have you some practical advice or practices to help in gaining this realization?

S W A M I

To do this one must realize the difference between the body self and the "Self", the resplendent "Atman", the Divine within. Yoga gives you this help with its disciplines of concentration and meditation, with its outlets for emotions, through service and devotion and the many other phases and aspects which Yoga advocates. Human life is transformed from body consciousness, the ego "I" upward to Divine Consciousness, the real "I." Yoga gives you the path to this realization where one day you may declare "Let oceans of pain or misery come to me; let rivers of pleasure and happiness come to me; I am no slave to either!" There Reality shines. Reality is Reality—it knows no duality or difference.

S E E K E R

Why does mankind not seek this Reality? Why is it avoided and even belittled?

S W A M I

Man is a strange creature and seems to run away from the only success that really matters—realization. Reality is suppressed and repressed by the great and the small and substituted with what I call the "polished life." The outer trappings and the decoré and this is the main cause of unhappiness in the world today. Man is trying "to seem" instead of "being" the thing. He would rather be an expensive counterfeit than the Reality.

This problem ceases when you sincerely accept the path of Yoga which leads to re-union with Reality, Truth, Immortality and the Infinite Self. Look within and find the beauty that is there in every life. If it is difficult to see, then use the eye of a sculptor. Cut out the extra parts that are not needed, chisel away the roughness, don't add to your creation. Leave out pain and suffering. Whatever remains when you are through, is the new you. Then one day you will be Master of your own life; "Poverty and prisons can bind you not, you cannot be free by means of lot. By thoughts of bondage, yourself you bind, of course you are free when free from the mind."

"You are your Master and servant of course,
You are your bondage and freedom's source.
The change of fate thus lies in you,
You can make it the highest and the lowest too."

S E E K E R

Do you believe that man has "free will" to do with his life as he pleases?

S W A M I

Life is a flame. Let it burn to give heat and light, not to be consumed and destroyed. Life is Yours! Make it or mar it. I extoll you to let wisdom be the heat and love its light. Wisdom and love combined in human life make life a success, and true success means happiness. Here is my formula for success : *S* is spirituality, *U* is utility, *C* is courage, *C* is character, *E* is evenness of mind, *S* is service and if you have all these six ingredients, then the last *S* will be smile. Your life will be full of smiles and not spent in tears. That man is the first great criminal who becomes sorrowful in this life, and he lives a lifelong sentence of pain and hard labour in a prison of his own making. Realize "Reality" and you have achieved happiness. This is your first and foremost duty—to be happy. Happiness brings contentment, contentment brings purity, purity brings sincerity, sincerity brings the eternal "Truth" to your realization.

S E E K E R

How can we avoid the confusion of false happiness, of pleasure or pre-occupation to realize the truth of happiness?

S W A M I

Some people try to be busy to be happy. I know of one man who has four telephone lines into his home so that he can keep busy with all of his calls. He even has one line into his bathroom! With some of the news he gets over his telephone these "Summit" days he sometimes forgets his purpose for being in the bathroom. It happens! Reality, even at this level is lost—we forget our basic purposes. Nor do I denounce money or riches, materialism or the finer emotions between the sexes, but only point out that they alone are not the basis for happiness. Look about, how the rich lose their mental balance or equilibrium when their money is endangered. Yet they neglect their only Riches, the Spiritual values. A proper concept of both are necessary for a balanced basis for life.

S E E K E R

Many people blame money for the degradation of man. Is this so? Does money contaminate us?

S W A M I

We cannot blame money and materialism for our misery. They are nothing in themselves. The blame is on *You*, if you lack proper understanding and your behaviour has lead to pain, worry and trouble. You fill your homes with beautiful furniture and decorations for your comfort but if you enter your house in darkness, without lights or a torch in your hand, then you may expect blows and bruises from the same furniture intended for your comfort. The sofa, intended for comfort for your legs, will break your knees. The lamp intended to save your eyes will break your head. Why? Because you went into the house in darkness, without light. The same principle applies to the things of this world. The world was not created for your misery and unhappiness or sorrow. The world is for your happiness, only learn to take along the light of "discrimination into the

darkness of ignorance.” Realize the world does not need to be changed; mankind does not need a change; religion does not need to be changed. You need to change. Your angle of approach—your viewpoint—needs the change. When people cry, “The world has gone mad—the world has gone materialistic,” they are wrong. Individual man has gone wrong, not the world. World is the same world it has always been. The ego “I” is in need of change to the Supreme “I”, and the power distorted and misused by the ego “I” channelled into better things. Yoga does this for the individual who is ready for its message. Yoga deals with the essence of life. Man cannot survive without Yoga. Yoga is balance—Yoga is Re-union with life.

S E E K E R

What of scientific inventions and modern equipment? What part do they play?

S W A M I

Electricity gives you comfort and happiness through heat and power to run modern gadgets or equipment, yet it can kill you if improperly used. One cannot say the electricity is bad, because when misused it is dangerous. Atomic energy can turn a desert into a green heaven and barren lands into productive acres, yet we are all too consciously aware of what horrible destruction can be caused by the “A” bomb. It is not one kind of energy which creates and another which destroys, but the use or abuse of the thing. The abuse is bad, not the objects or the things. Develop material things; but only as you develop spiritual values, then Reality is established.

S E E K E R

Can we hope that this will come about in time to avoid the currently feared conflagration?

S W A M I

Man must achieve balance. He faces a critical period today. Scientific inventiveness has given man luxuries and comforts but has also given him means of “mass annihilation” and man stands at the gate of destruction and misery, the Gates of

Sorrow. A man in poverty is forgivable if he cries in pain and want, but a man who has all the physical, material things and is still miserable, is only to be pitied. Something obviously is wrong somewhere. This wrong must be un-done. Sometimes you find that you have to un-do wrongs to find happiness and to bring man back to Reality, he must un-do his wrongs. Sometimes this un-doing is more an un-covering, just as a chocolate bar is covered by a wrapper and an outer cover and you cannot enjoy its sweetness until the wrapper and covering are torn away, so also with human life. Don't get lost, confused or overjoyed with the wrappings. Remove these layers and find the real essence of life—the happiness of truth in the "I" Consciousness. You are not far from the realization of this happiness—you are not far from your goal. Turn back the wrapper and reveal your sweetness.

S E E K E R

It seems incredible that man is unhappy in the midst of happiness. Is there another parallel to this that will aid our understanding?

S W A M I

Do you know that even fish can die of thirst while living in ponds, lakes, streams, rivers or the ocean itself? It can and it does die for the want of water. The fish's organism is such that it must assume a particular balance for water to flow into its stomach, otherwise the water is taken into the mouth and flows over the gills to extract oxygen alone. If the fish loses this particular balance, it cannot "turn back" to get water it needs and it dies of thirst, even while surrounded by water. In the same way man is dying for lack of happiness while in the ocean of happiness itself. He has lost the necessary balance to allow him to quench his thirst on the "Waters of Life." The saints today are calling to man, "Oh, ignorant, unfortunate man, turn back to happiness, drink and live, come out of your death-dealing ways. Realize your freedom today—begin today—do little by little so one day you can cry out, "Oh, Life, I am the Immortal Self, the Divine Self—I am Happiness, I am Existence, Knowledge, Bliss Absolute."

5.

Man—His Existence
and Purpose

SEEKER OF TRUTH

What is the purpose of man's existence ?

SWAMI PREMANANDA

To describe man in light of his short life span and in a few words is most difficult, if not foolish. This question has been with the mind of man down through the ages and from the dawn of consciousness man has been trying to fathom his existence and purpose. He is still trying today viewing the question from the standpoint of evolution, scientific knowledge, psychology, and intuitional reasoning. All are trying to answer the question "What is Man?" Man is a composite form, a combination of many things and many values making up a total man—man as an animal; man as an evolved human being, conscious and aware, aware or conscious of the thought, wisdom and in some cases, Reality. The Real Man can only be reached by deep introspection, positive intuition. But to explain : *The Evolved Man* : There are so many theories to explain evolution from the inanimate to the animate. So much confusion and conflict in all these theories. Darwinism, Science and Religion—all have their theories. All trying to understand how beauty and creativeness have come out of lower forms of life. Man with his many natures, from the devilish to the Divine. The devilish pushing the helpless and the hopeless, from one place to another, by hatred and aggression. But is man just this physical, mortal thing, I ask? And the answer comes back "No". The mortal, physical man is ever changing, decaying and dying. Try as he may to maintain his body, to keep it away from disease and decay he discovers, often all too

late, that life is momentary, life is fleeting, whether he is in the great buildings of America or a hovel in India; whether rich or poor, king or beggar, intellectual saint or dullard, whether a master or a slave. Man is perishable ! Man is mortal and death is the ultimate for his physical body. It is inevitable. *The Mental Man* : Man is a bundle of thoughts only. Every moment you are thinking whether you are aware of it or not. Man and his habits are the result of repetitious thoughts that become in time, repetitious actions. What you have been thinking in your yesterdays is here with you today, and what you are thinking today is preparing your tomorrow. Each thought brings an action, openly or undisclosed, each action brings a habit, each habit moulds a characteristic and each characteristic creates your life. This whole world is a creation of your thinking process, so just as you think, so you become. If you think of man as only animal, you become animal; if you think of man as only thought, then you take yourself only on to one of the mental planes and, that is only a transitory state itself. Each mentality is different; each one thinks differently and in diverse ways. To one, a thing brings happiness; to another, the same thing brings pain. What may be happiness today can also be unhappiness tomorrow. If by nature you are selfish and your motives are filled with desire then you can expect that the things which bring you pleasure one day, will bring you pain the next. If mind is ever changing, then where is the goal? What is good for the child is not good for the youth; what is good for the youth may not be good in old age. As physical man is mortal, so mental man is always changing, and change is not the supreme goal. There is a *Real Man* though, beyond the animal, the evolved man and the mind—The Changeless One, mind, emotions and body change but it is the Changeless One. The proper co-ordination between the best in all the other States is needed to reveal the Perfect Man. Of course, the individual must make the decision as to what ideal he is going to achieve in this existence. If he thinks low, his existence will have lower actions. If he thinks high, his existence will achieve higher values in life. If he co-ordinates different values in his existence, he will get united with the *Real Man*. School yourself in truth and realize the Divinity and Immor-

ality of your existence. Although you come into a world of slavery, do not let it bind you—see that you leave in Freedom, filled with love and happiness, a Cosmic Being merging into the Great Ocean of Immortality. This is his one and only purpose.

S E E K E R

How can we avoid the error of dual thinking? How does one find the key to seeing the Self in all things, and all things in the Self?

S W A M I

Once a great master asked his disciple, “Who are you ?” The disciple replied, “When I am in body consciousness, I am your humble slave. When I am in self consciousness, I am part of the All, but when I am in real consciousness, I am your Self, Sir.” The latter is the Reality, when there is no distinction—no duality left. There is no duality in the Divine. God is one ! Even when death comes, it is not feared as it is seen as the Self and is welcomed. There is no mundane confusion between life and death. Death will only mean the decomposition of certain elements because you have realized the real nature of the Self. Even while still in life, the outer man lives in society, but the inner man dwells in Supreme Consciousness. Balance must be maintained between the two for harmonious living.

S E E K E R

Perhaps we talk too much about life instead of living it ?

S W A M I

Surely we do! Let me tell you a story to illustrate this very point. Two friends went to visit a mango grove. One was a theoretical type, while the other was a practical man. They were granted an hour repast in the garden. The theoretical man set about to find the gardener and wanted to know such things as the size of the grove, the number of trees, the age of trees, the size of the seed, how long till the young tree bears average harvest, market prices, scale of wages to workers, rate of interest on borrowed funds for capital, and so on. Suddenly

the hour was up and he was asked to leave. As the two friends left, one asked the other if he had enjoyed the delicious, succulent fruit. The theoretically-minded man admitted he had not even seen the mangoes, let alone enjoying them, as he had been busy gathering information from the gardener. So like this, man can miss the enjoyment and happiness of life's fruits while wasting his time and energy on "who? what? when? where? why and how?" Find the practical aspect of life where religious theologies and philosophical theories can be enjoyed in practice. Life is neither a theology nor a theory but is a practice leading to happiness. There must be more emphasis on the practical and less on the theories. Religious teachings, literature and education must teach the art of practical living instead of engaging in the propagation of theory. Analyse, inspect, introspect and be taken along the path to Reality, to the goal of Infinite Silence, and indescribable state of Consciousness, which needs no explanation, theories or reason. The animal lives by instinct; man lives by reason; the Yogi lives by Realization. You may choose your own level. Be an animal, even an educated animal if you wish. Be a man, a reasoning man if you wish, reasoning your way to the goal or along the path, or if you so desire, you can be a Yogi—the realized one. Realizing your true nature, the Supreme Self. Be aware of your Divinity!

6.

Practical Vedanta



SEEKER OF TRUTH

What is Vedanta?

SWAMI PREMANANDA

Vedanta is the essence of the Vedas, the end or the close of the Vedas, which are the great treasure of wisdom and knowledge of India. Veda means knowledge and there are four great books or collections representing the epitome of knowledge or wisdom. Vedanta teaches that man must rise towards an ideal, to find a purpose for his life. Ordinary man when he thinks of an ideal immediately assumes this ideal to be of an individual nature. How often we hear : "My ideal is to become an engineer, a great poet, etc," but this is not the Vedantic ideal. The Vedantic ideal is of a universal nature and is common to every person and to every age group. One could call the ideal a Universal Instinct. If you believe in God, call it the "Divine Ideal" which is found by Divine Instinct. The atheist could call this "Natural Instinct" but the name does not alter the common universal desires that are manifest in its pursuit. Firstly : *The Desire to Live*. I would say this is the strongest desire in a man. Everyone, from child to an old man says, "I want to live", in sickness or in health, trouble or happiness, man says, "I want to live." No one wants to die. Even when there is great suffering, no one wants to die. The love of life is strong in man and in other creatures as well, although they cannot express it in words and ideas as man can who has built his religions and philosophies on his desire to perpetuate life, here and hereafter. Secondly : *Man wants to be Happy*. This is his next great desire and second only to his desire

for life. The moment there is any unpleasantness in our lives or sometimes we may observe this in our close relations or friends, there is an underlying reason that our desire for happiness is not fulfilled. When the desire for happiness is not fulfilled, then son leaves father, husband divorces wife, partners separate. Whenever relationships are broken or severed it is because our need for happiness was not satisfied in that association. To try and find happiness we engage in all kinds of pursuits and pleasures. We go to the theatre, the dances, read philosophy, take up the practice of Yoga, go to the feet of saints or throw ourselves on the mercy of God by immersing ourselves in religion. Whether we get that happiness or not is a different question, but our motive is that we want happiness; of this there is no question. We want to remove our unhappiness, sometimes even to escape it, but all to come to peace of mind. Thirdly: *To be Free*. Everyone wants to be free, to be able to move about, to think, to live without encumbrances or restrictions. Even the little child wants to be free and exercises its independence at a very early age. Freedom is very much desired by all men of the world today and this desire is a wonderful thing. The desire for freedom is what is important, whether we get it or not is another thing because, true freedom is a rare thing. Most of us feel we have freedom today but are "slaves" to something. Our freedom may not be freedom at all. Fourthly: *The Desire for Knowledge*. Even the little child has a desire for knowledge. See how it inspects and questions. Take a child to the market and see how quickly he will educate himself by his observation and enquiry. The youth wants to have knowledge. The adult still enquires. Man wants to know. Fifthly : *The Desire for Self-Respect*. Everyone has the desire to be respected, to be honoured. Look to what extent man has gone to seek honour and fame, respect and reverence. But he doesn't realize the secret of real self-respect. If you renounce hundreds, you get thousands, if you renounce thousands, you get millions, if you renounce the millions, you get the kingship. Renounce the kingship and you receive mystic powers and when you renounce mystic powers, you get world respect and honour, and if you renounce the respect and honour of the world, then

you may gain the respect and honour of the Lord Himself. But my point was to show that no one wants to be disrespected or dishonoured. These five things represent the five great desires of man, although he has others which come and go and are of a temporary nature. The baby has no desire for money, the old man no desire for child's play or toys, the young woman has no desire to dye her hair because there is no need at the time, but the five desires remain constant throughout life. They predominate in every person; in the child, in youth and old age. Why are these desires so important to human life? (1) *Why Does Man Want To Live?* There is a natural instinct that we desire in every form of creation to move toward its source. The stream rushes into the river and the river flows into the ocean which was the source of the water which rained down miles away to be collected by the stream. Everything wants to return to its source, from whence it came. Man instinctively wants to live because Immortality is his source. Even the suicide who takes his own life doesn't want to do so, but feels he is compelled to, to find the solution to his problems. Death is not the real nature of human life and man knows it but he must seek the Reality through realization to receive the answer to 'What is Life ?' Man feels his Immortality but has not yet realized it. (2) *Why Does Man Want to be Happy?* Because His real nature is Happiness—Bliss Absolute. Life in the Ocean of Happiness is man's real existence. He instinctively knows that misery and unhappiness are not meant for him but lacking the realization of his true nature, he seeks his happiness in passionate and pleasureable pursuits and only adds to his misery. Man must dive deep into life to find the Ocean of Bliss. The shallow man only makes more unhappiness which is the creation of his weakness. (3) *Why Does Man Want Freedom?* Because freedom is already inherent in man. Man feels that nothing can bind or hold him. Tyranny and oppression are only a passing phase and freedom will come. Yet, without realization man only binds himself tighter and tighter. He frees himself from one cage only to find he has been building a bigger and stronger one to hold, and usually unaware that he has built or created his new state of slavery with his weakness of

mind and by his mental creation. When man realizes that it is the Self which is eternally free, and he seeks the Self for his freedom, then truly he will be free. Then he can say, "I am the slave of none, I am free to act." Real freedom comes from sincerity which educes the Divine Reality and the freedom is Eternal Freedom,—*Moksha*. (4) *Why Does Man Desire Knowledge?* Because he feels that "All Knowingness" is buried within him. He feels the potential "God-ness" stirring as knowledge within. The sages, rishis and masters have all taught that knowledge does not come from the lips or from the pages of books or in the study of teachings but comes from within, you must bring it out. "I have not come to teach you something or to bring you a bundle of knowledge from heaven; I've come only to awaken that which is already within you." We are already in the Ocean of Knowledge, it only awaits your awakening. Realization brings "inner knowledge", the universal knowledge. This is not the facts and figures and data of man's puny intelligence but is Divine Knowledge of the universe, and ignorance and foolishness are removed, burned away, when we stand in the light of that knowledge. (5) *Why Does Man Want Honour?* As with the other desires, there is a natural trend toward respect and desire for the innate Divinity within. This is perverted by man into "ego" praise because he lacks the realization of his true nature. With realization he sees that there is no honour greater than oneness with the Divine One. What greater respect can be achieved than oneness with the Pure One? One with the Immortal Self—all other honours and fame are but child's toys and baubles. In realizing the essential Divinity within, we find our source in the Ocean of Purity. These are some of the things that the teachings of Vedanta tell us. Vedanta tells us of our real nature and how we may still live in this world and be happy, to live harmoniously and in peace. Vedanta is the philosophy of true happiness.

S E E K E R

Has the teachings of Vedanta been confined to the priest-craft, the sages and rishis alone?

S W A M I

Indeed no! It has been the property of the busiest of people, the kings and rulers of India, deeply engrossed and immeshed in worldly things. Some of the greatest rulers of India were also great sages, showing that practical Vedanta can be combined very nicely with life in the outer world. These great sage-kings at one time kept these Vedantic teachings alive and preserved the ideal for us as we have it today. They proved to us that things of the Spirit can go hand-in-hand with life on the material plane.

S E E K E R

What is the difference between Vedanta and Yoga?

S W A M I

Vedanta is the ultimate of Hindu philosophy which tells of the goal and ideal of life, which is Truth, while Yoga gives you a method and path to attain that same goal, which is oneness with Truth. Vedanta is the goal. Yoga is the path.

S E E K E R

Do all Yogas lead to the same end?

S W A M I

Yes, but we find that some Yoga practices or studies do not suit one, but suit another. In this way, every type of mind is accommodated. Depending upon your needs the master will recommend which study or practice you require. I always advocate a middle path, a balanced path but keep in mind the individual capacities as well. Your teacher will advise you like a doctor advises what medicine you need to overcome your malady. You, too, can help by knowing your limitations and the path you want to travel during your life.

7.

Eternal Life

SEEKER OF TRUTH

What is your conception of eternal life?

SWAMI PREMANANDA

Well, you see, we do believe that life does continue on the mental plane and is expressed in different bodies till it reaches complete evolution and complete merger into the Infinite Consciousness. What supports it is that supposing a man leaves his body when he hasn't achieved degree of his evolution, so another instrument of his manifestation and evolution must be there to continue that process. I mean we can just not believe that something comes from nothing and goes to nothing without leaving a trace of it. What we feel is that life continues till it completely evolves itself. And in this way when the physical body is decomposed the consciousness along with the mind carries all those impressions that have been created by the reaction of our own actions and another "instrument of expression" composed of all these impressions is to be made ready to continue that process of evolution till it completely achieves that stage. In our conception, what we feel is that supposing I go on doing actions and action brings a reaction and reaction does create a vibration as science has proved, it creates a certain impression on the subconscious mind. So when the physical body is decomposed, the soul goes along with the mental consciousness along with all the impressions that have been created and another instrument of expression is composed. Now what is that we call salvation and achievement of eternal life? We do not believe that the eternal life can be achieved after the death because in our conception even

the desire to achieve the eternal life is there before the body is decomposed then it means there is something still to be evolved because that desire still lingers on. So what we call eternal life is that in the life itself when you have completely realised the death of all the physical conscious, mental conscious and sub-conscious forces and your action has become just as in our language we call it a fried seed. You know when a fried seed or a baked seed is put into the earth or in soil it does not bring any plant, because it is a fried seed. So, when you have completely seen your own death before you die physically, then all your actions after that are not bringing any reaction because that action is not combined with the ego "I"; that I am the doer. So in this way when the physical body is decomposed then there are no more impressions on the mental body. So the mental body is decomposed in the mental plane and the individual consciousness dissolves itself in the absolute consciousness. That is what we feel. And now science also supports that to a little extent by accepting the non-destructive mental forces and non-destructive thought forces, that is, no thought is destroyed and no vibrations are wasted and all those create a certain reaction and that is why in our language they say that eternity is to be achieved right here in life and not after death.

S E E K E R

In that sense, Swami, we can say that heaven is bliss or is it a place of happiness?

S W A M I

In our feelings or in my personal conception and conviction, hell or heaven is a stage of consciousness.

S E E K E R

Well; then, hell and heaven can be in this life?

S W A M I

Right in this life surely.

S E E K E R

The life we are living now is heaven for us if we can be content and happy. With peace of mind we can experience heaven and with a restless mind we feel ourselves in hell.

S W A M I

Not only that. We feel sometimes that when the physical body is decomposed, there is a certain period between this physical life and another physical life so that intermediary period is a period of consciousness where mental body is predominant. You know here you are attached to body—I mean man is being expressed through the physical consciousness, so the physical consciousness is so strong that he goes on suppressing his mental consciousness off and on; but when the physical expression is not there, then the mental consciousness is more clear to the realization of the things which have been done in life.

S E E K E R

You think that you will know anything or you think that you are going to be conscious or aware of everything when you actually leave your body?

S W A M I

Well; you are very much conscious when you are in the transitory stage from one life to another. At that time consciousness is very clear. Take another case...

S E E K E R

You are conscious but there is nothing you can do about it. I mean...

S W A M I

You cannot do anything about it, but you know at that time it is the mental torture or the mental bliss. If you have done fine actions in your life your consciousness is enjoying the bliss of all that you have done; but if you have done many things wrong in your life, you know when you are in a busy world you do not worry what you have done in life

and go on, but when one sits in a prayer or in a church and mental consciousness is awakened at that time the repentance or the torture comes "O! why should I do that"; but the moment when he comes out of the church and the consciousness again is covered by the physical activities and the physical consciousness, he forgets that. But during that transitory period when the physical consciousness is no more there and only mental consciousness is there, it is a terrible mental torture or wonderful mental bliss that we call the stage of heaven or the stage of hell and it is right here in life and is also expressed in mental consciousness.

S E E K E R

I accept that but there seems to be a stopping. How is it that this thing will evolve out and you will no longer be conscious, now I mean I believe, but why I believe, I do not know. May be so I have been taught like this. Really we have been taught to believe that this thing would be eternal that there will be this bliss for ever with the consciousness of good life and God's blessings will not end. Once we have left this life we will either be sorry or in bliss because of our lives for ever.

S W A M I

You see we do not stop at that. In our conception we feel that supposing you have done something wrong it is quite possible you might have done something wrong out of ignorance. It is quite possible that you have not evolved so much that you have done wrong and now if you are to be sorry eternally I mean your gates are closed then. But no philosophy to us says no. If you have done wrong now and you have not been able to prevent yourself from it, I mean of course we have to live in now and we have to take care of today, and supposing you have been led away by certain things and you have not been able to do it, the gate is still not closed for you. Life is eternal and there is still a chance for you to rise again. If a child falls once and we say because he has fallen he has no chance of learning now, then we have closed the gate for him.

S E E K E R

Well, I agree. I see that; but I will need long long time to agree to that.

S W A M I

You see because such impressions are imposed so much on the minds in the western world, that if you have done wrong, you have to be sorry for ever or you have to be forgiven for that. But to me this is not the only way. Supposing I have done wrong, you know no man consciously wants to go wrong way, but in spite of the advice of some, in spite of the teachings of the ministers, a man has gone wrong, then does it mean he has to suffer for ever? No; eternity means that his evolution cannot stop. He has to evolve but what will happen? That with those things his mental suffering will rise so much that the suffering will bring him to the consciousness of the higher life.

S E E K E R

We try to get some people to see, to understand but the thing is that the impressions are made so strong, it becomes difficult to come out of them.

S W A M I

Well you see, I agree to that but still I feel that the doors are never closed for us. Life is eternal and it does not matter, if, I mean not that it does not matter in that sense of the term, but what I mean to say is, supposing one has fallen still the gates are open for him.

S E E K E R

You know that the Catholics have something there, that Protestants don't have because the Catholics believe that you can go to some place not really go, there is some place your soul stays until you have learnt to be better and repented, and still you can go on. I would like to believe that.

S W A M I

So you see in our conception there is a choice. We believe in that, but many things in our own expressions and experiences tell us that there is every reason to believe that life is continued and there are chances of evolution for every one. It depends upon the time how much you take to evolve but still there is a chance. And if we believe in eternity, there can never be an eternal sorrow. Sorrow is not eternal. Eternity means bliss and I do not believe that you can be eternally sad. Sorrow is something like darkness and darkness cannot be eternal darkness. Light must shine forth.

S E E K E R

Well, I have given lot of thought to this life after death. I still don't understand. Probably, I would never understand all I would like to know about it. It means to me at the moment we are born, our soul is set free and that we begin adventure in this life. The minute we die our spirit is set free and we begin another adventure. Just as birth brings the adventure of this life, death sets our consciousness, sets our soul free for the next life. I can learn about this life, but it is all so vague. All that I know that there is something else to know for me and I would like to know about that.

S W A M I

I do agree in certain ways. But if you really go deeper into it and start thinking that why is it all that there is a man, who starts realising the greatness of life at the age of 10 or 12, another at 20 and another does not think about it at all even at 80. When a child is born he is not born with nothing. He has brought something along with him, certain impressions, certain reactions and he starts evolving. We have seen certain children that are so philosophical right from the childhood. They make even the old man thinking over it.

8.

Unity in Diversity

SEEKER OF TRUTH

Does unity exist anywhere?

SWAMI PREMANANDA

Firstly, I would have to consider the term unity before I can give you any clear answer. Everyone is crying for unity but is there unity where man is trying to find it? Look to the physical real; each person has his own physical nature, his body structure, his shape and his emotions, his passions. Brother is different from brother, sister is different from sister and no harmony is found in physical shape or form. Consider the intelligence of man; each one with his own concept of himself, of the intellect. In the field of religion, notice the great number that we have created, each saying, "I have the right one, mine is the best." Each claims by Divine Right to be holding the key to Truth, through their rites and rituals and creeds and dogmas. Even the main religions are split into smaller sects as well because of their diversity. In Philosophy, the various ideas and concepts of man, of himself, of the world, of the universe, of existence, of life, of God, show the diversity everywhere in this field. In the political field, we find various systems and parties, and depending on the country each has many factions and splinter groups, denying the possibility of any unity at this level. At the social level, each society is bound by its own regulations and laws. What may be right in one society is wrong in another and the converse is also true. What is wrong to the Christian may not be to a Hindu. What is right to a Hindu may be wrong for a Moslem and so on. In spite of all these diversities, the masters, down through the ages, have told us of unity, and to

seek the unity. They have called us to this unity to bind us as one, to finish off with the differences between us. Is it practical or is it needed, that there be unity at the material level? The answer can only be : No. Without this diversity there would be no creation, no world, no universe, no existence. Division is the law of creation. There never has been a unity in manifest things, there is none now, nor will there ever be a unity at this level. There will always be diversity. But does diversity mean that we must live in suspicion, conflict and hate and warfare? No, not at all. We realize the diversity and find the unity in diversity. Perhaps you could say we must find the oneness which is in all things. The common factor in jewellery is the metal and precious stones, the common factor in the variety of sweets or candies is the sugar, while the thing which binds a necklace together is the string. Ask anyone, "What are you?" and you will receive diverse answers : "I am an engineer, I am a doctor, I am an American, I am a Conservative. I am a gay person." They are all different but there is one unity. Unity in the "I am". "I am" is the unity in them all. Unity, unity—everyone crying for unity and here it is all the time. Here it is in the "I am", the deeper meaning of life. Reality is with us when we realize the significance of the "I am".

S E E K E R

It is so difficult to see oneness, particularly in someone we dislike. Can you give us help on this point?

S W A M I

To overcome your dislike, you will have to find that common factor which is the purpose of life. Look around you, does not everyone want happiness, love, to live, to have peace, to achieve Realization? Here is unity—here there is no difference of nation or creed or belief. No difference between like and dislike. Man must learn to live like flowers in a big garden, each one different but giving beauty in its own way. In a garden you will see plainly unity in diversity.

S E E K E R

One man wants to get to heaven, another annihilation in his Lord, still another Paradise. Is this not diversion?

S W A M I

Truly there is no division in the goal, only the difference is in the names man attaches to the goal and the things which he expects to find at the goal. Let me illustrate in a story for you what I mean. A master gave some money to three servants and ordered them to purchase some food. One man said, "Let us purchase a watermelon", the second didn't understand English as he was Persian and said, "Let us buy a *Tarboose*", the third, an Indian, couldn't understand the other two, and said, "No, no, let us buy a *Hindwana*." A stranger nearby knew they were all talking about the same thing, only using words, so offered to settle the argument for them by making the purchase. Each was so delighted to find that the stranger had purchased what they had desired but were ashamed when they found it was exactly the same thing. The truth is one; man expresses it in various ways. There is no diversity in the goal.

S E E K E R

Can you help us to understand the oneness of humanity and of life?

S W A M I

We are one. Can you separate the drops from the ocean. Perhaps for a time but the drop will find its way back to the ocean, because the ocean is also in the drop. The drop is an ocean in itself. A miniature ocean in every drop, a miniature universe in every atom, a miniature God in every man. They all will be one, because they are one in reality. Realize this?

S E E K E R

What is love?

S W A M I

Mostly everyone thinks that love is falling in love with someone. Love that is for this one 'one day' and for another the next day. Love which makes marriage today

and divorces tomorrow. This is not love. I call it romance. Cinema and theatre romance. Love is a beautiful thing. It knows no barriers, knows no bounds, of country, race, creed or caste. Love is oneness. Love knows no possessiveness, no selfishness, no expectation. Love is giving and giving alone. Love is reality. Love will bring the kingdom of heaven here on earth, and bring it here and now.

S E E K E R

The materialist doesn't believe in a state of heaven anywhere. What about him?

S W A M I

It's only a matter of view point. When the great master Swami Rama Tirtha visited America at the close of the last century, one day he noticed a sign chalked on a board outside of a building. It read : "God is nowhere." Rama looked at it for a moment and then altered the last word so it read : "God is now here." It only required a little spacing and really no changing at all. To Ram Tirtha, God was not somewhere, nor was He nowhere, but God was present with him at all time. Just because the materialist doesn't believe in some thing, he doesn't say it may not exist. He just says he doesn't believe in it. A few years back people didn't believe in space travel and nuclear things but we have them now.

S E E K E R

How can we believe in God when we cannot see him?

S W A M I

Be sure that if you could see Him with your senses then He would not be real. Chalk looks like candy, but is not; things appear to be one thing, but often are another. That is why the masters have all said that God must be realized to be understood, so that there was no error of the senses. God cannot be comprehended as some part of creation; He is the creator God is not some thing, He is the all. God is neither Mister or Misses or Miss, but God is a mystery. He can be

realised and He can be loved. Great rishis and the saints have given us the method to realize and see God, but he is not seen by the human senses. First : *Listen* to ideas about God and His creation. Secondly : *Understand* what you have listened to or heard. Thirdly : *Perceive* or gain a concept from what you understand. Fourthly : *Realize* the nature of what you have perceived. Fifthly : *Know* the reality. Listen, understand, perceive, realize then know. This you must do if you wish to see God.

S E E K E R

Is the purpose of Yoga to achieve heaven or reach God?

S W A M I

The aim of Yoga is not to reach heaven, but to bring the state of heaven down here to earth, where man may live as he was intended to live, in peace and happiness. The aim of Yoga is not to reach God but to realize and reveal God through the individual life while in the midst of life. Be godlike in every thought, word, deed or action.

S E E K E R

What is Karma?

S W A M I

Simply, Karma is action. Karma has two main actions or principles which are at work in life. Karma is not predestination but is free choice as well. You can choose your actions or your way; you can choose your state or path. First : you reap as you sow. A farmer knows this law. If you sow something, it will grow; sow rice, you get rice; sow barley you get barley. Whatever you sow you must reap. If you do some action, then it must have its reaction. Secondly: A seed sown is returned in multifold form. You do not get one grain of rice back for one grain planted, you get a multitude. If you plant a mango stone, you do not get one mango fruit in return, but a multitude of mangoes. Remember, you reap as you sow, but keep in mind that harvest is a multitude.

9.

Signs of the Times

SEEKER OF TRUTH

Will you define modern civilization as you see it?

SWAMI PREMANANDA

A definition of modern civilization is, "not to be, but to seem." We are unconcerned with the real issues like the development of the self and are enmeshed in creating a wonderful impression to influence others. Civilized man lives in fears that his ancestors never dreamed of—fear of total annihilation along with all the old taboos and fears in modern garb or dressings. Man says he fears God, fears God's wrath. Yet he also says, "God is all-loving, all-embracing, all-forgiving." Modern man cannot comprehend this "all-merciful God" as he has lost the quality of mercy, he cannot conceive a God of Love because he has lost the true concept of love. He has created crude substitutes that have led him away from reality. In his frailness he can no longer surrender his real nature to God. He doesn't even know his reality any longer. Fearlessness is the first prerequisite for the spiritual aspirant. God is not to be feared. He is to be loved, to be realized, to be merged with. But what a coward we find of modern man; he is afraid also of his fellow men, someone just the same as he is. Perhaps that's what he fears the most, his own nature in others. The true man, loving God, is afraid of no man. Afraid of death? We find it at every hand. Civilized man has made a greater mystery of death than any other generation preceding him. He has only made it cheaper; now you can die wholesale. Be sure there is no death in life. It is in fact the decomposition of certain elements that man calls death and the recomposition of the same

elements is life and the elements are never lost, they only change. There should be no fear of death. Of what then is the modern civilized man afraid, you ask? He is afraid of himself, of his own thoughts and actions. He must have people about at all times, be constantly barraged by sound and sensuous things; he must be constantly on the move and occupied. Why? Because he's afraid to face the Self, to let go of his wrong actions of the past so he cannot find peace and rest because he is held back and down by the chain of weight of his fears. So he tries to run away from himself. How absurd, as he takes the attitude which creates his fears wherever he goes. Only the mind which is pure can ever be happy; only the mind devoid of frills and modern falseness, of ignorance, even if it has a modern label and of attachment to the unreal, will enjoy rest and peace. Any other mind only destroys rest and peace and cannot fathom it. Realization of the eternal nature is necessary.

S E E K E R

Should we then go back to ancient times and do away with our systems of civilized culture, do away with modern society and the financial system?

S W A M I

Is money the problem? If it is, then happiness should be the property of the poor. But the poor man says, "I am miserable; happiness lies only with the rich." The rich man has added worries trying to preserve, protect and increase his riches. The man and woman without a family say there is no happiness without children, while those with the family say there will be no happiness until the family is grown and dispersed. The rich are as unhappy as the poor, the family is as unhappy as those who have no family; the indulged are as distraught as the unindulged. Unless there is the proper wisdom to keep balance to things you will find this tendency to want to do away with things that "seem to be" the problem but which are not. Don't be an extremist rushing from the

sublime to the ridiculous. Find your balance and then learn to keep it.

S E E K E R

This tendency to the extremes is difficult to control. Can you give us a practical formula for maintaining balance?

S W A M I

When pleasure comes, don't be indulgent and overjoyed, but accept it for what it is, a transitory thing which comes and goes. When pain comes, don't be depressed, it is temporary, it will soon pass. Both pleasure and pain are passing phases and keep your mind concentrated on your real nature. Sometimes you may need full concentration to withstand the onslaught of pleasure or pain but withstand you must or you will find yourself lost in time-consuming and effort-wasting worry over nonsensical or frivolous things. Let me tell you a story to illustrate what I mean: A rich man called his cashier and enquired after his wealth. The cashier informed him that there was sufficient wealth stored away in the treasury for the care of the next ten generations. At this news the rich man fell into despondency to the surprise of the cashier who felt this information should have brought great joy to his employer. He enquired as to the reason for the worry and dejection and the rich man told him, "I am concerned for the welfare of the eleventh generation, oh! how will they pull on?"

S E E K E R

Apportioning one's time and mental effort seems to be the key to the problem then?

S W A M I

Surely so. Most people waste their time in worrying about things that have nothing to do with them. Or, they worry about things which are past, which are no more with us or for the future which is still not sure to come unless we do something about it today. That something is not to go all to pieces through fretting and worry. In worry we waste our energy as well as our

time. Be sure, worry for tomorrow will not take away the sorrow of tomorrow. Only right action brings right reaction. Worry for tomorrow will rob you of your energy today. Not only your energy will be lost, but your happiness as well. Learn to take things as they come, day by day, and if the flow of circumstances puts you into the environment or company of undesirable people or those not favourable to your mind, do not fret. Accept them as part of the lesson you are to learn to Divinity. All the great masters have told us of the unfavourable conditions they had to overcome, and that it was these things that made them the saints they became and carried them higher and higher in spiritual evolution. The more unfavourable the circumstances, the higher the mind can rise. When high winds are present in your life, soar higher and higher upon them. Be sure, they are not part of your reality; they are part of the passing phases of your life.

S E E K E R

We actually invite trouble into our lives and then complain about it then?

S W A M I

A saint and his disciple were walking through the market-place. Some of the people were praising the swami while others abused him as a pretender and a cheat. He was the same to all accepting neither praise nor blame. The disciple was taken aback by this and said, "Master, why do you just smile when they praise or abuse you; why do you just bow your head and go your way?" The master asked the disciple to look about the market-place and to note all the shops and that each had a variety of goods and wares. He likened the individual life to a shop with a store of goods for sale, some with praise and others with abuse. Because one looked in the market one did not buy all the goods. In the same way when people praise or abuse you from their store of mind, it only becomes yours if you purchase it; if you accept it. Don't be the customer! In that way the stock stays with the shopkeeper. Each individual is a shopkeeper with a stock of goods in his showroom. Some

have the stock of purity and love, others have the beauties of the mind, like sweetness but most have an abundance of misery. Whatever you like, purchase it. Those things you don't like you needn't purchase, leave it in the others' showroom, on his inventory. When someone abuses, don't be the customer, then there is no trouble and pain for you. Try to be selective in your purchases in this world. Then your stock will only be beauty, full of purity and love and reality.

S E E K E R

What of non-violence?

S W A M I

The life which is full of beauty, love and purity is the non-violent life. Where these things are, no darkness can enter, the light of reality reduces darkness to non-reality. Where love is present no hatred can enter, where happiness of purity is present, misery and worry cannot come. The mind filled with darkness and ignorance thinks that it is courageous to smash, to strike, to maim and kill. Is this courage? What greater cowardice can there be than the loss of the temper, the loss of self-control, the balance of mind? Become the master of your life. So much so, that if the whole world were to go against you, you can still embrace them with open arms to be able to love everyone. For this, the ego "I" must go, and as it is removed, the Supreme "I" will take its place, strengthening you, fortifying you, supporting you. It doesn't matter in whom you believe; in Christ, Krishna or Buddha, Nature or Life, you will gain self-control. Ask daily for help from within. "Oh Lord, yesterday is gone, to morrow is not sure to come. Let today be Yours, let each and every action be a flower at Thy lotus feet."

S E E K E R

Is it not selfish to want to be part of the One?

S W A M I

When greedy, we want to possess the object of our affections. In the act of submission we find we are possessed by the object

of our affection. This is the difference. In love, the beloved surrenders everything to the Lord and in that act of surrenderance the beloved finds that he and the Lord have become one. This is the ideal, the unity I call the Re-Union or Yoga. The lover gives only the best to the beloved, no cheap substitutes. The lover knows he must approach the beloved, he must go up to it. So also you must rise to your ideal, don't try and bring it down to your level. You will lose it or make it shabby. The great masters lived for the ideal and some died for it, but the ideal never came down nor did they lower it. This is reality. The world cannot be torn away from you, you must release it, give it up. There is no trouble when a boat is in the water, only when the water gets into the boat there is the danger. Don't let the water of desire, of the slavery to ignorance come into your boat, your ship of life.

10.

Advice to Students
of Yoga

SEEKER OF TRUTH

Swami, would you be kind enough to give us a few more hints as an important advice for the students of Yoga?

SWAMI PREMANANDA

I have tried to explore so many ideas for you to help you find some harmony to give you a smile, the symbol of inner realization and happiness. To show you that often what we think to be problems are not really problems at all, while at other times we unnecessarily create our own misery and pain and sorrow. Still I want to give you some thing you can do to establish the practical Yoga, what I call the "Cash Payment Yoga" in your life. I call it "Cash Payment" because you get the benefit now, not sometime in the future, not in some other state, but right here and now. I'll tell you a story so you will get the moral of being removed from the action, or abuse of others. When someone berates you or accuses you, just remember this story. Early one morning while visiting a city I was sitting for meditation when the telephone rang. As soon as I picked up the receiver a person on the other end began to abuse me before I was even able to say hello. On and on he went with the most abusive and terrible language, calling me all sorts of names and accusing me of cheating the stock market of all manner of things. For many minutes this continued till finally the man said, "well, haven't you anything to say; aren't you going to defend yourself, "why don't you say something." I did. Smilingly and lovingly I said, "sorry, wrong number" and hung up the receiver. Poor man, I felt sorry for him, now he would have to go through it all over again when

he found the right number, but it had no effect on me. Why? I was not the person. In the same way when someone abuses you, just let them rave and rant and say quietly within, "sorry, wrong number." Then it can't hurt you, then it can't have any effect on you. No one really knows the true you. Only you yourself can know that. Know in your heart when you are abused, accused or even praised that you are really not that person. In Tokyo, a lady heard me tell this story and when she went home her husband was angry with her and began to abuse her and carry on at great lengths and she just took it all quietly and when he had finished, said pleasantly, "sorry, wrong number." He wanted to know what all this "sorry, wrong number" stuff was about. So she told him the story from my lecture and next day he was in my audience and afterwards came to me and said, "Swami, for 20 years I've been abusing my wife and only yesterday I found out I was the 'wrong number', not she." Learn to concentrate. Discipline the mind, control the emotions, realize the Self. Do a little every day to raise your mind and life.

S E E K E R

Sometimes by this awakening of the consciousness, we start condemning ourselves and feel that there is no hope for us. Is it a right attitude!

S W A M I

No. Definitely not. Even if you have been the worst sinner, do not fret at all, but know that all your pain is making you grow, pain is the law of evolution. The development of an ordinary man is the great thing in life. No one comes fully developed ready for realization. Here is a strange but wonderful thing. In physical life the stage of the child is pleasant and happy and the old age filled with pain and misery. In the spiritual life it is the baby stage which is filled with the pain. That's why I call sinners, "my Divine Babies", because I realize this. My God is not first for saints, in the temple or the churches; He is everywhere for everyone. Find your Reality and do it for yourself. No one can do it for you. You wouldn't have someone eat your

food for you or be married by proxy, would you? Then enjoy your experience with the Divine. Religion is an individual experience with the Divine. Prayer is one of the most important aspects of the spiritual life, but be sure you know your real nature when you pray. Remove your ignorance and your doubts when you pray. Prayer should make you one with the Lord. Prayer lifts you from your painful negative thoughts, releases you from your ignorance and superstition. Pray daily, live in high thoughts, do all your duties with a calm and quiet mind with the conception of Reality ever before you and you will find happiness ever with you. Prayer is just not asking for things or telling the Lord what He must do for you. No, Prayer is oneness which leads you away from worldly folly which can only cause pain. Do not play with the negative things or you soon will find yourself trapped by them. Discard worry, discard sorrow, don't entertain them. If you do not you will find that when pain comes you will get depressed, pleasure comes you get pride, passion comes you get slavery, then the more you are enslaved the more you become a slave of yourself and you grow weaker and weaker while your slavery grows stronger. Depend upon yourself. Be sure that the power is within you to cast off your slavery to become your own master. The whole universe is within you as you are in the universe. Begin to listen to that voice within, obey that voice within and free yourself. When oneness with the Lord is realized, this is meditation. In the heart of the Lord is real meditation. When you have realized the Lord you will have a madness for the Lord. If mankind must go mad for things, some mad for money, others for power and pleasure, then the real disciple must be mad after God. Not the madness that leads downward to the mental destitution but upward to oneness with the Lord. Feel His presence through self-analysis, inner introspection and peace. To find *It* is in your hands, you have been shown the way. To receive *It* or reject. *It* is also your choice. Choose the upper path that will take you to Realization and Truth. Keep a spiritual diary so that you will be able to analyse your progress on the path. This diary is a type of self-analysis and you will know those qualities that need weeding out and those

that need to be magnified. Keep it to yourself if you wish and do not justify your faults and gloss over your shortcomings. Do not be afraid to judge yourself. Improve yourself every day, live every day as though it is your last day on earth, for tomorrow is not at all sure.

II.

Poems

I SING AND DANCE

I sing and dance with ecstatic delight,
 I have seen Thy face and Thy Light.
 Oh bring me the cup of wine divine,
 In His name, shall I drink and dine.
 My heart is full of joy and gladness,
 My face is full of hope and brightness.
 There is not a trace or tinge of sadness,
 I am in a state of divine madness.
 Divine has lured me to His side,
 I am awake, there is nothing to hide.
 He is with me, He is around me daily
 I talk to Him, walk with Him so freely.
 He is my life's light and lodestar,
 He is the peg, pillion and pillar.
 He is the lighted lotus in the lake,
 He keeps me quite wide awake.
 I sing and dance with merriment,
 Is not Divine's love the highest sacrament ?
 I sing and dance with joy and laughter,
 As I go round and round, faster and faster.

LOVE'S LIGHT

I see love's light shining in the sky
I feel so happy as thoughts soar high
And the soul is ravished; it wants to fly
Oh let us think of love and its divinity ply.

Love's light is streaming in the heart so fair
It brings us cheer and makes us free of care
It is love's radiant light that is all around
From glen to hill, from valley to mound.

Fill your heart with abundance of love's light
Ponder on love's glory, its beauty and its might,
It will take you onward to the greatest height
To your utter amazement and delight.

UNION WITH LOVE

Look at the maddening river rushing
From the mountain top into deep ocean dashing
It has travelled miles and miles without wavering
To reach its destined goal without quivering
Look at the sun throwing its million rays
Upon all creatures alike always
It gives warmth and light, as it stays
In the firmament, through all the days.
Like the river meeting the ocean in its embrace
Like the ray of sun piercing every face
May we be united with Love with its Grace
Union with Love is the goal of life's race
As the lover seeks his beloved anxiously
As the mother kisses her child endearingly
Let us love Love and follow its Light obediently
It is the Sun of our heart; serve it silently.

F A I T H I N L O V E

Doubts, despair, delusion, distress, depression
Have flown away like hurricane, without mention
Not the least shred or tinge of the demon of despair
Is left in me. It is all so very bright and fair
Doubt has flown giving place to faith abiding
It is the hand of Love that is all the time guiding
Faith in Love is the eternal feast of joyousness
Oh, come and share it with heart's fullness
I would give away all in all but not change
My faith in Love for any earthly exchange
I shall fulfil Love's wishes in my humble way
And shall sing Its praises, smiling night and day.

H I S T H O U G H T S

There is Lord in pain and suffering;
There is Lord in music and dancing.
Walking, singing, thinking ——
Let the Name of the Lord be ever ringing
Drinking, eating, reading, sleeping——
Let His Name be ever deepening.
Oh the very Name of the Lord is sweet——
Sweeter than the candy that you eat.
Forget Him not, but ever meet
Him in every lane and street,
He is here, there, every where on earth and sky—
Think of Him and ever soar high
Like the birds that sing and fly
Keep up your spirit never let it die.

TRUTH IS ONE
EXPRESSIONS DIFFER
GOAL IS ONE
PATHS DIFFER

Oh ! call me not the worshipper of the sun and fire.
I worship Truth and Truth alone, in every attire.

Divine in my heart is the holiest saphire
To find Whom I daily aspire.

To unfold the Self whom we love and adore
It is the teaching of every religion, yore.

Not rites and rituals and doctrines sore
Will open the kingdom of heaven's lore.

Seek the Self within by a life of righteousness.
Divine is Truth, seek Him by the path of truthfulness.

Lead the life of soul's fullness
And you will see Divine in full consciousness

All religions are gateway to Truth, alike
There should be no question of like or dislike.

Oh, gridle your mind and make it a spiritual dyke
Against forces of evil, all religions are alike.

O L O V E !

O Love! O love! O love!
Above time space and causality
Thee I will always love
O truth the one reality
O love—O love—O love.
Myself in which I live
In thee I live and move
And to thee myself I give
O love—O love—O love.
To thee belongs my whole life
Thee I will ever serve
In the midst of honour or strife
O love—O love—O love.
Thy will is wholly mine
Just bid me whatever thou wilt
My will is a reflection of thine
O love—O love—O love.

THE LORD I KNOW

The Lord I know is Lord close by
Not seated on throne in far off sky
But here on this earth, reflected in trees
In mountains, in flowers, in sweet summer breeze
In ocean's grandeur, in plain's delight
In moontide glare, and in stilly night
In children's prattle, in maid's prime
Since the births of worlds until end of time
In modesty of women, in smile so loving
In heart of the generous, ever-ready for giving
For the Lord I know with a thought that is free
Is the Lord of Love, found in you and me.

“I AND MY FATHER ARE ONE”

Oh listen to the inner voice without fear
It will save you from many a tear
It will inspire you and put you in right gear
It is your own Lord's voice, so very dear
“I and my Father are one,” such was Christ's message
It is the message and teaching of every age
‘I am that’, ‘You are that’, says the Indian sage
Heaven is ‘here and now’ come out of selfish cage
Truth is love, truth is righteousness
Truth is friendship, truth is co-opreativeness
Truth is beauty, truth is forgiveness
It is the chieftain of single mindedness
Life is Spirit, life is one, life is joy
Live in love, life is love not a toy
Salute the love with rapturous joy
Brimful cups of Bliss, you will enjoy.

LOVE SHOCK

I dance with delight, my heart is wrapt with joy,
I live in Love and Love alone, no tinsel no toy
There is joy in my heart, as I walk as I talk
I am in excellent condition due to the Love Shock
Joy gushes from my heart, like a divine river
Love has taken the wheel, It is my Life's Giver
My eyes shoot flames of Love I look around
And I find I am standing on Love's own ground
I sing and dance and dance and sing with joy divine
Oh, fill the goblet, and let me drink the wine
The wine of Love that teaches love of all mankind
Without any barriers of colour, caste, nation or kind.

THAT STAR IS YOUR LOVE

Oh let me open my heart to Thee, in all its artlessness,
Oh let me think of Thee, in all contentedness.
Thy Light I seek, Thy words of wisdom rare,
Oh let me fill my mind with Divine fare.
I sing of Thy Love and Thy exquisite touch,
Thy glowing Light is flowing in, ever so much.
Thy radiant voice I hear, I see the pattern of Thy garment,
It is such a joyous feast free of earthly torment.
To raise from the mundane to the celestial, is life's goal.
Oh sleep not in unconsciousness, think of the soul.
The body shall perish, but the soul is immortal.
Why think of earthly dross, think of the eternal.
Grow in spirit, with Love as your guide,
Seek It alone, have none by your side.
Drink the cup of Divine wine, joyously merrily,
Follow Love's Light alone, resolutely, unerringly.
From darkness to light, from death to eternity,
This is life's journey, make it a certainty.
Fix your mind on the Star in the firmament
That Star is your Love, follow it without torment.

L E T U S B E

Let us be true but sweet
Let us be courageous, but humble
Let us be determined but mild
Let us be fearless but loving
Let us be receivers but forgiving
Let us be frank but compassionate
Let us be soldiers but of peace.

12.

Parables

THE OWL CONVENTION

Once all the owls of the world met in Aveneg to hold a momentous convention. The purpose of this convention was to decide whether the day existed or not.

After due deliberation, reports and speeches from the leading delegates, all attesting to the fact that they had never seen the day, but had heard of it by hearsay only, they held a vote.

As all owls are nocturnal creatures and cannot see the daylight, they unanimously decided that the day did not exist.

So ignorant man living in his life of darkness, although he may consider himself "as wise as an owl", is in no position to disclaim the light of spiritual life.

REALITY

A man made a large profit from an investment and rushed home to share the news with his wife. The wife demanded a specific share of the fortune so the husband bought her a necklace worth ten thousand dollars.

Being the usual woman she rushed to show it to her landlady and when the landlord arrived home his wife was beside herself with remorse. Why a tenant was able to afford expensive jewels for his wife but her husband never gave her anything. She could not be consoled and said she would surely die if she did not have one just the same.

No amount of assurance of her husband's love could get through to her frenzied mind, nor could reasoning that the

had only the rentals obtained for their livelihood and nothing to spare for jewels.

Driven from his home by the sorrow and unhappiness the landlord sought company with an old friend and unburdened his tale. The friend suggested that he buy some bauble and tell the wife it was worth twelve thousands and she would never know the difference. The landlord did so at once and his complication was solved. The polished thing looked as beautiful as if it were real jewels and temporarily the wife was satisfied.

One day the necklace was stolen by a faithless servant and the wife was nearly out of her mind. When her husband came home, she told him the terrible news but he assured her all would be all right. He would arrange another loan and replace the stolen gems.

Now why is the wife worried and the husband is calm and restful? Because the wife thinks the necklace to be real, while the husband knows the reality of the necklace.

In the same way the man of reality knows values and the reality of the world. He knows these things are baubles and are part of the transitory, changing nature and he is not worried about them, of course he works for them.

ON VALUES

Once there was a monk who came to the palace of a great king and he slept upon the palace steps. The king observed him there and felt pity for him but thought "how much more fortunate am I with my kingly comforts and courtly pleasures."

In the morning he called for the monk and asked him how he had slept. "Oh, very well sir, half like yourself and half better than yours."

The king was perplexed by this and enquired of the monk what he meant.

"Well, Sir, half the night I slept and so did you, and in sleep we are both equal as there is no distinction of rank while

one sleeps. The other half you spent wasting your energies in mundane thoughts and pleasures, while I was serving my Lord and receiving a bountiful supply of energy of His Love and the revelation of the Self.

Sleep is one time when rich and poor are alike, but in the wakeful hours the time and energy spent in mundane things cannot be considered as equal with things of the Spirit.

T H E M I S T A K E

Once there was a woodcutter who became weary of life and the misery he had to bear. One time while carrying a load of wood he collapsed with fatigue and pain and cried out, "O Lord, take away my miserable life."

Whereupon the Angel of Death appeared to do his bidding and the woodman was shocked to find that his plea had been answered so quickly. "Oh, why are you here," he enquired from the man of Death and was told that his plea was to be granted.

The woodcutter protested that a mistake must have been made, he didn't really want to die, he just needed a hand to get the bundle of wood to his home.

Be very sure when you ask for something that that is what you want, because that is what you get.

T H E E Y E - W I T N E S S

A witness was being questioned by a magistrate as to whether his testimony would be "as an eye witness" or would his evidence be hearsay.

The magistrate was assured that the information given would be first hand, that of an eye-witness.

The magistrate enquired if any person was present at the scene of the crime at such-and-such place on so-and-so date and the man testified that as an eye-witness he could swear that no one had been there. Whereupon the magistrate ordered his

arrest as he had convicted himself by his own testimony, that as an eye-witness no one else had been there.

So also we often convict ourselves and declare our own guilt by claiming first-hand information, or being an "eye-witness."

THE TICKET

An ignorant villager was going to travel by train and the ticket-checker thought to have some fun at his expense and asked to see his ticket. The ticket-checker told him that he couldn't travel on this ticket as it was a ladies' ticket.

Confused but not defeated, the villager retired to the wash room and changed into some of his wife's clothing he happened to be carrying from his home to his wife's home.

The ticket-checker took the gate-keeper into his joke and when the villager dressed as a woman presented his ticket he was told that as it was a "male ticket" he could not travel.

The villager was upset and angry and said "Well, if it is a male ticket then surely I can travel on it as I am only dressed up to look like a woman."

You see, a ticket is just a ticket. It is neither male nor female. Just like with Truth it is neither male nor female—just the Truth. The expressions of truth may be different but this is only one Truth, only one Reality.

THE BLIND MAN

A blind man was sitting by the wayside begging for alms and a passerby dropped a fraudulent coin into his dish whereupon the blind man complained of the fraud.

The passerby enquired how he knew it to be a fraud if the man was blind.

"Oh, I am not blind, I am just taking the place of a blind man who sits here every day begging alms, but this is his day

off, and to see that he doesn't miss anything or someone takes his place, I come here and substitute for him."

The whereabouts of the blind man was questioned; whereupon the substitute answered, "as this is his day off, he has gone to see the picture show. He always goes on his day off to cinema."

Sometimes we allow the fraudulent to be perpetrated in our lives because it has become an established custom. It's done, done as we say. Don't excuse such actions or try to justify them, they will only keep you away from your reality.

Because a false precedent has been set, you needn't follow as the "blind following the blind." Sometimes we imitate blindness for our own purpose. We're really not blind at all, we can see the faulty, but we like to play the actor, the substitute for the blind-mind, who himself isn't blind.

THE ARGUMENT

Once the hands and the stomach had an argument. The hands said, "tomorrow we are going on strike and refuse to work."

The stomach wanted to know why this was to be done and was informed by the hands that as they did all the work, that they should enjoy only the food. The stomach did nothing but got all the reward.

Next day the strike started. The hands did not work, supplied no food to the stomach and every part of the body soon suffered and was in pain. In the midst of this disharmony, the Life Force said, "look here all of you, either you get busy with your respective duties or I will leave and then neither of you will exist any longer. Create harmony or you will find you have no value whatever, only when you work together harmoniously does each find its true importance.

In the same way we must stop our foolishness of thinking one is more important than the other or better than the other. Only when we work and live harmoniously together can our true import emerge. Either we do this or the great Life Force will leave us and we will no longer exist.

GOD IN ALL THINGS

A swami was busy making some chappatis, and as each disc was cooked he set it aside so that when it was finished he could spread ghee or butter on them. A dog came along and stole them. When the swami noticed this, he ran after the dog with the ghee shouting. "O, my lord, do not eat the chappatis without being finished with the ghee."

See God in every action and then only happiness is there for you. See God in every form and no trouble or pain can exist for you.

THE MIRROR PALACE

Once a dog wandered into a mirror palace and as its reflection fell into mirror, he saw dogs all around him. He was frightened, so bared his fangs and attacked the snarling dog before him smashing his head on the glass. Scrambling up he attacked the dog which was coming at him from the rear, then the sides and so on until he smashed the life out of his own body. Servants took the carcass away.

The owner came to the palace of mirrors and sat in the swivel chair and enjoyed seeing himself on all sides, above and below. He knew that he was just a mirrored reflection and so enjoyed it.

That man or woman who is like an animal in this world will bruise and beat themselves until they die because they are only attacking themselves. The realized man knows he is only in a palace of mirrors and sees himself manifest everywhere.

When you can see yourself reflected in the mirror of your fellow man, then realization is there.

THE HAND OF THE LORD

Once a swami was walking down a road and was hit by a car and thrown to the side of the road. A passerby took him

to his home and bathed and bandaged him and gave him some milk and a bed to sleep in until he was well. Then he called the police and gave the car license number so that the driver could be apprehended and charged.

Later, after the man was arrested they were all called before the magistrate and the swami was asked to identify the man who had hit him and he said, "sure, the man who gave me the milk."

The man who befriended him was shocked and hurt that all his kindness was being returned in this strange behaviour and when the magistrate asked the swami if he was certain who had hit him, he said, "surely, I know who hit me, it was the one who gave me the milk."

"Please explain", the magistrate ordered.

"My Lord must have been displeased with my actions so took the form of the man in the car to punish me, but He also loves me so that He took me in and cared for me and gave me some milk. It was my Lord in two different forms and surely the one who gave me the milk also hit me.

When we see the Lord's Hand in every action that will not judge anyone but realize the purpose in all things.

THE THUMB

A great king had a prime minister who had the gift of prophecy. One day the prime minister said that the king would lose his thumb but the king only laughed. One day on a hunting trip with his minister, he did lose his thumb in an accident with his bow and was quite furious with his minister for having this calamity come upon him and ordered him to be thrown in prison.

On the next hunt the king was taken prisoner by wild thugs who took him to their land. They were going to offer him as a human sacrifice to their goddess thinking what a fine sacrifice a king would be. When it was discovered that he was not whole, that one thumb was missing, an imperfect sacrifice could not

be made, so they released the king who eventually found his way back to his own land.

He ordered the minister to be brought before him and begged his forgiveness for having thrown in prison for the loss of the thumb, the loss of a thumb which had saved his life. The minister instead, fell at the king's feet and thanked him for having sent him to prison. The king couldn't understand until the minister explained, "Sire, if I had not been in prison I would have been with you on the hunting trip and been captured by the thugs as well, and I have both my thumbs, I am a whole man and would have been sacrificed to their goddess."

So you see, sometimes those things we think to be quite unfair and difficult to bear may be just the things that are saving us from more disasterous events. Learn to live with yourself whatever be your state at this time.

THE ATHEIST

A monk was sitting in his kutir safe from the icy winds and wintery blasts outside. A knock comes to his door and a stranger asks for warmth and safety from the elements.

The monk says, "Surely come in. Enjoy my fire and join me in my praise and singing to the Lord."

The stranger informs him that he is an atheist so cannot join in the songs and praise; whereupon the monk orders him to leave, tells him he cannot stay under these circumstances and sends him out into the terrible night.

Moments later an angel appears and asks the monk if a man has come by that way, and when informed of the affirmative, he enquires and is told that he was sent off into the night again because he was an atheist.

The angel asks if the monk thinks God is aware that this man is an atheist. The monk affirms that as God is Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent and all-rewarding, he certainly is aware that the traveller was an atheist.

“How old was the stranger,” the angel asked, and was told that the traveller was about 50 years old.

“Don’t you think it strange, that the Lord knowing this man to be an atheist has allowed him to live for 50 years but you could not let him live another night. Indeed you are the atheist not he; you do not believe in God and you prove it by your actions, by not seeing the Lord in your fellow man.

If you can’t love your fellow man how can you love the Lord. If you cannot see the Lord in the living temple you will not find him in church, temple, mosque or synagogue.”

THE WISHING TREE

In ancient mythology of the Hindus is the *Kalpa Vriksha*, the tree which fulfills every wish. One only has to think and the wish is granted and man has always been looking for this Wishing Tree so he can just sit under it and have all the things he wishes or desires without any effort to get them.

One day a man sat under a tree and thought “Oh, how hungry I am,” and suddenly food was there. He was startled at first but then realized he was under the *Kalpa Vriksha*, so he thought, “Oh, how nice to have some nice wine to go with the food,” and it was there. Then he wanted to have all manner of things, wealth, pleasures, a damsel and so on, and they all came but then he thought, “Here I am out in the jungle and what if a tiger comes along and eats me.” And it did.

You see everyone wants a “wishing tree” but do not realize that the good and the bad will be given and how many of you can control your mind to the point so you wouldn’t destroy yourself in the first hour.

13.

Prayers

I.

O Lord, I thank Thee for Thy Love. I thank Thee for Thy Grace. Thy Love is Light and when it is lighted in any heart, doubts, despair, delusion, distress, depression, suppression fly away like hurricane without mention. Bless me with wisdom and strength. Let doubts fly away from my heart and let faith take its place for Faith in Thee is like eternal feast of joyousness. It brings fullness in life. Thy Love is the anchor and pillow of mind and brings peace and joy of highest kind. Bless me, O Lord, that I may fulfil the mission of my life in my humble way.

O Lord! let this life of mine be absolute, perpetual blessing to one and all in Thy wide Universe, without any distinction whatever between male or female, so-called living or dead, religion or colour, rich or poor, young or old, wise or foolish, good or bad, sinner or saint. To all let this self of mine be absolute, perpetual blessing forever and ever.

My Lord, knowing Thy Grace; experiencing Thy Love; being Thy Glory; perceiving Thy Greatness; observing Thy Light; feeling Thy Presence; realizing a little of Thy Wisdom; yea, truly very, very little, my tongue loses its power to express the bliss that I enjoy in loving Thy mankind, in serving Thee, by serving Thy children and in giving all that Thou giveth me. Bless me, O Lord, My Love, that my life be a constant blessing to all whom I meet, that my life may reveal Thee in every moment. Bless me, O Lord, that till my last breath my life be a service and inspiration to others. Lot of good should be done through me but I should not be conscious of it. I seek no more. I ask no more.

II.

Aum

O Lord, Thy Love is my strength, Thy Love and Thy Grace are the two boons which I seek daily, nay, hourly.

Thou art the Dispenser of Justice.

Thy Love is infinite.

Clothed with the garment of Thy Divine Love, armed with the armour of Thy Grace, wrapped up in the sense of Thy Justice and mellowed with the waters of Thy Name, may I carry on the duties of life, cheerfully, manfully, and patiently, ever abiding in Thee, my Lord, my Father, my Guardian, my Master, my Pastor Divine.

I pray to Thee for health and strength so that purified and strengthened inwardly and outwardly, I may work incessantly, by Thy Grace, and under Thy protection, guidance and inspiration for the good of all mankind.

O Lord, to accept this prayer or reject it is also Thy choice.

It is not my concern. It is my firm conviction that whatsoever is Thy will is best for me.

Om! Om! Om!

Peace! Peace! Peace!

III.

Aum

May my speech be reconciled with the mind and may my mind with the speech.

O Self-Effulgent One—be revealed unto me.

May both my mind and speech be enabled to bring home to me the “Great Wisdom.”

May what I have heard from the masters never leave me.

By the study and the practice of their teachings I will unite science and spirit.

Truth will think and Truth will speak.

Through Thy Sacred Grace, O Lord of the Universe, we are able to perform our various duties faithfully amidst the turmoils of worldly life.

Give me strength O Lord, that I may be able to create a harmony between material law and spiritual law and adjust my daily life harmoniously with my spiritual Ideal.

Om! Om! Om!

IV.

Aum

O Lord, I seek Thee in contriteness of heart and humility,

O Lord, I seek Thee in all sincerity and heart's purity,

O Lord, I seek Thee with all earnestness and avidity

O Lord, I seek Thee, for Thou alone art Reality

My Love for Thee is boundless, endless,

My Devotion to Thee is fathomless,

Life without Thee is soulless, remorseless,

Oh let my mind be purified by service selfless.

Om! Om! Om!

I4.

Sanyas Day Messages



KODIKANAL, SOUTH INDIA

14th May, 1959.

My Beloved Self,

You ask me to write a few lines. I know how to write but what to write I know not. I exist not. Life is not mine. Body is not mine. Heart is not mine. Language is not mine.

I bow to Thee O Lord! You are the Divine Principle, the Supporter of the Universe—the Breath of Life. The Law of Rhythm and Harmony—the unconditioned Consciousness—the Absolute Spirit pervading throughout the entire Universe and transcending all bounds of Time, Space and Casuality. You are the Fountain of Love and Grace. You are the Pillar of Strength, Omnipotent, Ominpresent, Omniscient, Infinite, Eternal, Unchangeable, Unknowable, Inexplicable, Incomprehensible, You are the One without a Second. I bow to Thee.

O My Master, I bow to Thee, for You and You alone are the Awakener. How soundly was I asleep in the enchanting lap of Maya and World. O Master, how can I repay Thy grace. You have been and You are present with me in every moment of my life. I feel Your presence in every second of my life. It was Your call that awakened me seven years ago.

My Divine Self, in each one of us there is a certain spiritual intuition latent most part but such that it can be actuated and made patent by a contact of the Living Spiritual Master. During the countless births man has been forming a league with the lower self and has been responding to the trumpet calls of the lower mind, so that it becomes impossible for him to break

through the citadel of egoistic selfhood with his own efforts. Easier it is for a seeker to hurl a rooted mountain from its base than to traverse the spiritual journey successfully and gain freedom from the yoke of slavery of the lower self without the guidance of a Living Master.

Loving Divinity, it was exactly seven years that the Call came from the Lord through the Master and my mind was so full of joy that I gave expression to my inner feelings of delight in the following lines:

O Lord, Obedient to Thy Call
Here have I come deserting all
No boon I ask—No loss bemoan
Take me in and make me Thine own

The response to the Call was immediate. The World was renounced and one day I cried out:

Good-bye proud world, I am going Home,
Thou art not my friend and I am not thine,
Long through thy weary crowds I roam
A river oak on the Ocean brine,
Long I have been tossed like the driven foam,
But now proud world I am going Home.

Good-bye to flattery frowning face
To grandeur with his wise grimace
To upstart wealth's averted eye
To supple office—low and high
To crowded halls, to courts and streets
To frozen hearts and hastening feet
To those who go and those who come
Good-bye proud world I am going Home.

The search for the Master met with success soon. All curtains were chalked off. Oh wonder of wonders! I was in my own Home. I found the Goal nearest to me than myself. Worries were over. Desires all fulfilled. Joy overflowing, I jumped and danced. I realised Oh I was the 'One' whom I searched. What a miracle! The world seemed more beautiful. "I crave Union

with Thee. O Lord" was my daily cry—my daily food—my daily dress—my daily thought. But lo, I saw nothing but Lord now. I felt nothing but Lord. I saw Him in bush and the tree. I saw Him in bud and the child. He was in the bird and sky. Wherever I turn my eyes—whatever I think—whatever I do—it is all He. Lord and Joyousness go ever together. They are inseparable entities. My cup of joy is brimful always. I am all Joy—Joy—Joy.

O Beloved of my Beloved, O ignorant man—O sinner! Hear me. Here is a joy for you. Realize yourself. Arise, Awake, Human life is broad enough to contain with it a definite path to salvation. Renunciation means better worldliness which can be practised by you by being in the world.

Why searcheth Him in jungles O my mind!
Invisible yet Omnipresent He is with thee always.
Even as the scent within the flower dwells
And as thy image in the glass is held
So Lord within thine own heart abides
Seek Him only there, O Brother,
Within and without realise that He is
It is the Truth that Master has revealed
Without the realisation of the self—sayeth Fakir,
From the world mirage you cannot be free.

So, O my dear one, do not sacrifice the Gem of gems on the altar of mundane passions and desires—the night soil. Regain your lost Empire—Be the Master of your Temple. O Lord and my Master—Let each and every moment of my life be spent in Thy service and in Thy love. Thy service is Joy. It thrills every atom of my frame. Thy Love is sweet. It permeates my being. I bow to Thee, O! Lord. O! Master.

Yours in Lord,
SWAMI PREMANANDA

VANCOUVER, CANADA

14th May, 1960.

I thank Thee Lord a million times for Thy revelation.
My heart leaps with Joy with sudden acclamation
The long waiting is crowned with consummation
Of my heart's sovereign desire in fullest gratification.
I hear Thy voice from the rainbow arc of light
I see Thy cloak of fire; what a divine sight.
I see the leaping flames, all fiery red and white
What a glorious set of Thy beauty and Thy might.

Such was the joyous exclamation of a young man of twenty-two, eight years ago on the 14th May, 1952, who had found a new life—new world altogether—on me danced and sang with ecstasy—because he was now in a new world—world of Truth—Divinity—Reality—Immortality—Purity—Eternity and all the attractions of the world faded like a dream—and there he knew what 'Life' is—Oh Life—"Love Infinite for Eternity." Today, eight years have passed—I feel the same joy—same love overflowing from my heart for all—for the whole Universe—no matter who you are—to what religion you belong—of what nationality you are—no distinctions, please—I extend you my love—love of my heart. I want you to realise your true nature—the 'Reality within' so that you can also enjoy the same happiness—same joy—a life of fearlessness.

Man is in great agony today—under the aggression of hatred—jealousy—'cold war' and so on a number of physical and mental disorders. Fear of atom, hydrogen bomb, is really making his condition hopeless and utterly helpless. He must rise today from the deep slumber of ignorance and must realise his meaning and purpose of life. The cure is there. The call of the Masters is not a call away from life but is a call to life—not to the activism of the 'blind led by the blind' but to Karma Yoga as the Gita propounds it. The

essence of that philosophy or "Right Action" (as Buddha also inculcated) is contained in the two definitions of Yoga—'The Gita', Yoga Karmabhu Kaushalam (Yoga is skill in action) and Samatvam Yoga Utchyate (equilibrium is called Yoga.)

The main problem today is Peace—Peace in the mind of man—Peace in the mind of the nations and Peace in the world. It has always puzzled me why, if all wars as a matter of course end in peace, and men who cause them regard themselves as the most rational of all human beings—since they are able to carry the rest with them (for the time being, at any rate) by an irresistible show of arguments—they should not settle all disputes by rational appeal and argument instead of Armageddon. For war, however, glorified, is a brutal affair in which "reason" is put out of commission and animals fight animals with an elemental fury and that an "unforeseen force" called chance or luck may clinch the issue in one's own favour rather in favour of the 'enemy.' Once we pull out of the frenzy, we yearn for lasting peace, though we are at a loss how to secure it permanently. Verily "Peace passeth all Understanding."

So my brothers and sisters in oneness with Lord, come and let us pray sincerely today with these words:

I pray to Thee, to avert this great calamity
Of a third world war in its monstrosity.
Man has invented demoniac weapons of destruction
To destroy what ages have taken for construction.
Relieve us of the morbid fear of wholesale destruction
By hydrogen and atom bombs of devilish demonstration.
We want peace and love and freedom to prevail
Smooth waters on which life's ship may sail.

With Love.

Yours in Lord,
SWAMI PREMANANDA

KYOTO, JAPAN

14th May, 1961.

Today I started my Partnership with Him, O Sons and Daughters of Immortality,

On my entering a new milestone of my life, I am trying to x-ray my mind—what is it that makes it dance with joy today? There is a wonderful feeling in my heart—something—that has no language to express itself—a flowing stream of bliss—undiluted—unpolluted and undisturbed. What it is?

We have heard often of a Divine Partner but until we place ourselves in conscious association with Him, how can we benefit from His wisdom in this business of living? An intellectual knowledge of Divine is fine, but it remains just that unless we incorporate it in our daily living as a firm conviction of a way of life. The day we decide to turn ourselves and our affairs over to His guidance will be a day to rejoice over. The pursuit of knowledge must end in practice, to be of value.

The Mind of Divine is our mind; we use It usually in ignorance of Its great potentiality. We have labelled our misuse fate, bad luck, or God's judgement. In our freedom of thought we have taken our patterns from limiting family tradition, our environment, or racial heritage, instead of our in-dwelling Divine Perfection.

We should rededicate ourselves daily to a larger concept of a richer, fuller life. Joy, happiness, and every good imaginable are always ready for us to accept to use and to share.

There is that within me which is all the success, prosperity and happiness I could ever conceive. I have a truly wonderful partnership with Divine in an association that is eternal. His is to give; mine to receive and then, to share. I know it is Divine's pleasure that I place no limitation on this acceptance. Nothing but fulfilment can be mine in this arrangement of giving and receiving. Gratefully I accept of the wealth from this corporation of Divine.

How blessed am I to receive this wealth and share it with you all. Bless me, O my brothers and sisters, on this important day of my life, that I may go on serving you all—and through you all serving Divine till my last breath. Bless me, my dear ones, Bless me. Whatever is with me is not mine—but of Divine. Blessed am I to be the instrument of serving you all in life.

Yours in partnership with Divine,
SWAMI PREMANANDA

YAMAGUCHI, JAPAN

14th May, 1962.

I no longer believe, for I can see and experience.

Ten years back I became "hungry" and the hunger was intense. The Soul only knows for certain that it is hungry. The important thing is that it announces its hunger by crying. A child does not stop crying if we suggest to it that perhaps there is no bread. It goes on crying just the same—the reality of its hunger is not a belief, it is a certainty.

Being somewhat shy by nature, I could not announce my hunger with a cry that anybody could hear, but the inhibited cry could not be altogether lived down. I was too self-conscious to audibly proclaim my "hunger for Divine." Yet, paradoxically I was acutely aware of the presence of others watching me—as if they had no other business of their own to attend to. I consequently shilly-shallied with all outward expression of my religious craving. But inwardly I grew more engrossed and there I found company with the "Divine" who blessed me in ways that encouraged me to tap all the resources of the Unseen.

Most men are satisfied with the temple ritual and a vicarious homage to Divine through priests or other intermediaries. I always felt that I could never marry Him by proxy, nor be satisfied with the mere ritual of wedding. I must be imbedded in Him and be able to imbibe Him. The dualism of the bodies must be dissolved in the Ananda (Bliss) of the spirit otherwise it is only a make-believe or self-delusion. Worship is like Art. It is an attempt to transport into a limited quantity of matter, modelled by man, an image of the infinite beauty of the entire universe. If the attempt succeeds, this portion of matter should not hide the universe, but on the contrary it should reveal its reality to all around it.

And since then I have been busy in making the statue of life beautiful and sharing the beauty of life with all in this

beautiful earth of ours. No matter to what religion, caste, creed nationality one belongs, if he has cared to, I have joyously shared my joy and beauty of life with him.

The statue I have been inwardly busy carving was ill-shapen, crude and even positively ugly in places, the marble was hard and all but intractable; but the sculptor has before him the model of his beautiful imagination, he cuts away here, he smooths there, he makes this line lighter, this other purer, until a lovely face has grown upon his work. So did I too, I have cut away all that is excessive, straightened all that was crooked, brought light to all that was overcast, laboured to make all one glow of beauty and shall never cease chiselling my statue until there shall shine out on me, from it, the godlike splendour of virtue, until I shall see the perfect goodness established in the stainless shrine.

Yours in partnership with Divine,
SWAMI PREMANANDA

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