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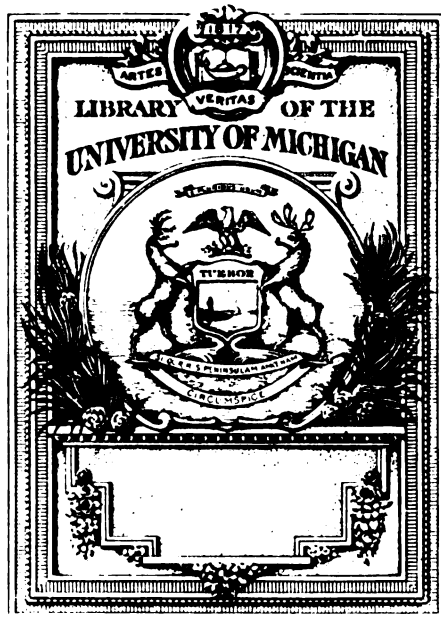
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**"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda**

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VEDANTA MONTHLY

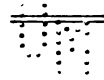
**The  
Message of the East**



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**VOLUME IX.**

**1920**



Issued by

**THE VEDANTA CENTRE**

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**SINGLE COPIES, 20 Cents**

**\$1.50 A YEAR**

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Entered as second class matter May 1, 1915 at the post office  
at Boston, Massachusetts, under the act of March 3, 1879



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VEDANTA MONTHLY  
"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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VEDANTA MONTHLY

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# The Message of the East



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Entered as second class matter May 1, 1915 at the post office  
at Boston, Massachusetts, under the act of March 3, 1879

**PUBLISHED MONTHLY EXCEPT IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER**

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<b>REPORT</b>	

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## THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

—  
"And behold the glory of the God of  
Israel came from the way of the East"  
*Ezekiel.*

"Light shall come again from the East"  
*Tyndall.*

Published monthly except in August and September.

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VOL. IX.

JANUARY, 1920.

No. 1

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### PRAYER

O Thou Eternal, Inexhaustible Source of all blessedness!  
Make our hearts serene and glad.

Fill our minds with noble thoughts and selfless aspirations  
That we may learn to surrender ourselves wholly unto Thee.  
Reveal Thy true nature unto us that we may know Thee  
as our protecting Father and loving Mother.

Thou art the Support of this universe, the Resting-place of  
all weary souls.

Do Thou consecrate and sanctify our lives and actions.  
Help us to lift our thoughts above the fleeting distractions  
of the world and rest them on the stable and undying.  
Awaken in us unfaltering faith and a yearning desire to  
know the Truth.

Forgive us all our shortcomings and imperfections.  
Kindle in us a burning devotion through which we shall  
realize that we are wholly Thine.

Grant unto us this blessing—that we may learn to live  
ever in Thy presence

And find our true happiness in Thee alone.

O Thou Infinite, All-compassionate Being, purify our  
minds and make our hearts a fitting altar unto Thee.  
Bestow upon us Thy Sacred Blessing and fill us with Thy  
Holy Peace.

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## THE LAW OF OUR DESTINY

*By Swami Paramananda*

It is declared in the Bhagavad-Gita that the Omnipresent Lord partakes neither of the merit nor demerit of any creature. Wisdom is covered over by ignorance, thus mortals are deluded. Again in the Laws of Manu we read: Thou canst not gather what thou dost not sow. As thou plantest the tree, so will it grow. That is, according to a man's own thoughts and deeds must his compensation be. Or as it is said in the Bible: As a man soweth, so must be reap. If this be true, then the question arises: How far are we to take the responsibility of our life in our own hands, or to what extent are we to leave it in God's hands? If it is our doing, then we must be watching constantly over our own destiny; if it is of God's making, then we must find some explanation by which we can accept it from our heart—firmly believing that since everything happens by God's will, we must unquestioningly abide by whatever befalls us. As Epictetus says: "Dare to look up to God and say, Make use of me in the future as Thou wilt. I refuse nothing which seems good to Thee. Lead me whither Thou wilt. Clothe me in whatever dress Thou wilt. Is it Thy will that I should be in a public or a private condition, dwell here or be banished, be poor or rich? Under all these circumstances I will make Thy defence to men." If we can gain this sublime attitude of mind, it will make our life, in good fortune or ill fortune seem like a heavenly benediction.

We may have an intellectual conception of this and repeat that everything happens by God's Will, but are we able to feel it when the greatest difficulties confront us? If we reach that point, then there is no doubt that our destiny is solely governed by God's hand. If, however, we

have any egotistic sense or any feeling of separateness from that Divine Power, then we must assume the burden of our own life consciously, diligently and with all watchfulness. The orthodox idea of accepting everything that comes as God's will is not to be looked upon with contempt, but something must be added to it. It is true that everything which happens is God's will; and if it is God's will, we must accept it with an undoubting mind. The question naturally arises, however, that if all is the will of God, who is all-merciful, all-wise, all-loving, why are there such tremendous variations in the fortunes of men? They do not seem just and therefore cannot be ordained by a just God.

We forget that if God moulds our destiny, He must mould it according to the material we give; and that probably makes this great variety in His creation. This will explain why one man is happy, another unhappy; one refined and another coarse; one spiritual and another worldly. It is due to the material we ourselves give through our own thoughts and deeds, our own conscious or unconscious feelings. If we do not take account of this fact, it is almost impossible for us to reach a satisfactory explanation of life. We may feel despair, distrust, skepticism; but that will not solve the problem or quench our turbulent unrest. We must view everything with calmness of spirit and openness of heart; and if we are able to do this, the book of life will not seem so confusing to us.

There is no doubt that we have something to do with our destiny; but we do not mould it alone. If we start with that aggressive idea—that we are going to make our life most exalted and most beautiful without any help from man or God, we are bound to stumble and fall. But if we start forward in a prayerful attitude, with earnest feeling



and all the devotion of our soul, then with God's aid we are able to succeed. We can truly lift our head then, not in an aggressive spirit, but in the consciousness that there is an all-abiding God within us and it is His voice which speaks through us, His mind which works through us, His power which constantly uses us. Thus all self-exertion for the betterment of our destiny must be combined with faith and unwavering devotion to God.

Buddha tells us that all that we are is the result of our thoughts. If we have good thoughts, then happiness and blessing will follow us, just as the wheel of a chariot follows the horse which draws it. In the same way pain will follow us, if we do anything or think anything with an evil mind. This is the law. It is not that some invisible Providence is keeping record of what we think and do, but our own conscience will make us happy or unhappy, will give us or deprive us of peace. The Vedic philosophy, instead of making us feel helpless and desperate, that there is no way of escape, holds out this hope, that even if we are born with an apparently evil destiny, it is not something which we cannot overcome. What is done can be undone. What we have done through our own thoughts and deeds we have the power to undo by other thoughts and deeds. Instead of weeping and wailing over our mistakes, therefore, we must learn to stand up and be courageous. It is not a misfortune when suffering comes upon us. It becomes a misfortune if it drags us down. When it destroys our faith and courage, then it becomes a great curse; otherwise it purifies us.

We must not always look for comfort. If we do, we shall not have the kind of character we wish to have. Gold cannot be fashioned until it is burned. It is the same with our life. It must be burned many times, and that part

---

which is not consumed by the fire is the real part in us. Truth can never be burned up. Why then should we be afraid? You may say, how can we help it? We can help it. Our physical nature is full of fear and so long as we identify ourselves with the life which is dependent on perishable things, we shall continue to be fearful; but as soon as we focus our mind on something which is permanent, fear will gradually drop away from us. It is this permanent side which we must bring closer into our life and there is no one who can do it for us. Churches, Scriptures, Temples, forms and rituals may aid us, if we open our hearts and know how to draw inspiration from them. If however we have not openness of heart, no outside help will awaken that higher instinct within, which is the most needful thing for our spiritual life. All other things are of secondary importance.

Even in misery a wise man sees the smile of heaven; he receives it as a blessing; while the short-sighted, pleasure-seeking man imagines he is going to be deprived of all happiness and wants to run away from it. But it runs after him. We can never run away from things. Whenever misfortune comes, if we try to turn our back on it, we shall find that it will follow us. There is no escape from it in that way. If, however, we face it, it will disappear; especially if we face it with understanding. We need a certain amount of courage and firmness to meet the problems of life. The weakling can do nothing. But real strength comes to us, not when we depend on our own brain and muscles or on anything material, but when we depend on God and feel that He is standing by us. That is the vital thing. We may call this Supreme Power God, Truth, or by any name which pleases us, but we must start with that as the foundation of all our effort.

There is no one who is absolutely unbelieving. We may not believe in one special doctrine or form of faith, or in one special expression of Divinity; but we all have inherent faith in our spiritual being. Whatever form it may take, we must have it. We must dig out our religion from within. It is latent and inherent. We may not have given it a name or any outward expression, yet it is there. It is because of Him that we live; and as soon as we become convinced of that Presence, we have very little occasion to fear anything. One who knows the Truth, the Truth makes him fearless. "Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free"—free from all fear. At present we are haunted by fear. In one form or another it is always pursuing us. We try to run away, but we find no escape.

Let us try not to run away from anything. God will give us strength. He never fails us, if we can only remember to call upon Him. The trouble is that when difficulties arise, we forget our spiritual nature, our faith is shaken, our mind becomes clouded and we grow fearful. Therefore we must make it the habit of our life to keep close to the Ideal. That is religion. We must do it not only in the hour of devotion and prayer, but also in the hour of activity. We must follow the law, knowing that even the thoughts we hold in the darkness and which no one else may perceive, each contributes its share towards the moulding of our destiny. If we have harmful thoughts, although they may not express themselves in action, yet they will create a poison in our system and affect us more than the person towards whom they are turned. We call it a natural tendency. A man thinks it is natural for him to be angry when some one provokes him; but it is quite unnatural for one who understands the real law and has

learned to control himself. He does not need to control himself even, for his understanding will dispel all darkness and feelings of anger will not rise.

Everyone, however, must go through preliminary stages of struggle and discipline; and if we are not willing to do this, the road will be a long and difficult one. It is through our own effort that we shorten the road. We can be lethargic in regard to spiritual things and settle down, accepting our present condition as our fate; but that is not the way to mould the best kind of destiny. Each one of us is given certain problems to work out in order to show what we are capable of doing. If we are able to produce something which is satisfying to our higher aspirations, then we can lay it before the altar of God and He will find it acceptable. But if we think that we shall please Him through empty words of praise, we shall never please Him. Only that one whose life is productive will be pleasing to Him.

It is useless to expect to have a life of perfect happiness and attain the highest heavenly region, after we pass out of this life, unless we have something to show that we deserve these things. If we do not deserve Heaven and are given a place there, we shall not be able to keep it. This is something which often we do not remember. If to-day our life is moulded by our ordinary vision, if our association is vulgar and unclean, then certainly we shall not be able to appreciate anything heavenly, pure and full of the fragrance of holiness. If our mind, our heart, our conduct and associations are of a lower nature and we are forced to go up, we shall find ourselves out of place and unhappy. Heaven is Heaven only when our heart feels in tune with it; otherwise it becomes unbearable. We can never keep or enjoy anything which we do not deserve.

---

**DEO OPTIMO MAXIMO**

*By Louise Imogen Guiney*

All else for use, One only for desire;  
Thanksgiving for the good, but thirst for Thee:  
Up from the best, whereof no man need tire,  
Impel Thou me.

Delight is menace if Thou brood not by,  
Power a quicksand, Fame a gathering jeer.  
Oft as the morn (though none of earth deny  
These three are dear)

Wash me of them, that I may be renewed,  
And wander free amid my freeborn joys:  
Oh, close my hand upon Beatitude!  
Not on her toys.

---

**LIVING WITH GOD**

*Spiritual Maxims of Brother Lawrence*

The Presence of God is an applying of our spirit to God, or a realization of God as present, which is borne home to us either by the imagination or by the understanding.

I have a friend who these forty years past has been practising through the understanding a realization of the Presence of God. To it he gives many other names; sometimes he calls it a simple act, or a clear and distinct knowledge of God; at other times, a view as through a glass, a loving gaze, an inward sense of God; yet again he terms it a waiting on God, a silent converse with Him, a repose in Him, the life and peace of the soul. Still, my friend tells me that all these ways, in which he has expressed his sense of the Presence of God, come to the same thing; and that the Presence fills his soul quite naturally, that it has come so to pass in this way.

He says that by unwearying efforts, by constantly recalling his mind to the Presence of God, a habit has been formed within him of such a nature that, so soon as he is freed from his ordinary labor, and not seldom even when he is engaged thereon, his soul lifts itself up above all earthly matters, without care or forethought on his part, and dwells as it were firmly stayed on God as in its centre and place of rest, faith almost always being his companion at such times. Then his soul's joy is full,—it is what he calls the actual Presence, and includes all other kinds and greatly more besides. Then it is he feels that only God and he are in the world; with Him he holds unbroken converse, asking from Him the supply of all his needs, and finding in His Presence fullness of joy.

Let us mark well, however, that this intercourse with God he holds in the depth of his being; there it is that the soul speaks to God, heart to heart, and over the soul thus holding converse there steals a great and profound peace. All that passes without concerns the soul no more than a fire of straw, which the more it flares, the sooner burns itself out; and rarely indeed do the cares of this world ever intrude to trouble the peace that is within.

But to come back to our consideration of the Presence of God, you must know that the tender and loving light of God's countenance kindles insensibly within the soul, which ardently embraces it, so great and so divine a fire of love to God, that one is perforce compelled to moderate the outward expression of the feelings.

Great would be our surprise, if we but knew what converse the soul holds at these times with God, who seems to so delight in this communion, that to the soul, which would fain abide ever with Him, He bestows favours past numbering; and as if He dreaded lest the soul should turn

again to things of earth, He provides for it abundantly, so that the soul finds in faith a nourishment divine, a joy that has no measure, beyond its utmost thought and desire; and this without a single effort on its part but simple consent.

The Presence of God is thus the life and nourishment of the soul, and with the aid of His grace, it can attain thereunto by diligent use of the means which I will now set out.

The first is a great purity of life; in guarding ourselves with care lest we should do or say or think on anything which might be displeasing to God; and, when any such thing happens, in taking heed to repent thereof, humbly begging His forgiveness.

The second is a great faithfulness in the practice of His Presence, and in keeping the soul's gaze fixed on God in faith, calmly, humbly, lovingly, without allowing an entrance to anxious cares and disquietude.

Those who set out upon this practice let me counsel to offer up in secret a few words, such as "My God, I am wholly Thine. O God of Love, I love Thee with all my heart. Lord, make my heart even as Thine"; or such other words as love prompts on the instant. But take heed that your mind wanders not back to the world again; keep it fixed on God alone, so that, thus subdued by the will, it may be constrained to abide with God.

The practice of the Presence of God is somewhat hard at the outset, yet, pursued faithfully it works imperceptibly within the soul most marvellous effects; it draws down God's grace abundantly, and leads the soul insensibly to the ever-present vision of God, loving and beloved, which is the most spiritual and most real, the most free and most life-giving manner of prayer. The grace of God is the more needful for each moment, as without it the soul can do nothing.

Whilst wandering through the Rain God's glade with the Master, Fan Ch'ih said to him: May I ask how to raise the mind and amend evil?

The Master said: A good question! Rate the task above the prize; will not the mind be raised? Fight thine own faults, not the faults of others; will not evil be mended?

Make faithfulness and truth thy masters, have no friends unlike thyself, be not ashamed to amend thy faults.

Listen much, keep silent when in doubt, and always take heed of the tongue: thou wilt make few mistakes.

The Master said: One thread, Shen, runs through all my teaching.

Yes, said Tseng-tzu.

After the Master had left, the disciples asked what was meant. Tseng-tzu said: The Master's teaching all hangs on faithfulness and fellow-feeling.

---

### ELEVENTH ANNIVERSARY

*Of the Vedanta Centre of Boston*

The Vedanta Centre of Boston celebrated the Eleventh Anniversary of its establishment on the evening of January 6th. Every seat in the Chapel was filled, and it was necessary to place chairs for late-comers in the entrance hall. The spirit of the evening was one of special unity and fellowship, and all those present felt that it was the most successful celebration ever held at the Centre. In the windows of the main floor hung a number of red lamps, casting a ruddy glow into the shadows of the Parkway outside; while flowers, evergreen branches and blooming plants lent an air of festivity to the interior. A religious Service occupied the first part of the evening. This was followed by an hour of informal social intercourse, during which refreshments were served and various musical selections were given. The Exercises opened with an organ



that, O Bhagavan (revered Master), which being known, all else becomes known?

It was customary in ancient India for a pupil, when he sought instruction of a holy sage, to approach him bearing in his arms a bundle of wood for the altar fire. This armful of sacrificial wood, called in Sanskrit *Samit-pani*, became the symbol of discipleship, representing a desire to serve even in the humblest capacity. Those ancient teachers did not give out their knowledge for a certain fee as it is done in the modern educational institution. They were wholly independent. They did not seek pupils. On the contrary, they were very careful whom they taught. The pupil was obliged to prove his worthiness by humility, earnestness and patient service.

#### IV

The Sage said to him: There are two kinds of knowledge to be known, so are we told by the knowers of Brahman,—higher knowledge and lower knowledge.

#### V

Lower knowledge consists of the Rig-Veda, Yajur-Veda, Sama-Veda, Atharva-Veda, phonetics, ceremonial, grammar, etymology, metre, astronomy. Higher knowledge is that by which the Imperishable is known.

The Upanishads make a clear distinction between secular knowledge (*Apara*) and knowledge born of direct vision (*Para*). Secular or lower knowledge not only includes astronomy, ceremonial, rhetoric and all branches of intellectual study, but even study of the Sacred Scriptures. Any knowledge which is acquired through study is classed as lower knowledge, because merely reading or hearing about Truth is not knowing Truth. The Aryan sages did not discredit the study of books, but they recognized that theoretical knowledge must always be inferior to knowledge based on direct experience.

## VI

**That which cannot be seen, which cannot be seized, which has no origin and no attributes, no eyes nor ears, no hands nor feet; That which is eternal, diversely manifesting, all-pervading, extremely subtle; that Imperishable One the wise regard as the Source of all created things.**

*Para-vidya* or higher knowledge is that which cannot be perceived by the senses or by our ordinary faculties. It dawns in the soul only when senses, mind and intellect have become pacified and full of serenity. We do not gain ultimate realization until we have subdued the turbulence and unrest of our mind. At present the greater part of our effort at knowledge is physical. We wish to see with our eyes, grasp with our hands; but through these channels we can gain only objective knowledge; while knowledge of God is subjective. This is evident from the definition of the Supreme given here. He is unconditioned and beyond the reach of our physical senses, our mind and intellect. To perceive Him we must cultivate another state of consciousness, which is done through the practice of meditation.

## VII

**As the spider brings forth and draws in (its thread), as herbs spring from the earth, as hair grows on the living body, likewise does the universe come forth from the Imperishable.**

## VIII

**Through Tapas Brahman expands; from this, food is produced; from food come Prana (energy), mind, the elements, the worlds, good works and their immortal fruit.**

## IX

**From that One who is all-perceiving and all-knowing, whose Tapas consists of wisdom, are born Brahma (the Creator), name, form and food.**

*Tapas* signifies spiritual discipline, known variously as penance, austerity, etc. The word *Tapa* means literally heat, and is employed in this case because spiritual practice is supposed to act on the system like fire, consuming all impurities. This interpretation, however, cannot be applied to the present text, as it is evident that Brahman, the Supreme Lord, has no need of purification. It is used here to signify the fire of wisdom, which like all fire expands. Out of this wisdom fire, burning in the mind of Brahman, come forth, first the creative power, and thence all forms of material manifestation.

*(To be continued)*

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### REPORTS

At the invitation of the minister, Rev. F. B. Crandall, Swami Paramananda delivered the Christmas sermon at the First Unitarian Church of Ayer, Mass., on Sunday evening, December 21st. A special Service had been arranged, with an elaborate musical programme and the church was artistically decorated. The Christmas carols with which the Service opened, were heard first at a distance, and as the singers approached, the lights spread from the dim glow of the candles on the altar to a cross above the altar and thence through the church. After the Rev. Mr. Crandall had read the Office of Prayer the Swami held a brief meditation. "The beauty of the scene and of the music and the discourse of the Swami made an exquisite harmony," Mr. Crandall himself writes. "He dwelt upon the mystical significance of the Holy Child in religion. In gentle and gracious words he appealed to his hearers to forsake their sinful prejudices and to rise to the plane of purity and spiritual understanding in their religious thinking. By his presence and by his preaching

Swami Paramananda bore a powerful witness for the spiritual ideals that are comprehended in the well-beloved symbol of the Christ Child."

\* \* \* \* \*

The Vedanta Centre of Boston marked the Christmas-tide by a Service on Christmas Eve at 8 o'clock. From every window of the main floor there shone into the darkness outside the light of many candles, while the corner window overlooking the Parkway was ablaze with lights burning on an altar to the Christ Child and the Virgin. The Service began with a Christmas carol. Then, after a meditation, the Swami gave a most impressive Talk on the true Christ Spirit in which, as in all he says, there sounded the two strong notes of universal religious harmony and the vital need, not of theoretical loyalty to creed, but of practical spiritual living. Two more Christmas carols, a second meditation and the benediction closed the Service, which was pronounced by every one to be one of exceptional beauty and exalted feeling.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sister Devamata returned from her Western journey on December 11th. Her three weeks in Louisville proved fruitful for the work, many having gained a new interest in the teaching and a fresh impetus in their spiritual practice. In all she delivered eight public lectures and held as many classes. Besides these, she gave several Talks in private drawing-rooms and held a special Thanksgiving Service. Among the public lectures, two were given in the hall of the Public Library and called out a large attendance. On her return to Boston she stopped over in Cincinnati for three days, during which she spoke on Sunday evening at the New Thought Temple and on Monday in the Assembly Room of the Hotel Gibson.

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**"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda**

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**VEDANTA MONTHLY**

# The Message of the East



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**FEBRUARY, 1920**

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Issued by

**THE VEDANTA CENTRE**

**1 Queensberry St., Boston, Mass., U. S. A.**

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Entered as second class matter May 1, 1915 at the post office  
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towards fostering these great ideals. We believe firmly that the revelations of the saints and sages and seers everywhere are one. God is one, Spirit is one. We are all children of that One; and we cannot serve that One and love that One unless our love makes us include all His children — east, west, north, south, everywhere. To uphold this universal unity is the chief aim of this work.

Now as we start on another year's labor, we want God's blessing upon it, because we realize more and more that human efforts fail many times and must fail unless we have the blessing of the Supreme. But when we have that, then we can achieve something which will be worth while, lasting and far reaching. Also we wish the good will of the people. I would not be here today if it were not for some of you who kept me through your love, through your earnestness and your sincere desire to have a Centre. I came here as a wandering Sannyasin. I did not expect to settle down and have an established work, but it was your earnest spirit which laid the foundations of this Centre.

We do not want anybody to be identified with this work and be denunciatory towards any other form of faith. We never give out such teaching from this platform. Our work will have its best expression when we shall be able to go out and carry the great Cosmic Principle in our hearts and make people realize that to hate any one is to impede their own progress. When we succeed in understanding these lofty principles and in applying them in our lives, this world will become a very different place. That this world may become so and that we may play our humble part in it, for that purpose this work exists. My friends, it is not always the exterior that counts; it is not the outside glamour that always brings the light to us. A dew drop is so gentle—the bud hardly realizes that anything has

fallen upon it, yet it gives birth to a beautiful blossom. So must it be with our spiritual striving. We must do it through our life, silently and devoutly; then we shall realize the great ideals the world teachers have given us.

Let us unite our hearts and prayers. Let us offer our thanks for all that we have been privileged to do, and let us pray that He may give us inspiration for more effective and far-reaching service to His children. May the Supreme Spirit of the Universe, Whom we invoke by different names and worship in different manners: may that universal, cosmic, loving Father and Mother of all living beings grant unto us His protection, and may He inspire us to perceive His light and His love everywhere in the universe. May that all-abiding Spirit unfold our vision and enable us to see that it is the same One who is worshipped by different religions; that all names and forms strive to represent that One Who is boundless and formless. May that Unbounded Infinite One awaken in us such love and sincere devotion for our Ideal, and such a spirit of service to humanity, that we may realize that we are all children of that Cosmic Being. Then shall we have in our hearts only love and brotherly feeling towards all living beings.

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### **REPORT**

The Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was observed at the Vedanta Centre of Boston on Sunday, January 18th, the same day on which the public celebration was held at all the Centres of the Ramakrishna Mission in India. There was an impressive religious Service, with special musical selections and an address by Swami Paramananda, who spoke with deep feeling of the beauty and power of Swami Vivekananda's selfless devotion to Truth and to his fellowmen. Because of lack of space we are

unable to give the address in the present Message, but we hope to do so in the March number.

\* \* \* \*

The Birthday was commemorated also at the Vedanta Society of San Francisco. Swami Prakashananda, who is in charge of the work there, held two Services. At 11 A. M. he spoke on "Swami Vivekananda's Contribution to the World Thought" and at 8 P. M. his subject was "Swami Vivekananda as a Forerunner of a Universal Religion." Both Services were attended by many appreciative friends.

\* \* \* \*

Swami Paramananda was invited to speak before the Art Alliance of Philadelphia on January 21st. The Philadelphia Record speaks of the lecture thus: "Swami Paramananda gave an interesting lecture on 'The Spirit of the Indian Drama' at the Art Alliance yesterday afternoon. The dramatists of India, he said, strive continually for the spiritual, even in comedy. The genius of Indo-Aryan culture, both secular and sacred, is pre-eminently spiritual. India's best epics, art and drama all alike tend toward idealism, in which the soul life plays the most vital part. The dramatists realize that unless they touch the deeper side of life, even in providing amusement for the people, they will not hold them. The great plays of India nearly all deal with the life and character of spiritual heroes. This has necessarily an important educational value. The Indian youth not only learn their history, but gain a solid formation for their character, in absorbing the mighty ideals thus portrayed on the stage. The speaker described the ancient and modern theatre of India, and discussed the great dramatist of India, G. C. Ghose, known as the Shakespeare of Bengal and the Garrick of the Bengalee stage."

\* \* \* \*



On Sunday afternoon, January 25th, the Swami was invited to speak at St. Mark's-in-the-Bouwerie New York, on "The Unseen as the Creative Force in Hindu Life." The keynote of the afternoon was the realization of the universality of essential religion. The rector, Dr. Wm. Norman Guthrie, laid emphasis on it in his short Address on the "Mysticism of the Scottish Celt" at the Vesper Service, and it was again strongly accented by the Swami at the later gathering in the Parish Hall. Preceding the Swami's Address, Mr. Robert de Bruce gave a brief explanation of Zen Mysticism as exemplified in certain Chinese paintings on exhibition at the Parish Hall; while following the Address, Mr. Dwight Goddard, translator of the "Tao Teh King," spoke for a few minutes on Laotze. Dr. Guthrie himself writes of the occasion:

"Swami Paramananda then opened with silent prayer and a Peace Chant, after which he gave a beautiful Address on our great spiritual problem in the Occident—how to reconcile the hunger of the Spirit for quiet and repose and divine realization with scrupulous and courageous performance of duty. He showed how efficiency would be greatly increased by the right use of the art of meditation. When he closed with a benediction, after silent prayer, the audience was too spell-bound to applaud. They expressed their thankfulness for the experience, which the Swami had secured for them so largely, by the contagion of his strong spirit of devotion. It was an afternoon that will not soon be forgotten by the participants; and it raises the hope that after the Swami's return from California he may be able to hold some regular week-night meetings at Old St. Mark's, where he has already so many friends."

\* \* \* \*

All meetings at The Vedanta Centre of Boston will continue as usual during February.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—*Rig-Veda*

VEDANTA MONTHLY

# The Message of the East



MARCH, 1920

Issued by

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Entered as second class matter May 1, 1915 at the post office  
at Boston, Massachusetts, under the act of March 3, 1879

**PUBLISHED MONTHLY EXCEPT IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER**

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## **Chapel of the Vedanta Centre**

**1 Queensberry Street, Fenway  
(Ipswich Street Car)**

**Swami Paramananda**

**of India in charge**

**TWELFTH SEASON—1920**



**SUNDAY, 11 A. M.**

**SERVICE WITH ADDRESS**

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*March 14th How to Conquer Selfishness*

*March 21st The Productive Force of Desire*

*March 28th The Three Worlds*

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## THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

—  
"And behold the glory of the God of  
Israel came from the way of the East"  
*Ezekiel.*

"Light shall come again from the East"  
*Tyndall.*

Published monthly except in August and September.

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Vol. IX.

MARCH, 1920.

No. 3

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### PLATO AND VEDIC IDEALISM

*Lecture by Swami Paramananda*

"As the different streams, having their sources in different places, all mingle their waters in the sea ; so, O Lord, the different paths which men take because of their different tendencies, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee!" This ancient Indo-Aryan prayer gives a picture of the ultimate goal of unity, towards which all philosophies and religions tend. When we reach the heights of spiritual vision, the little barriers and differences melt away and we realize the underlying unity and universality of cosmic life. But even before we attain this final oneness, if we are open, fair and genuine, we cannot fail to realize a certain kinship among all the great ideals of the world. For instance, when I study the writings of the Greek philosophers, it is almost like reading the teachings of the early Vedic seers. The eminent English Orientalist, Sir Wm. Jones, recognizes this when he says: "It is impossible to read the Vedanta, or the many fine compositions in illustration of it, without believing that Pythagoras and Plato derived their sublime theories from the same fountain with the sages of India."

This does not mean that the Greeks borrowed from the Indo-Aryans, or the Indo-Aryans from the Greeks, al-

though there is no question that there was intercourse and free exchange of thoughts between them from very early days; but spiritual ideals are the common property of all peoples. The cosmic universe is rich enough in knowledge to supply all abundantly. There is no need of borrowing. Besides, borrowed knowledge never stands the test. One may try to repeat the ideas of another, but the words have no vital force and can produce no lasting impression. All vital contributions to world thought must rise from one source only — direct vision.

It was because the Greek philosophers and the ancient Indo-Aryan seers in their spiritual research reached the same lofty heights that they perceived the same fundamental ideals and often defined them in almost identical terms. Thus we find Plato's conception of a world of abstract self-existent ideas or "patterns fixed in Nature," of which all individual ideas and forms are copies, corresponds to the Vedic conception of the Absolute out of which springs all relative manifestation. Both alike declare this Source of being to be one and eternal. In the Chandogya-Upanishad a father says to his son: "That which exists is One and all things have sprung from that One. It is not, my child, that in the beginning there was nothing and this universe came out of that nothing. No, something cannot come out of nothing. In the beginning there was the One, the Infinite and Absolute" — that which Plato defines as the ultimate Idea of Good or the Permanent Reality: "One which is something over and above the many." A like distinction is made in the Mundaka-Upanishad, when a sage says to a disciple: "There are two kinds of knowledge to be known — higher knowledge and lower knowledge." Lower knowledge is gained through sense-perception and intellectual study, while

"higher knowledge is that by which the Imperishable is known"; and "knowledge of Brahman the Supreme is the foundation of all knowledge."

In Book V of the *Republic* again Plato discriminates carefully between "opinion" and "science" or real knowledge. "Science has for its province to know the nature of the existent"; "it is correlative to the existent and the negation of knowledge (ignorance) necessarily to the non-existent," while opinion is "something more dusky than knowledge, more luminous than ignorance." This is illustrated by the allegory of the cave given in Book VII. He describes a cave running down a steep incline into the earth. Some way down, where daylight is no longer visible, a bright fire is burning and beyond it there is a low wall built across the cave. Over the top of this wall little figures of animals and men are moved back and forth by showmen. The shadows of these figures are thrown upon the rocky end of the cave, facing which are prisoners, so chained that they cannot turn around. Seeing thus from day to day only the shadows of the manufactured images, would they not come to regard them as the only realities? So is it with those who have merely second-hand or hearsay knowledge of disjointed facts.

Suppose, however, that one of the prisoners is released and compelled to walk with open eyes towards the light, the dazzling splendor of which renders him incapable of discerning the objects which had cast the shadows on the end-rock. If some one tells him these are only phantoms and that he is somewhat nearer to reality, will he not be puzzled? So is one who begins to acquire first-hand knowledge of the facts of the universe. But suppose that he is dragged up the steep ascent of the cavern out into the light of the sun, will he not be vexed and indignant at the

treatment; and, blinded by the glare, will he not find it impossible to make out so much as one of the objects all around him? At first he will be better able to gaze at their reflections in water. By degrees, however, his eyes will grow accustomed to the daylight and he will be able to discern clearly each thing as it is; so is it with a man who has reached the stage of direct apprehension of Principles—above all, the Principle of Ultimate Good. This type of man in Vedic classification is called the *Rishi* or seer, the man of vision; while the prisoner is the lettered scholar, the man of opinion or intellectual grasp only.

This higher knowledge, Socrates explains further, cannot be sought "in perception at all, but in that other process, however called, in which the mind is alone and engaged with being." The *Katha-Upanishad* also tells us: "No one can see Him with the eye . . . but when the five organs or sense perception become still, together with the mind—that is called the highest state." These words of both Socrates and the *Upanishad* give a true definition of transcendental or superconscious vision which is the aim of the Indian system of Yoga—a system evolved to teach man how, by withdrawing his mind from all the distractions of the sense plane and making it perfectly one-pointed or single, he may gain access to his inner resources. Patanjali, the father of the Yoga philosophy, says: "At the time of concentration, the seer rests in his own unmodified state (the state of perfect serenity)." Only in this state of introvision or "aloneness," which presupposes complete detachment from external perception, can true knowledge be apprehended. Undoubtedly Plato held the same conception when he declared that education was "a turning round of the eye of the soul." And "this is the rule

for achieving it," it is said in one of the Upanishads: "restraint of the breath, restraint of the senses, meditation, fixed attention, investigation, complete union with the object of meditation."

In the process of turning inward the soul's eye the need of a teacher is universally recognized, as is the need of a guide when one travels into an unknown region. The teacher in India is called *Guru* or "sight-giver" or "one who dispels the darkness." He is also regarded as the parent in the second birth of the awakening soul. In *Theaetetus* Socrates even calls himself a midwife. "My art of midwifery is in most respects like theirs," he says; "but the difference lies in this, I practise on their souls when they are in labor, and not on their bodies; and the triumph of my art is in examining whether the thought which the mind of the young man is bringing to birth is a false idol or a noble and true creation. Therefore, I am not myself wise, nor have I anything which is the invention or offspring of my own soul, but the way is this: Some of those who converse with me at first appear to be absolutely dull; yet afterwards, as our acquaintance ripens, if the god is gracious to them, they all of them make astonishing progress. There is clear proof that they have never learned anything of me, but they have acquired and discovered many noble things of themselves, although the god and I helped to deliver them."

Here Socrates expresses with remarkable definiteness the Vedic idea that the Guru is merely an instrumental help in drawing out the inherent powers of the soul. A real teacher must always be full of humility and deeply conscious that he is only a channel through which the Divine works. For that reason he must be free from all ulterior selfish motives and unwavering in his devotion to



Truth. "I have actually known some who were ready to bite me when I deprived them of a darling folly," Socrates says; "they did not perceive that I acted from good will, that no god is the enemy of man; neither am I their enemy in all this, but religion will never allow me to admit falsehood, or to stifle the truth."

The injunction of the Vedas that "Truth cannot be attained by mere study of the Scriptures, nor by intellectual reasoning, nor by frequent hearing of it. . . He who has not turned away from evil conduct, whose senses are uncontrolled, who is not tranquil, whose mind is not at rest, he can never attain Truth even by much study," finds a frequent echo in Plato's teaching. He was uncompromising in his claim that the highest type of conduct is inseparably bound up with the highest type of knowledge; and that this knowledge can only be gained by one who is willing to seek the aid of something beyond physical perception or mere intellectual theory. The man merged in the flux of sensuality, he declares with reiterated insistence, can never reach the knowledge of God.

According to Plato, this knowledge should not be the aim merely of the recluse or scholar; it should be sought with equal earnestness by men in every department of active life, especially by those who govern public affairs. The highest political power must be vested in philosophers only; and he defines a philosopher as one who is "able to apprehend the eternal and immutable"; who is possessed of "truthfulness, that is, a determination never to admit a falsehood in any shape, if it can be helped, but to abhor it and love the truth"; he must be "temperate and thoroughly incovetous, for he is the last person in the world to value those objects which make men anxious for money at any cost"; he must be "quick at learning, lofty-

minded and graceful, the friend and brother of truth, justice, fortitude and temperance"; for "a mean and cowardly character can have no part in true philosophy." He concludes by asking: "Can you hesitate to entrust such characters with the sole management of state affairs, when time and education have made them ripe for the task?" And a long discussion follows to prove that "the miseries of our cities will find no relief until philosophers become rulers."

This Platonic idea of a philosopher-ruler we find realized in Indian history more than once, in such wise and virtuous kings as Janaka, Yudishthira, Asoka and various others. They were not only able statesmen, but profound spiritual teachers as well, to whom even holy men and ascetics came for religious instruction. Wisdom they had in excess and they applied it wholly for the betterment of mankind. They looked upon their rulership as a sacred vocation, entrusted to them by God; and they consecrated all their activities to selfless service of their fellow-beings. They never used their power for personal gain or self-aggrandizement. They treated their subjects as their children. Love of justice and truth was the burning passion of their hearts. Their devotion to philosophy, however, did not make them visionary or lead them to give themselves wholly to contemplation and metaphysical speculation. On the contrary, they were of a noble, heroic type, full of practical ability and keenly alert in the performance of their duties.

The Indo-Aryan teaching that there can be no true unity so long as the feeling of "I" and "mine" dominates, finds a strong parallel in Plato's development of the Ideal State. "There is unity where there is community of pleasures and pains, where all the citizens are glad or sorry on

the same occasion," are Socrates' words in the *Republic*. "And where there is no common, but only private feeling, that disorganizes a State—when you have one-half of the world triumphing and the other sorrowing at the same events happening to the city and the citizens. Such differences commonly originate in a disagreement between the term 'mine' and 'thine'." The Bhagavad-Gita gives the same thought as applied to the individual. "He whose heart is steadfastly engaged in the practice of Yoga, looks everywhere with the eyes of equality, seeing the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self. . . He who looks upon pleasure and pain everywhere with the same regard as when it is applied to himself, that one is highly esteemed." (Concluded in April. Second part will deal with Reincarnation and Immortality.)

Ignorance is the knowledge of many things—the knowledge of diversity without the knowledge of unity or of the One God. The conviction that God is in all objects—that there is unity in variety—is called knowledge. Knowing Him intimately is realization. Suppose you get a thorn in your foot. You take a second thorn to pick it out. Then you throw both away. So to get rid of the thorn of ignorance, you use the thorn of (relative) knowledge. Then you throw away both ignorance and knowledge in order to attain complete realization. —*Sri Ramakrishna*.

### THE SIGHT OF GOD

*By St. Cadoc, 6th Century*

Without light nothing is good  
 Without light there is no piety  
 Without light there is no religion  
 Without light there is no faith  
 There is no light without the sight of God.

---

**THE ETERNAL WORD***Sermon by John Tauler*

(Dominican Monk of Strassbourg, 14th Century)

Children, it behooves us greatly to mark what it is that makes men deaf, like the man in the Gospel. From the time that the first man opened his ears to the voice of the Enemy, he became deaf thereby, and all we after him, so that we cannot hear or understand the sweet voice of the Eternal Word. Yet we know that the Eternal Word is still so unutterably nigh to us inwardly, in the very principle of our being, that not even man himself, his own nature, his own thoughts, nor aught that can be named or said or understood, is so nigh or planted so deep within him as the Eternal Word is in man. And it is ever speaking in man; but he hears it not by reason of the sore deafness that has come upon him.

Whose fault is this? I say that something has covered man's ears and stopped them up that he may not hear this Word; and his sense is so benumbed that he has become dumb, not knowing his own self. If he desired to speak of what is within him, he could not; for he does not know how it stands with him, nor discern his own ways and works. The cause whereof is that the Enemy has whispered in his ear and he has listened to the voice, and hence has he grown deaf and dumb. What is this most hurtful whispering of the Enemy? It is every disorderly image or suggestion that starts up in thy mind, whether belonging to thy creature likings and wishes, or the world and the things thereof; whether it be thy wealth, reputation, friends or relations, or thy own flesh, or whatever it be that lays hold of thy fancy, making thee to like or do somewhat.

Through all these he has his access to thy soul; for he

is ever at hand ; and as he marks to what a man is inclined inwardly or outwardly, what he likes and dislikes, straight-way he lays hold of it and attacks him with that weapon, and suggests what agrees with that man's inclination, and pours into the ears of his soul all manner of imaginations concerning that thing, that the man may not be able to hear the Eternal Word. If the man instantly turned his ears and mind away from the enemy, the assault would be easily repulsed ; but as soon as he opens his ears so far as to dwell upon and dally with temptation, he is already well-nigh conquered, and the strife is at the hardest. But as soon as thou hast bravely turned thy ear away, thou hast well-nigh prevailed ; for this enables thee to hear the inward voice of the Word, and takes away thy deafness. Not only worldly men but also religious men are liable to this deafness, if they make the creature their idol and aim and their hearts are possessed therewith. With some their ears are stopped up with their own inventions and with the daily routine of habit with which they go through certain outward acts, learnt by means of their senses from the creatures. All this dulls a man's hearing so that he cannot apprehend the Eternal Word speaking within him, nor in any wise understand what it says.

It is true, however, that we ought to maintain the habit and practice of works of piety, though without a spirit of self-exaltation on account of them, such as prayer, or meditation, or the like, in order that our sluggish nature may be aroused into vigor, our minds raised on high and our hearts allured and kindled. But there must be no claiming to ourselves thereof, but rather our ears must be left open to listen to the whispers of the Eternal Word. Let us not be as some obstinate men who never go for-

ward, but to the day of their death remain standing on their outward customs, seeking for nothing further; and when God would say aught unto them, there is always something that gets into their ears, so that His Word cannot be heard. . .

Now when our Lord comes and puts his finger into a man's ear and touches his tongue, how eloquent will he become! O children, of this wondrous things might be said! But we will now consider the seven gifts of the Spirit, given to man through this touch whereby the ears of his mind are opened. First is given unto him the spirit of fear, which has power to rid him of all self-will, and teaches him to flee from temptation and at all times to shun unruly appetites and license. Next is given to him the spirit of charity, which makes him sweet-tempered, kind-hearted, merciful, nor ready to pass a harsh judgment on any one's conduct, but full of tolerance. Thirdly, he receives the gift of knowledge, so that he understands the meaning of his inward experience and thus learns to guide himself according to the blessed will of God. The fourth gift is Divine strength; through this gift such Divine might is imparted unto him, that, with Paul, it becomes a small and easy matter to him to do or bear all things through God who strengtheneth him. The fifth is the gift of good counsel, which all those who follow become gentle and loving. Lastly come two great gifts, understanding and the wisdom of insight, which are so sublime and glorious, that it is better to seek to experience them than to speak thereof. That our ears may thus be opened of a truth, that the Eternal Word may be heard in us, may God grant us! Amen.

## SONGS OF KABIR

*Translated by Rabindranath Tagore*

### I.

Between the poles of the conscious and the unconscious,  
     there has the mind made a swing;  
 Thereon hang all beings and all worlds, and that swing  
     never ceases its sway.  
 Millions of beings are there; the sun and the moon in their  
     courses are there;  
 Millions of ages pass, and the swing goes on.  
 All swing! the sky and the earth and the air and the water;  
     and the Lord Himself taking form;  
 And the sight of this has made Kabir a servant.

### II.

O servant, where dost thou seek Me?  
     Lo! I am beside thee.  
 I am neither in temple nor in mosque;  
     I am neither in Kaaba nor in Kailash;  
 Neither am I in rites and ceremonies,  
     nor in Yoga and renunciation.  
 If thou art a true seeker, thou shalt at once see Me;  
     Thou shalt meet Me in a moment of time.  
 Kabir says, "O Sadhu! God is the breath of all breath."

### III.

How could the love between Thee and me sever?  
 As the leaf of the lotus abides on the water; so Thou art  
     my Lord, and I am Thy servant.  
 As the night-bird Chakor gazes all night at the moon; so  
     Thou art my Lord and I am Thy servant.  
 From the beginning until the ending of time, there is love  
     between Thee and me; and how shall such love be  
     extinguished?  
 Kabir says: "As the river enters into the ocean, so my  
     heart touches Thee."

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**WISDOM THROUGH SERVICE OF THE IDEAL**

*By Sister Devamata*

"Those men of wisdom who have realized the Truth, will teach thee supreme wisdom. Learn it by reverence, by enquiry and by humble service." The service referred to in these words of the Bhagavad-Gita is very different from what is understood as service in the world. In the world we think of service as *doing* something for another. But the service which leads to wisdom is *being* something for the sake of the Ideal. The doing is wholly secondary and follows spontaneously. It is what we are from moment to moment which determines whether we are serving God or not. The merit of spiritual service is measured by the interior state, not by the outer activity. One man may be constantly busy in performing acts of righteousness and another may appear to be inactive; but if the first man's good works are interwoven with the thought of self, and the mind of the second is completely surrendered to the Divine, the apparently inactive man is the truer servant. He is "waiting on the Lord," listening for the word of command. His concern is to keep in perfect rhythm with the cosmic motion and to work or wait as it impels him. He unites himself with God and lets God unite him with the world. His contact with outer things may be intermittent, but his touch with God is never broken. As Sri Ramakrishna tells us: "Do your work in the world with one hand and hold the Feet of the Lord with the other. When your work in the world is done, fold the Feet of the Lord to your heart with both your hands."

However sincere may be our desire to serve God, we have too little penetration to discern where or when or how. What do we know of His plan or of our part in it? What assurance have we when to speak or when to remain silent,



when to act or when to stand with folded hands? Yet there is no need of uncertainty or discouragement because of this. If we will but join ourselves with the great cosmic power, it will carry us with unerring precision to the right task at the right moment. That power is constantly in motion, ordering and fulfilling all things according to a divinely appointed plan. When we move with it, we fall naturally into our proper place and find our special work. One thing only is asked of us,—that we keep our mind single and fixed on God; for when the eye is single, we are told, then is the whole organism full of light, the light of wisdom. In every household there must be one who plans and allots the work, otherwise the different members labor at cross purposes and waste and disorder creep in everywhere. So is it in God's household. Unless all things move according to His wiser way, confusion and distress inevitably overtake both the individual life and the social order.

In the spiritual path every act of service must be preceded by an act of purification. This was the meaning of Christ's injunction that before we lay our offering on the altar, we must go and make peace with our brother. If there is anything in our heart which agitates it or chills its fervor, if there is in our mind anything which clouds or distracts it, if there is any element of selfishness in our motive, then our service will not be acceptable, however great may be our outer effort or offering. Unless we serve with a tranquil heart, a single mind, a joyous spirit, and wholly without calculation or self-mindfulness, it cannot bring us wisdom or draw us closer to the Ideal.

Another vital requisite in this higher form of service is—it must be done with the whole of ourself. In ordinary life, when we are serving any one, we do not

feel bound to empty our mind of every other thought. A mother may be sewing for her child and all the time she may be thinking of quite other matters. But this does not pass as service in the spiritual life. There can be no division of thought or energy or love. They must all go into each act of service. We must serve "with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our strength and with all our mind." That is the lesson of the widow's mites. The two small coins she gave were paltry, but because they were all she had, they became a royal offering. If we give the whole of ourself, it is a large gift, no matter how small it may seem to be. If on the other hand we have a great deal to offer, but keep something for ourselves, then our offering in God's eyes appears miserly and insignificant. It is by this that spiritual service is measured — not how much we give or how much we have to give, but whether we give the whole.

God covets the whole of our heart, because He knows that with less than that we cannot receive His gifts. They are so abundant that He wishes us to come with the very largest vessel we possess, in order that He may fill it to the brim. It hurts Him when we make it possible for Him to give us only very little. A wise teacher in India used to say that the Great Mother is so indulgent, she never molests her children or forces Herself upon them. She waits patiently until of their own free will they turn to Her. Then in rejoicing she pours out Her blessings upon them without stint. If from day to day we are not gaining in wisdom, if the results of our service to the Ideal seem small, it is because our effort is partial. We are keeping some of ourself in reserve for our own use.

There is still another essential element which must enter into all service of the Ideal. We must not serve for the

joy it brings to us, but for the joy it gives to Him. This is especially true when we serve the Ideal through some living teacher. His desire must govern us, not our own. The least thought of self-gratification destroys at once the value of our service. We must seek through it, not increase of happiness, but increase in power of denial. We may covet the privilege of serving Him directly, but He may wish us rather to serve Him indirectly by rendering service to others. We may wish to do what keeps us near; he may set for us a task which takes us far away. Thus it is told of Nityananda, the beloved disciple of the Great Teacher, Lord Gouranga, that one day the Master called him and said: "You must go to Bengal." Nityananda replied in sorrow: "How can I leave you? The body cannot live without the soul and you are my soul." Lord Gouranga rebuked him, saying: "Because you love me, you do not wish to go away; but we are not in this world to please ourselves." "Yet it breaks my heart to leave you," Nityananda protested weeping. The Lord embraced him with ineffable tenderness and said: "When you suffer in my absence, remember that I too am suffering for you."

To be willing to be "the servant of the servant of the Lord" is regarded in India as the final test of the spirit of service. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto Me" were Christ's words. When we seek to make terms with our Ideal, we lose the power to serve truly and also we deprive ourselves of the blessing which otherwise would inevitably follow. Vedic Sacred Writings are full of instances of illumination gained through unquestioning and uncalculating service. When Satyakama Gabala, it is related, came to the sage Gautama Haridrumata and asked to be taught by him, the lad was given "four hundred weak,

lean cows" and told to lead them forth to pasture. He sought out the high mountain slopes where the grazing was richest and in patient solitude he kept the drove until it numbered a thousand. When he returned, the Upanishad tells us, his face shone as one who had seen God. Again we read of a youth, Upakosala by name, who had tended his master's fires for twelve long years with such unrequited patience that even the sage's wife protested, saying to her husband: "Let not the fires themselves blame you. Teach him." But the teacher went away without having taught him. Still the boy continued to feed the fires, though sadness filled his heart. At last, it is said, the flickering tongues of flame began to instruct him, so that when the master returned he exclaimed: "Friend, your face shines as one who knows Brahman."

Service of an Ideal is a holy and sacred calling, which requires earnest and single-hearted consecration. There is no higher duty. It glorifies even the lowliest life. It makes easy the roughest path. He who undertakes it must feel as one set apart, as no longer belonging to himself. He has become the servant of the Most High. Ever mindful of this, he moves prayerfully through the activities of the day, asking: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Never will the answer fail to come if we ask in sincerity of spirit. It may not take shape in words, but we may be sure that the duty which presents itself is the one for us; and the Gita says: "Better one's own duty, though devoid of merit, than the duty of another, well performed. Better is death in following one's own duty; the duty of another is full of danger."

Let us go forth then to our daily tasks with new courage, new resolution, new love and joyous gratitude that we have a place in the Great Mother's household and may

prove a little useful to Her children. Let us never in our waywardness try to check the working of Her perfect plan, but let us strive to make ourselves eager channels through which She may act and speak and help. If we can learn to serve Her in patience and complete surrender, within our hearts will come from day to day a deeper peace, a larger joy and a growing light of wisdom.

### MUNDAKA-UPANISHAD

*Translated and Commentated by Swami Paramananda*

#### SECOND MUNDAKA

#### PART I

##### I

**This is the truth. As from the blazing fire burst forth thousands of sparks like unto fire, so also, gentle youth, do the various beings spring forth from the Imperishable and return thither again.**

All things have their origin in the Supreme, and the ultimate aim of all life and effort is to be reunited with the Source. The play of manifestation may seem to block the consciousness of the underlying link between the human and the Divine, but sooner or later all souls must regain that consciousness.

##### II

**That effulgent Being is without form; He exists both without and within; He is unborn; without breath and without mind; pure, higher than the High Imperishable.**

Here is given the definition of the Absolute, the Unconditioned, known in the Vedic terminology as *Nirguna-Brahman*. The Absolute cannot be created, therefore He must be without form; because He is infinite, all-pervad-

ing, therefore He must be within and without all things. For the same reason He does not breathe, nor has He need of the instrument of mind for thought. The High Imperishable here refers to the Creative Energy, what is known as *Saguna-Brahman*, that is, Brahman with attributes, or the personal God; while *Nirguna-Brahman* means Brahman without attributes.

## III

From Him are born the Prana (life-force), mind, all the sense organs, ether, air, fire, water, and the earth, support of all.

## IV

Fire is His head, sun and moon are His eyes, the four quarters are His ears, the revealed Vedas are His words, His breath is the air, His heart is the universe, and from His feet came forth the earth. He is the inner Self of all living beings.

## V

From Him comes the fire, whose fuel is the sun; from the moon come the clouds (rain); from the earth come all herbs; the male places the seed in the female, thus many beings are born from the Purusha (the Great Being).

## VI

From Him come the Rik, Saman and Yajur (Vedas), the rites of initiation, all forms of sacrifice, special ceremonies, sacrificial gifts (to the priests), the appointed season (for sacrifice), the sacrificer, and all the worlds which the moon sanctifies and the sun illumines.

## VII

From Him are the various Devas born, the Sadhyas (Genii), men, beasts, birds, the up-breath and the down-breath, corn and barley, austerity, faith, truth, continence, and (Scriptural) injunction.

## VIII

From Him are born the seven Pranas (senses), the seven lights (of sense-perception), the seven fuels (objects of perception), the seven oblations (acts of sense-perception), and the seven lokas (seats) where the senses move; seven in each living being, residing in the heart.

## IX

From Him are born all oceans, mountains and divers rivers. From Him come all herbs and juices, by which the inner self subsists, together with the gross elements.

## X

That Being alone is all this—sacrifice and austerity. All is Brahman, the Highest Immortal. He who knows this (Being) dwelling in the cave of the heart, O gentle youth, cuts asunder even here the knot of ignorance.

In these verses we are given a picture of cosmic creation rising out of Brahman, the Supreme. The first manifestation is Fire (Agni), the giver of light and heat. Heat brings forth life; rain falling upon the earth causes vegetation to spring up, thus food is produced; from food comes the procreative energy. All aspects of being—gods, genii, men and beasts—are directly connected with Him. The Scriptures and all rites and ceremonies have sprung from Him. Every form has its origin in Him.

The seven senses referred to in Verse VIII are the two eyes, two ears, two nostrils and mouth. The seven *lokas* or seats represent the avenues of sense perception. The inner self in Verse IX signifies the subtle body made up of the mind (*manas*), intellect (*buddhi*) and ego (*aham-kara*). He who realizes the all-pervading and eternal Cause of Creation as abiding in his own heart, the Life of his life, attains illumination even here in this body.

(To be continued)

**SWAMI VIVEKANANDA***Extract of Address by Swami Paramananda**(Delivered at Commemorative Birthday Service)*

The best thing a man can do is to live as much as he can like the great men who have lived for an Ideal. I have never known a truer exponent of this than Swami Vivekananda. He was a believer in doing. His great passion was to know the Truth. His motto was to know and after having known, to share it with others. There are many people who renounce the world and give themselves with tremendous zeal to spiritual things; but Swami Vivekananda used to say that there was another renunciation, that after a man has renounced worldly things, he must be willing to renounce the desire to enjoy the spiritual life just for himself. It was that which made him great in his work. He really felt for humanity, so much so that he was sometimes found weeping for the suffering of the poor and afflicted. He was not a mere believer in theories and dogmas. He was an ardent lover — a lover of Truth and a lover of mankind.

He eliminated the term charity absolutely. "Who has need of your charity?" he would ask. "You have need to be grateful that you have the opportunity to render service to your fellow-beings." In one of his poems he cries out: "O lover, give, give. You are the possessor of Infinity, do not say that you cannot give. Give, give, and ask nothing in return. He who asks anything in return, his gift dwindles into nothingness. Why think always of what you can get? Give, give as much as you can."

Unless our life coincides with what we say, our words carry very little weight; but he was that thing which he expressed in his teaching. When people attain the goal, they become one with it. As the Vedic saying is: One who knows the Supreme becomes like unto Him; and it is from



the lives of those knowers of God that we draw our inspiration. It is not the talker, the man of theory who helps us; but the one who knows.

From his boyhood Swami Vivekananda was full of deep longing for the Truth, so he went about asking this one or that one where it could be found. His heart yearned to understand the ultimate purpose of life. Finally in his restless search he was brought to Sri Ramakrishna. Like others he went expecting to find one who was learned. Sri Ramakrishna, however, was unlettered. How could he be great without learning? was his first idea; but as he came closer and closer to Him, he realized that real knowledge is not born from the study of books; it comes from entering into the inner being. In his zeal to realize the Truth, like Buddha, he took up the path of rigid austerity and self-denial; but he concluded that this also did not help one. He found that the end was reached by dropping the self; that as soon as clinging to the little self was gone, the real Truth shone forth by its own light.

A great man lives and passes out; but his thoughts and influence do not pass with him. Those who came in personal contact with Swami Vivekananda were inspired by the great ideals which he had conceived, and the practical results are to be seen in the many Homes of Service and other institutions which have grown up in connection with our work in India. Yet he sought to impress upon all his followers that no one was dependent on him, that each was himself a centre of spiritual power. He was utterly free from egotism and his perfect child-like simplicity showed his real greatness. Often he said to his disciples that he was not a master of any one, he was just one of them. Great men are always very simple. Not much can really be said of them. It is more the subtle feeling we have

about them ; and that is the reason why I repeat again and again that we do not honor a great soul by speaking words of praise of him, but by making our lives like his.

The truly great ones do not come like beggars. They do not seek recognition. They do not care at all for human praise. And this is the spirit which must inspire us. Let us draw our inspiration from such examples of unselfish consecration, that we may mould our lives after theirs and serve the Truth and spread the Truth. Let us try to fill our mind with lofty aspirations, that even in our weak moments we may not forget the Ideal, but that we may rise and go on with fresh courage and new resolution however often we may fail. Let us offer our thanks to the Supreme Being for giving us such living examples to teach us how we may truly love and serve Him.

### REPORT

The Vedanta Centre of Boston observed the Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna on Sunday, Feb. 22nd, by a special Service at which Swami Paramananda delivered a deeply impressive address. In the course of this he said: "Sri Ramakrishna made no claim for Himself. He went on silently, never pretending anything, never asking anything, merely living to express God, and refusing to recognize any but the voice of the Great Divine Being, Whom He called Mother—the Mother of the universe, yet also His own tender, loving, protecting Mother, upon Whom He was as dependent as a little child. He became a priest in a Temple on the Ganges and His duty was to perform the daily worship before an image of the Divine Mother. As He worshipped, that symbol became a living Presence with whom He communed constantly. Wherever He walked, whatever He did, always was Divinity present with Him. He was wholly without learning, yet even the most learned

men came to Him seeking for wisdom and guidance. Why? Because He had gained His knowledge, not through the study of books, but by touching the Fountain-head. Realization of God was a passion with Him, and He wept and struggled and sought until the light burst forth from within. His acceptance of spiritual ideals was universal and His tolerance towards all people, whatever their creed, was without bounds. Mahommedans, Christians and followers of the various Hindu sects found the vital essence of their special form of faith embodied in Him. Keshab Chunder Sen, the leader of the Brahmo-Samaj, said more than once that all that he adored in the life of Jesus or the life of Buddha he found fulfilled in the life of Sri Ramakrishna. And what was the secret of this? His absolute selflessness, His great love for mankind and His perfect simplicity. There are no intricate philosophical discussions in His teaching. His message makes direct appeal to the soul and is so simple that a child can grasp it.

We find in Him the blending of many different ideals. He realized fully the vision of unity. We may theorize about universality, but we shall not know what it means until we gain this vision. Sri Ramakrishna did not try to convert anyone. He merely came and showed what it means to live constantly with God; and by the influence which He radiated, He united the hearts of men. To-day we have need of examples of such catholicity and such vast all-embracing love, which never shrinks from any fellow-man because he feels or thinks differently. It is a benediction when we find such mighty souls living in the flesh, bringing the message of God near to us, making us feel the touch of Divinity. It is these great ones—in themselves so humble, so consecrated, so full of devotion—who destroy the distance between God and man; and because they do this, their service to humanity is incalculable."

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

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VEDANTA MONTHLY

# The Message of the East



APRIL, 1920

Issued by

**THE VEDANTA CENTRE**

1 Queensberry St., Boston, Mass., U. S. A.

**SINGLE COPIES, 20 Cents**

**\$1.50 A YEAR**

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Entered as second class matter May 1, 1915 at the post office  
at Boston, Massachusetts, under the act of March 3, 1879

**PUBLISHED MONTHLY EXCEPT IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER**

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## THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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"And behold the glory of the God of  
Israel came from the way of the East"  
*Ezekiel.*

"Light shall come again from the East"  
*Tyndall.*

Published monthly except in August and September.

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VOL. IX.

APRIL, 1920.

No. 4

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### REINCARNATION AND IMMORTALITY

*By Swami Paramananda*

(Part II of Lecture on "Plato and Vedic Idealism." Continued from  
March Number.)

Plato reaches the greatest heights of his sublime philosophy when he considers the theme of the soul. In the *Republic* he states that the soul of man consists of three parts: the wisdom-loving, the honor-loving and the gain-loving. Of course the soul to which Plato refers here is what the Indo-Aryans call the *Jivatman* or individual soul. It is not the permanent principle in man, but only the reflex of the *Paramatan* or Real Self. The three parts in the Platonic classification correspond to the mind (*manas*), intellect (*buddhi*) and ego (*ahamkara*) which in Vedic philosophy constitute the subtle body of man. This subtle body contains the character and determines the course of the soul after bodily death. It is not, however, the indestructible essence of man's being, although it is much less perishable than the gross physical body. Like the Indo-Aryan sages, Plato lays great emphasis on the distinction between the spiritual and the physical. "The soul is like the divine and the body is like the mortal," he declares; or to quote the words of the Bhagavad-Gita: "These bodies are perishable, but the dwellers in these bodies are eternal, indestructible and impenetrable."

Again Socrates says in *Phaedo*: "The body is a source of endless trouble to us by reason of the mere requirement of food, and also is liable to diseases which overtake and impede us in the search after truth; and by filling us full of loves and lusts and fears and fancies and idols and every sort of folly, prevents our ever having, as people say, so much as a thought. For, whence come wars and fightings and factions? Whence but from the body and the lusts of the body? For wars are occasioned by the love of money, and money has to be acquired for the sake and in the service of the body; and in consequence of all these things the time which ought to be given to philosophy is lost. Moreover, if there is time and inclination towards philosophy, yet the body introduces a turmoil and confusion and fear into the course of speculation and hinders us from seeing the truth; and all experience shows that if we would have pure knowledge of anything, we must be quit of the body, and the soul in herself must behold all things in themselves. In this present life I reckon that we make the nearest approach to knowledge when we have the least possible concern or interest in the body, and are not saturated with the bodily nature, but remain pure until the hour when God Himself is pleased to release us."

As long as we are absolutely identified with the body, we have no access to the domain of the soul. We do not gain soul vision, however, by destroying the body, but by learning to discriminate between the spiritual and the physical, the eternal and the perishable; and by transcending the shifting conditions of bodily life. "The feelings of heat, cold, pleasure, pain are born from the contact of the senses with sense objects; they are with beginning and end, transitory. Therefore endure them. He who is serene and not afflicted by these sensations, but is the same in pleasure and

pain, is fit to attain immortality." Such are the words of Sri Krishna; while Plato expresses it thus: "And thought is best when the mind is gathered into herself and none of the things trouble her—neither sounds nor sights nor pain nor any pleasure,—when she has as little as possible to do with the body and has no bodily sense or feeling, but is aspiring after being."

The Indo-Aryans do not condemn the body or regard it as an evil in itself. It becomes so, they say, when we fail to look upon it merely as an instrument and take it to be all in all. So long as we remain wholly engrossed in the physical, the soul must be like a prisoner, since it can have no freedom for true self-expression. In this Indian philosophy is in accord with Plato when he says: "What is purification but the separation of the soul from the body"; "accustoming her to collect and rally herself from the body on every side, and to dwell alone by herself as much as she can both now and hereafter, released from the bondage of the body?"

This release, however, is not accomplished by bodily death. On the contrary, mere dying will not bring it to us. If we have not realized a life apart from body while we are still in the body, death will not reveal it. Nor is this liberation from physical bondage to be gained through self-torture or practice of severe austerity. Through clear knowledge alone of our soul nature shall we attain it. Free souls, even when they are thrown into the midst of the world, are never overcome by its confusion, because they know how to separate the essential from that which is non-essential. Therefore, they are called in India *Paramahamsas* or great (*para*) swans (*hamsas*), because like the swan, which can take the milk out of the water when mixed with it, they intuitively discriminate between the real and the apparent, between spirit and matter.



If the soul's life is independent of the body, what is the nature of that life? The Vedic Scriptures answer: "The soul is never born, nor does it die. This Ancient One is unborn, eternal, everlasting. It is not slain even though the body is slain." And Plato's answer is: "When death attacks a man, his mortal part dies, but his immortal part retreats before death and goes away safe and indestructible. Beyond all question the soul is immortal and imperishable." When Simmias and Cebes refuse to be convinced of life after death, Socrates thus rebukes them playfully: "Like children you are afraid that the wind will really blow the soul away and disperse her when she leaves the body; especially if a man happens to die in a storm and not in a calm"; at which Cebes laughs and says: "Try and convince us as if we were afraid, Socrates, or rather, do not think that we are afraid ourselves. Perhaps there is a child within us who has these fears. Let us try and persuade him not to be afraid, as if it were a bugbear." In another passage from *Phaedo* we read: "Your favorite doctrine, Socrates, that knowledge is simply recollection, if true, also implies a previous time in which we learned that which we now recollect. But this would not be possible unless our soul was in some place before existing in the human form; here then is another argument for the soul's immortality."

There can be no doubt that Plato possessed as firm and definite a belief in pre-existence and reincarnation as the sages of India. "Our souls existed formerly apart from our bodies," he says. And again: "The souls of the dead must exist somewhere, whence they come into being again, for the soul is strong enough by nature to endure coming into being many times." "They say that the soul of man is immortal, and at one time has an end which is termed dying, and at another time is born again, but is never des-

troyed. . . The soul then being immortal, and having been born many times, and having seen all things that exist, whether in this world or the world below, has knowledge of them all; and it is no wonder that she would be able to call to remembrance all that she ever knew about virtue and about everything; for as all nature is akin and the soul has learned all things, there is no difficulty in her eliciting, or as men say, learning out of a single recollection all the rest, if a man is strenuous and does not faint; for all inquiry and all learning is but recollection." "We must have received our knowledge of all realities before we were born."

Being a true philosopher Plato realized that immortality could not extend in the direction of a future life only; it must extend back into pre-existence also. Eternity must stretch equally backward and forward, because what has no ending cannot have a beginning. This is one of the most salient points in Vedic teaching. Sri Krishna says to his disciple Arjuna: "It is not that I have never existed before, nor thou, nor all these kings. Nor is it that all of us shall cease to exist hereafter. As in this body the embodied soul passes through childhood, youth and old age, in the same manner it goes from one body to another."

How can we explain what we see to-day unless we are able to relate it with what existed yesterday? In the same way, how can we explain our present life unless we relate it with some previous existence? In the cosmic universe nothing happens by chance. There can be no effect without a definite cause, yet often we are confronted here with situations for which we can find no cause in our present life. If, however, we could penetrate the veil which hides the past, we should find the direct cause of all these happenings. The understanding of the unbroken continuity of life and of the unfailing working of just law, will remove

from our mind the idea that the destiny of man is controlled by an arbitrary Deity, or that we are the creatures of fate.

Immortality, however, is not a mere dogma or theory, which can be settled by argument or intellectual study. It is the profoundest fact of our being and can be realized only through whole-hearted consecration. One who has not the realization of it, however much he may try to fortify himself by learning and science, will prove inadequate when he faces the vital problems of the Unseen. The conviction that soul is immortal removes all sense of impatience. As soon as a man fully grasps it, he no longer feels the need to fulfill the whole purpose of life in this little span. He does not rush headlong, uneasy lest he may lose opportunities which will never come again. He knows that Eternity lies behind him and before him and all about him, and that he stands as a witness of that Eternity, as a part of that Eternity. At once he is shorn of all fear—fear of disease or death or loss. “Any man whom you see grieving at the approach of death, is after all no lover of wisdom, but a lover of body. He is also most likely a lover either of wealth or of honor or, it may be, of both,” Plato declares.

Also in describing the last hours of his Master he writes: “Socrates smiled and said: ‘O Simmias, how strange that is; I am not very likely to persuade other men that I do not regard my present situation as a misfortune, if I am unable to persuade you; and you will keep fancying that I am at all more troubled now than at any other time. Will you not allow that I have as much of the spirit of prophecy in me as the swans? For they, when they perceive that they must die, having sung all their life long, do then sing more than ever, rejoicing in the thought that they are about to go away to the God whose ministers they are. But men,

because they are themselves afraid of death, slanderously affirm of the swans that they sing a lament at the last, not considering that no bird sings when cold or hungry or in pain." This is the test. No man who has not the vision, who has not the fact of immortality clearly established in his heart, can remain tranquil and exalted at the hour of death or of calamity.

What do we learn from this comparative study? Do we find any fundamental differences? No, on the contrary, we realize more vividly that the deeper feelings and aspirations of the human heart are everywhere the same. If we are willing to set aside all barriers of prejudice and our personal likes and dislikes, we cannot fail to discover the underlying unity in all thought and life. When our spiritual sight is opened, we turn away from all the non-essentials; our eye becomes single; and through this singleness of vision we are able to perceive the Divine, which is the final goal of all philosophy and all the religions of the world.

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### THE ASCENT OF THE SOUL

*Vision of Mechthild of Hackeborn*

(A Benedictine Nun and Mystic, 13th Century.)

On *Esto Mihi* (Quinquagesima) Sunday, she heard the Beloved of her soul, Jesus, saying to her in the sweet whisper of love: "Wilt thou abide with Me on the mountain, these forty days and nights?" And the soul: "O how gladly, my Lord; this is what I wish, this is what I desire." Then He showed her a high mountain of wondrous greatness from the east even to the west, having seven steps by which it was ascended, and seven fountains. And, taking her up, He came to the first step, which was called the step of humility; on which was a fountain of water, washing the soul from all the sins that pride committed. After this they

ascended the second, which was called the step of meekness; with the fountain of patience, cleansing the soul from the stains which anger caused.

Then ascending to the third, which was called the step of love, there was the fountain of charity, in which the soul was washed from all the sins which hatred wrought. On this step God stayed with the soul a little while. Then the soul fell at the feet of Jesus; and forthwith that most sweet organ, the honey-sweet voice of Christ, sounded, saying: "Arise, my love; let me see thy countenance." And all the company of angels and saints, who were on the summit of the mountain, re-echoed the sweet marriage-song of love, with God and in God, as though it were one voice, so sweetly, and accompanied it, with such sweet harmony, that human speech suffices not to express it.

Next they ascended the fourth, which was called the step of obedience; the fountain was of holiness, cleansing the soul from all things that disobedience did. After this they came to the fifth, which was the step of continence; and the fountain of liberality, purging the soul from all things which avarice committed, for she did not use creatures either for her own utility, or for the praise of God as she should have done.

And soon, ascending the sixth, which was called that of chastity, they came to the fountain of divine purity, purifying the soul from all the desires wherewith the flesh offended. There the soul saw the Lord and herself clothed alike in white raiment. Thence to the seventh step, which was called spiritual joy; the fountain was heavenly joy, washing the soul from all the sins of sloth; but that fountain did not flow freely like the others, but trickled by little and little, drop by drop; for no one, as long as he is in this life, can fully attain to heavenly joy; but it is as a drop, or, at least, nothing in comparison with the truth.

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**QUESTION**

*By G. O. W.*

O thou that cravest shelter,  
My bread and wine to share,  
Wilt thou take, at My table,  
Unquestioning—My fare?

When My feast lies before thee  
And when no other guest  
Shall share thy bread of solitude—  
Will this to thee seem best?

And though from bitter vineyards  
Is drawn My lonely wine,  
Man, may I fill thy trembling cup  
Full to the brim,—like Mine?

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**WHAT IS DEATH?**

*Lecture by Sister Devamata*

Death is the counterpart of life. Every moment that we live, we are dying. Life and death are merely two sides of a something which is change, and we know that without change life on this plane cannot continue. Whenever in the created universe motion or change ceases, disintegration begins. We play and work incessantly to prevent stagnation and induce change in our system; why then should we shrink from that culminating change called death and believe it to be an enemy? In reality, unless there were something constantly dying in us, we should cease to live. Life only comes from life. Each breath means that myriads of little creatures are offering themselves up for our life's sake. Our physical organism is a perpetual altar of sacrifice, on which the fire of old life burns that like a leaping flame new life may rise. When we enter into relation with

the deeper facts of Nature, we learn to look upon death as we look upon life; and we do not recoil from the consummation of the process without which we would not live at all.

Birth here must always mean death somewhere else; because it is no more possible for existence to spring from non-existence than for a positive quantity to come from the multiplying of zeros. The first little cry of the new-born baby does not announce a new life for the soul; it merely marks its entrance into a new environment and experience. The basic units of creation are eternal. Something cannot come out of nothing or go into nothing. It follows then that whatever is always must have been and always will be. And this applies to the individual consciousness as truly as to the material elements of the body. Forms change. Chemical elements compose, decompose and recompose elsewhere. Physical forces gather and scatter, making and breaking these created things to which we cling. But as we watch this ceaseless change, there is in us a self-identity which persists.

This sense of I-ness, like all other fundamental forms of being, cannot have come from nothing, nor can it melt into nothingness. It is as indestructible as the ultimate units of force and matter. It may expand until it breaks the bonds of selfishness and becomes as vast as the universe; or it may contract to the narrow limits of this body; but always it is there. It cannot be annihilated, because it is the vital part of us—the very witness of our existence. Let us try to destroy it or to imagine ourselves as dead. We cannot. We can picture our body lying dead, but always we stand beside it looking at it. It is impossible for us to conceive of complete annihilation. It would seem therefore that belief in the indestructibility of life must constitute one of the fundamental facts of our consciousness.

Why then do we hold to life with such feverish anxiety? Because we have not yet convinced ourselves that it cannot be taken from us; and being our greatest treasure, instinctively we tighten our grasp upon it. Nor is this wrong. Nature meant us to cling to it, but not in the narrow personal sense in which we now conceive it. We think of it as something in us, which we possess. We must reverse our conception. Life is not in us. We are in it. We bathe in it. We are immersed in it. It covers us and flows over us in inexhaustible stream. It enfolds us eternally. It is the one thing from which we cannot escape, the one thing we cannot lose. Of what then shall we be afraid? Our fear of death springs from a false idea of what life is and where it is seated. We have identified it too closely with mere bodily existence. The body is only the outer garment of life. We put it on for convenience' sake, as we clothe ourselves when we go into the street. It is of the greatest use to us and we should give it the best of care; but also we should wear it lightly, ready to throw it aside like a worn-out dress when its use is over.

Some people justify their attachment to this body and environment by saying that change of form involves loss of time. But the child could as well claim that it would be an economy of time and effort for him to remain year after year in the same room at school. These various life-fragments are like different school grades. In each we have specific lessons to learn; and when they are learned, whether in few years or many, it is essential for our development that we pass on to other grades. The body we have at any moment is the product of an experience already outgrown. Our vision always stretches far beyond it; and every practice of austerity, every exercise in technique of any kind, is merely an attempt to make it respond to a



larger and larger demand. When the limit of its power of response is reached, we should be glad to exchange it for a new one better adapted to our purpose.

Mr. F. H. Pike makes plain the advantage of this in an article on "The Place of Death in Evolution" printed in the *Journal of Heredity*. "The limitations to possible change during the life-time of any individual," he writes, "preclude changes of sufficient magnitude for purposes of evolution. The death of the unmodifiable organism may be considered as an adaptation from the point of view of the species." Nor is there any waste of time in making the change. The experiences of childhood enrich our consciousness in their way quite as much as those of riper years. They are as helpful to others also. Who serves a higher purpose in a household than a little child? Who brings a deeper joy? Who teaches a truer unselfishness? No one condition or age is more productive of benefit than another, either to ourselves or to others. Each offers unique opportunities for growth and service. Therefore we have no logical ground for wishing to extend our present life or to cut it short. We should leave that to the normal course of law. Neither our unfoldment nor our happiness depends upon the number of our years, but upon the fervor of consecration with which we live them.

If we are eternally existent, then why this age-long journey from form to form? No question rises more insistently in the searching mind than this. Unfortunately where it is asked, it cannot be answered. Could we understand the answer, we would not ask the question; for the question implies an ignorance of what life is. The soul has not plunged into the finite. It is as infinite to-day as before it began this apparent round of material manifestation. Its life is just as unbroken and continuous. These successive

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finite lives are like waves breaking on its surface. They cannot alter its nature. Still is it infinite and eternal. That is why our inner being gives such unwilling assent to the idea of death, and why we are so restless in this cage of the finite. All these countless lives through which we pass are solely to teach us that we are deathless, immortal, unchanging. Merely repeating it day after day and year after year, however, would not convince us. We must prove it to ourselves by living and dying many times.

To transcend death we must find, while still in this body, that inner principle of life which death cannot reach. It is useless, we know, to look for it in our body, since science tells us that all its particles are renewed in the short space of a year. That is, once in every twelve months physically we die and are reborn. We are not aware of it, because it occurs gradually and in the same environment. But what reason have we to believe that that seemingly more radical renewal which we call death may not seem as natural and may not produce as little sense of altered condition?

The mind also cannot be taken as the seat of permanent being, for it is kaleidoscopic in its endless changes. A chance meeting, the reading of a book, a single occurrence may transform it completely. The same changefulness is apparent in our moral nature, for do we not see it growing as we grow? That which possesses the quality of persistent continuity must lie beyond—in that vital centre of our being where we touch God or Pure Existence. This being so, shall we hope to cheat death by prolonging the life of this body? Or shall we escape from its haunting presence by giving ourselves to this ever-dying outer world? No; if we do not wish to be death's frequent companion, one course only is open to us—we must ally ourselves with the undying.

It is not logical to suppose that Nature would have led the individual life-unit on through eons of unfoldment to stop short with mere body consciousness or even mind consciousness. Of what use to perfect a machine and then grant neither sufficient time nor occasion to discover its true use and possibilities? The aim of life is not a perfect physical development. It is not the accumulation of learning, nor yet the development of a lofty standard of virtue. The ultimate end of life is to reveal to man the vital fact of his deathlessness. The instant that he realizes this, rivalry, selfishness, all human weakness and struggle, will vanish; because they rest upon the erroneous belief that life and its opportunities are limited.

We need more than one body, however, to teach us this lesson. We must outlive many bodies before we are convinced beyond all doubt that we partake of an imperishable, universal existence. So long as we consider ourselves isolated entities, each with rival interests and a little life of his own, death will press hard upon us, casting its shadow over our brightest joy. But when we realize the solidarity of life and interest throughout the universe, death will lose its power and sting. It is the little self which lives and dies. If we can forget that and lift our thought to a larger sphere, even while here in this body we shall live in the infinite and eternal.

Instead of recoiling from death, let us recognize its utility. Let us be glad that all these material things, which impede our free march onward, are destined to wear out and fall away. We should be too weighted with matter, were this not so. Change and decay create spaces for expansion of life. They make possible a richer fruition. The dead leaves of the autumn blanket and fertilize the ground for the new growth of the spring. So, as one bodily life

falls, it passes on to the next one a store of garnered experience and understanding.

For the wise man death means a resurrection, not a burial. He sees in it the promise of a more efficient bodily instrument to work with, of added attainment, of a wider contact with Reality. Like an eager explorer, he sets out joyfully on each new lap in the journey which is leading him steadily out of the realm of death into the full consciousness of life everlasting.

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### MAN'S DUAL NATURE

*From the Hermes Trismegistus*

(Passage in a "Sermon to Asclepius." Egyptian Teaching. Date unknown.)

Ye earth-born folk, why have ye given up yourselves to Death, while yet ye have the power of sharing Deathlessness? Repent, O ye, who walk with Error arm in arm and make of Ignorance the sharer of your board; get ye from out the light of Darkness, and take your part in Deathlessness, forsake Destruction!

\* \* \*

It is for reasons such as these, Asclepius, man is a mighty wonder,—an animal meet for our worship and for our respect.

For he doth pass into God's nature, as though himself were God. He thinketh little of the part of human nature in him, from confidence in the divineness of his other part.

How much more happy is the blend of human nature than all the rest! Joined to the Gods by his cognate divinity, a man looks down upon the part of him by means of which he's common with the Earth.

The rest of things to which he knows he's kin, by reason of the heavenly order in him, he binds unto himself with bonds of love; and thus he turns his gaze to Heaven.

So, then, man hath his place in the more blessed station of the Midst; so that he loves those below himself, and in his turn is loved by those above.

Heaven seems not too high for him; for it is measured by the wisdom of his mind as though it were quite near.

No darkness of the air obstructs the penetration of his mind. No density of earth impedes his work. No depth of water blunts his sight.

*Asclepius*:—What, then, Thrice-greatest one, has caused it that man should be planted in the world, and should not pass his life in highest happiness in that part (of the universe) where there is God?

*Trismegistus*:—Rightly thou questionest, O (my) Asclepius! The Lord and Maker of all things, whom we call rightly God, when from Himself He made the second, the Visible and Sensible (the Cosmos),—I call him sensible not that he hath sensation in himself, but that he is the object of the senses of those who see;—when, then, He made him first, but second to Himself, and that he seemed to Him (most) fair, as one filled to the full with goodness of all things, He fell in love with him as being part of His Divinity.

Accordingly that he was so mighty and so fair, He willed that some one else should have the power to contemplate the one He had made from Himself. And thereon He made man,—the imitator of His Reason and His Love.

And so when He perceived that the “essential” (man) could not be lover of all things, unless He clothed him in a cosmic carapace, He shut him in within a house of body; and ordered it that all men should be so; from either nature making him a single blend and fair-proportioned mixture.

Therefore hath He made man of soul and body; that is, of an eternal and a mortal nature; so that an animal thus

blended can content his dual origin—admire and worship things in Heaven, and cultivate and govern things on Earth.

No other thing ensouled, of gods or animals, can do this thing, save man alone. 'Tis in the admiration, adoration, (and) the praise of men, and in their acts of worship, that Heaven and Heaven's hosts find their delight.

Some then, though they be very few, endowed with the Pure Mind, have been entrusted with the sacred charge of contemplating Heaven.

Whereas those men who, from the two-fold blending of their nature, have not yet withdrawn their inner reason from their body's mass, are appointed for the study of the elements and all that is below them.

Thus man's an animal; yet not indeed less potent in that he's partly mortal, but rather doth he seem to be all the more fit and efficacious for reaching Certain Reason, since he has had mortality bestowed on him as well.

For it is plain he could not have sustained the strain of both, unless he had been formed out of both natures, so that he could possess the powers of cultivating earthly things and loving Heaven.

He knows himself; he knows the world as well. So that he recollects indeed what is convenient to his own parts. He calls to mind what he must use, that they may be of service to himself; giving the greatest praise and thanks to God, His image reverencing,—not ignorant that he is too God's image, the second one; for that there are two images of God—Cosmos and man.

So that it comes to pass that, since man's is a single structure,—in that part (of him) which doth consist of Soul, and Sense, of Spirit, and of Reason, he's divine; so that he seems to have the power to mount from as it were the higher elements into the Heaven.

But in his cosmic part, which is composed of fire, and water, and of air, he stayeth mortal on the Earth—lest he should leave all things committed to his care forsaken and bereft.

Thus human kind is made in one part deathless, and in the other part subject to death while in a body.

Now of that dual nature,—that is to say of man,—there is a chief capacity. And that is piety, which goodness follows after. And this capacity then, and then only, seems to be perfected, if it be fortified with the virtue of despising all desires for alien things.

For alien from every part of kinship with the Gods are all things on the Earth, whatever are possessed from bodily desires,—to which we rightly give the name “possessions,” in that they are not born with us, but later on begin to be possessed by us; wherefore we call them by the name possessions.

All such things, then, are alien from man,—even his body. So that we can despise not only what we long for, but also that from which the vice of longing comes to us.

For just as far as the increase of reason leads our soul, so far one should be man; in order that by contemplating the Divine, one should look down upon and disregard the mortal part, which hath been joined to him through the necessity of helping the lower world. . .

Man, the being thus created and composed, and to such ministry and service set by Highest God; man, by his keeping suitably the world in proper order, and by his piously adoring God, in both becomingly and suitably obeying God's Good Will; man being such as this, with what reward think'st thou he should be recompensed? . . .

That this may be the pleasure of God's Love, such is our prayer for you, devoted ones.

In other words, may He, when ye have served your time, and have put off the world's restraint, and freed yourselves from deathly bonds, restore you pure and holy to the nature of your Higher Self, that is of the Divine!

### MUNDAKA-UPANISHAD

*Translated and Commentated by Swami Paramananda*

#### SECOND MUNDAKA

##### PART II

###### I

**Shining, well-seated in the heart, moving in the heart, is the Great Being, the Support of all.. In Him all is fixed, whatsoever moves, breathes and winks. Know Him who is both being and non-being, who is beyond the reach of human understanding, the highest and most adorable One.**

The Supreme Lord abides in every heart and from Him alone springs all activity. Nothing can exist apart from Him. In Him the whole universe is centred. He is both formful and formless. He is present in all the forms we see, yet we cannot lay our hands on any form and say "This is God." He is both personal and impersonal. He is the manifested and the unmanifested (being and non-being). He is the final goal of all effort.

###### II

**That which is effulgent, subtler than the subtlest, on which all worlds and those who dwell in them rest, that is the imperishable Brahman; that is Prana (breath), that is speech and mind. That is the true, that is the Immortal. That mark is to be hit. Hit it, O gentle youth!**

###### III

**Having taken the Upanishad, the great weapon, as the bow; and having fixed in it the arrow, sharpened by stead-**



fast devotion; then having drawn it with the mind fixed on the Supreme, hit that mark—the Imperishable, O gentle youth!

#### IV

The sacred word Om is the bow, the Atman (Self) is the arrow, Brahman (the Supreme) is said to be the mark. That mark should be hit by one who is watchful and self-possessed. Then as the arrow becomes one with the mark, so will he become one with the Supreme.

We have here a poetic and archaic picture of the process of realizing the Supreme. The study of the Upanishads is abstract. They deal with the Infinite. But the sages who give the teaching contained in them try by similes to relate these abstract truths with our life here. The aim of all our striving is the Absolute and Eternal; careful study of the Scriptures, constant practice of meditation, and untiring devotion serve as the means by which we attain it.

In the next verse the teacher makes it still more definite. *Om*, the *Logos* or Word that was in the beginning, is taken as the bow, the soul of man is the arrow and the Infinite is the mark. To hit the mark the mind must be wholly collected. An illustration of this is given in the Mahabharata. Arjuna and his kinsmen, it is told, were called to a contest in archery. The target was the eye of a fish raised on a high pole. Their teacher asked each one in turn, "What do you see?" And they all described the whole fish. But when Arjuna was asked, he replied: "I see only the eye of the fish;" and he alone hit it. If our mind is divided or scattered we cannot meditate; and without the power of meditation we cannot gain direct perception of the Imperishable. When we do gain this perception what happens? We become one with the Supreme. The knower of God partakes of His nature.

## V

**In Him are fixed the heaven, the earth, the sky and the mind with all the senses. Know Him to be the Self of all, and abandon all vain words. He is the bridge to immortality.**

There can be no form of manifested life apart from Him. When we understand this and realize Him as the essence of our being, we lose attachment for mortal things and cease to lay so much stress on lower knowledge. "Vain words" here signifies theoretical speculation, book knowledge, everything in fact which fosters our egotism or pride and does not lead to ultimate Truth. Thus knowledge of God serves as the bridge over which we cross from the mortal to the immortal.

## VI

**Where the nerves of the body meet together as the spokes in the nave of a wheel, there the Atman dwells, variously manifested. Meditate upon that Atman as Om. May there be no obstacle in thy crossing to the other side of darkness!**

The seat of this Divine Principle in us is the heart. This inner Principle or soul is in itself unchanging, but it appears to take the modifications of the mind, such as joy, grief, anger, jealousy, hatred, love, etc. Thus it manifests variously. Since *Om* is the ultimate Name of the Supreme and *Atman* is identical with the Supreme, by meditating on *Om* as the *Atman* we direct our thoughts toward the highest and thus pass beyond the darkness of ignorance.

## VII

**He who is all-knowing and all-perceiving, to whom belongs all the glory of the universe, that Self dwells in the heavenly city of Brahman (the heart).**

## VIII

**He takes the form of mind and becomes the ruler of the body and the senses. Being in the heart, He sustains the body by food. The wise, who realize this, behold Him shining forth, immortal and all-blissful.**

## IX

**When He is seen, who is both high and low, the fetters of the heart are broken, all doubts are cut asunder, and all Karma (bondage of work) is destroyed.**

When the vision of Him, Who is all there is, high or low, subtle or gross, vast or small, dawns within us, the heart is at once freed from the fetters of attachment, egotism and every form of selfishness; all the perplexities and doubts of the mind are cleared away. This does not happen when we gain intellectual knowledge only. The more we read and analyze, the more confused and entangled the mind becomes. But when we behold God directly, at once all the darkness of doubt disappears in the glory of His self-effulgent light, as the night goes when the morning comes. That brightness no one can define. As long as we need someone to prove Truth to us, we have not found it. But when His light shines in our heart, Truth becomes self-evident. Without this light the outside world will always be full of shadows for us; but when that light is found, the whole universe glows with its radiance. Then all the chains of Karma—past, present and future—are shattered, and the soul enjoys perfect freedom.

## X

**That stainless indivisible Brahman, pure, light of all lights, dwells in the innermost golden sheath (the core of the heart.) Thus do the knowers of Self know Him.**

## XI

**The sun does not shine there, nor the moon, nor the stars,**

**nor do these lightnings shine there, much less this fire. When He shines, everything shines after Him; by His light all is lighted.**

This same verse also appears in the Katha-Upanishad, Part V, v. 15.

## XII

**That immortal Brahman is before, that Brahman is behind, that Brahman is to the right and to the left; that Brahman extends above and below. The Supreme Brahman alone is the whole universe.**

(To be continued)

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## REPORT

Swami Paramananda left for the West on February 29th. He stopped in Cincinnati for four days, during which he delivered three afternoon and three evening lectures. A gentleman there, who met and heard the Swami for the first time, writes of his visit: "The Swami spoke at the New Thought Temple on Monday afternoon and gave five lectures at the Hotel Gibson. The Assembly Room of the hotel was filled or nearly filled at every meeting. He stood at the extreme end of the room and chairs were placed close up to him. Thursday was a rainy disagreeable day, but people came out both in the afternoon and in the evening just the same. A great many attended all the lectures; and I know many felt as I did, reluctant to let him go. His message of spiritual truth went straight to the hearts of his listeners. I sat in the rear of the room and was in a favorable position to feel the pulse of the audience. I assure you it was a spiritual feast for hungry, starved souls; and the people lost themselves as they sat silently drinking in the truths which he gave them. He aroused the devotional

side of his hearers and lifted them to heights of spiritual insight and understanding that were wholly new to them. He did not seek any oratorical effect; it was what was transmitted through his simplicity, his gentleness, his poise and his spiritualized nature."

Another letter reads: "I cannot tell you what interesting and enlightening addresses the Swami has been giving us. He has had a most faithful and appreciative following, so much so that he feels encouraged to come back to us." From Cincinnati the Swami went to Louisville for three days, holding in all five meetings while there. He then continued his journey to California, reached Los Angeles on March 11th, and began his season there on the 14th.

\* \* \* \*

The Reports of the Relief Work carried on by the Ramakrishna Mission in India, which reach us, show over how large an area their loving service now spreads. A recent letter from Swami Dhyanananda tells of active efforts to relieve the famine-stricken inhabitants in a district of Burma. A ravaging flood added to a serious pest of caterpillars had completely destroyed the crops, thus reducing the population to a state of complete starvation. For several months the Mission fed 850 families daily, besides distributing over 8000 pounds of rice and other articles of food to sufferers requiring only momentary aid. More than 1000 sick were cared for, and seeds were distributed to cultivators. Clothes were supplied wherever needed, and in some cases money was given. We are sure that added to this material succor, the workers carried to each heart new courage and energy; for it is characteristic of the Mission's labors everywhere that they bring to those whom they help, a larger outlook on life and a new sense of its opportunities.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—*Rig-Veda*

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VEDANTA MONTHLY

# The Message of the East



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MAY, 1920  
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Issued by

**THE VEDANTA CENTRE**

1 Queensberry St., Boston, Mass., U. S. A.

**SINGLE COPIES, 20 Cents**

**\$1.50 A YEAR**

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Entered as second class matter May 1, 1915 at the post office  
at Boston, Massachusetts, under the act of March 3, 1879

**PUBLISHED MONTHLY EXCEPT IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER**

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## **Chapel of the Vedanta Centre**

**1 Queensberry Street, Fenway  
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**Swami Paramananda**

**of India in charge**

**TWELFTH SEASON—1920**



**SUNDAY, 11 A. M.**

**SERVICE WITH ADDRESS**

**SUBJECTS**

*May 2nd How We May Control Our Destiny*  
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*May 16th Faith, Belief and Vision*  
*May 23rd Pre-existence and Life Hereafter*  
*May 30th Occultism and Its Dangers*

**VESPER SERVICE SUNDAY 5 P. M.**

**(Meditation, Music, and Short Address.)**

**Public cordially invited to both Services.**



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## THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

—  
"And behold the glory of the God of  
Israel came from the way of the East"  
*Ezekiel.*

"Light shall come again from the East"  
*Tyndall.*

Published monthly except in August and September.

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VOL. IX.

MAY, 1920.

No. 5

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### THE ETERNAL PRESENCE

*By Swami Paramananda*

(Given at the Sunday Vesper Service)

Outer conditions and circumstances have very little influence upon us when we have the grasp of eternal things. When the Eternal Presence becomes a reality to us, we find our strength and inspiration even in the midst of the greatest sorrow. Not only can we meet all difficulties with calmness, but we have even a sense of joyousness as we face them. Instead of being thwarted by them, we come to regard them as blessings. The power of the Spirit always rules over matter. If through the meditative life we gain higher understanding and learn to manifest our spiritual nature, material things will affect us very little. All the small undesirable elements which now disturb us will vanish and this world will become heavenly.

Who makes the world heavenly? Human beings. Through their conduct and superior understanding they can change the whole atmosphere of the world. If, instead of seeing only the material and changeable, we will begin to feel more related to the eternal and unchanging, we shall awaken to a new sphere of consciousness. Yet although it may seem new, it was always there, for it is eternally existent. In the hour of loneliness or perplexity, if we can be con-



scious of that great Presence, we shall never feel lost. Those who cultivate such habits are never disconnected from the Source, and they become invincible. Evil does not overcome them, they overcome evil.

When we reach this state, we possess such superior strength that even the most aggressive person feels powerless before us. We cannot convince a man or turn him from his weakness by merely arguing with him or fighting him, but often we completely transform him by showing him something higher. We see this in the lives of truly great men. They are full of love and brotherly sympathy and compassion, and, above all, of the spirit of the Infinite; the small things naturally have no importance for them, so they are able to meet their fellow-men on a higher plane and they call out what is noblest in them.

When we evolve this consciousness, not only do we deal a death-blow to our own unhappiness, but also we remove a part of the world's unhappiness, because we strike another note. To be able to do this, however, we must go deep into our own nature. It is not a matter of talking and theorizing; it is a matter of finding. And where? Where can we gain access to Divinity except in our own soul? How can we make acquaintance with our inner powers except within ourselves? As soon as we learn to go deep down into our own inner nature, we begin to be imbued with a new understanding. A more expanded consciousness dawns in our heart, and it is through this that we are freed from all petty feelings and limitations. All the ethical lessons we learn through books or Scriptures, about love and charity and service, never seem to us really true and never become an inherent part of our daily life until we gain this larger consciousness. But when we have gained it, we do not fear death even;

because we overcome death through a new consciousness of life, a life which is undying. We have no more fear of anything, because we have found that One Who stands supreme and that One is our own.

This consciousness of the Presence of Divinity or God is not a matter of name and form. It makes no difference by what name we call Him. It is an inner awakening, a spiritual conception. When we attain it, we drop all dispute regarding the nature of God or the nature of the soul. We believe in God because we know Him. We call Him all-loving, because we have proved His all-loving nature in our own soul. We speak of Him as almighty and infinite, because we have found Him to be so. Only when our spiritual ideal has thus become a reality, do we become religious. We do not become religious by merely belonging to a creed or church, however lofty or noble. It is by finding this Reality within us. We can never convince any one else regarding our spiritual faith until we have convinced ourselves. And when we are absolutely convinced, we shall not need to go about preaching our faith; we shall do our preaching by our silent actions. Our conduct, our life, our every thought, our very presence will preach. Example teaches much more than words. The greatest lessons we learn about self-control are not from books, but from some one who has subdued his passions and lower propensities and shows complete mastery of himself. That living example makes an impression and we carry that impression with us.

It is a matter of living and to live Truth we must find it directly for ourselves. That is the purpose of our spiritual study and practice. Devotion, prayer, meditation, philosophic discrimination, all help us towards our spiritual upliftment that we may have direct perception of

our Ideal. If we do not accomplish that, all our efforts are vain. That is, if we lose sight of the fundamental fact that realization must be our aim and goal, we may go on adding one superficial effort to another, but they will bring very small results. The spirit of Reality must be kept alive in us. We must hold fast to the sense of the Eternal Presence. But no one can do this for us. We must do it for ourselves. Let us try in all earnestness. We owe it to ourselves, for the soul's welfare should be the foremost consideration of every mortal. If we fail in this, we are failing in the fundamental principle of life, as well as in the first duty towards ourselves and towards our fellow-men.

Let us strive anew to consecrate all our thoughts and feelings to Him. He is the Eternal among all fleeting things. He is the consciousness in all conscious beings. He is the One in the midst of many. He it is Who fulfillest the desires of every heart. He is the Source and Sustainer of all, the Giver of all good, the Bestower of all blessedness. May He grant us steadfast devotion and kindle in our soul the consciousness of His loving Presence, that we may never forget Him or fail to abide by His Will. May He remove from our hearts all harshness, all egotism, all discordant and alien feelings, that we may live in Him in harmony, love and peace. May His Peace be upon us and upon all living beings.

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Let thine all be filled out of Him, albeit His whole cannot be contained by thine. He will fill thee utterly, and superabound in Himself. If the vessel fails not, the oil is enough. As long as thou hast the vessel, He ceases not to pour in the oil; and when thou hast not a vessel more, still has He more oil. —*Hugh of St. Victor, 12th century.*

**ECSTASY***By Harindranath Chattopadhyaya**(A new Hindu poet, only 19 years of age, a Bengalee by birth, but writing directly in English.)*

O make my burning blood Thy sparkling wine  
 For Thee to drink at pleasure and rejoice!  
 Transmute my flesh into a song divine  
 For Thee at will to voice!

Transform my tears into a silver shower,  
 To mingle with Thy rivers clear and white.  
 O! make my laughter an enchanted flower  
 To blossom in Thy light.

Fashion a banner out of my desire,  
 And float it on Thy Palace, secret King!  
 Cleanse Thou my life with rich, relentless fire  
 Of endless suffering!

O! make each word I speak a crystal prayer,  
 Each thought I think, a deathless Temple-flame,  
 Strike on the anvil of my heart's despair  
 The solace of Thy Name.

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The Loved One is not concealed from thee,  
 O thou obstruction round about thy soul!  
 Thou thyself hast become thine own veil,  
 Standing obdurate in scepticism's path.

*—Mirza Khan.*

Thou that wouldst find the Lost One, lose thyself  
 For nought but self divides thyself from Him,  
 Ask ye how I o'erpassed the dreary void?  
 One little step beyond myself was all.

*—Akhlāq-i-Jalālī.*

### HOW GOD MAY BE SEEN

*From the Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*

*M.*—Sir, how may one fix one's mind upon God?

*Sri Ramakrishna*—To that end one must chant without ceasing the Name of God and His great attributes. One ought always to mix in the company of holy men. One must go among the Lord's devotees or those who have given up the things of this world for the sake of the Lord. It is, no doubt, hard to fix one's mind upon God in the midst of the world's cares and anxieties. Therefore one must go into solitude now and then in order to meditate upon Him. In the first stage of one's life in the Spirit, one cannot do without solitude.

When plants are young they have need of a hedge about them for their protection; else goats and cows will eat them up. The mind, the retired corner and the forest are the three places of meditation. One should also practise discrimination between the Real (God) and the unreal (the phenomenal world). It is thus that one will be able to shake off one's attachment to things of the world, to sensual pleasures, wealth, fame, power.

The tortoise moveth about in water in quest of food; where, thinkest thou, abideth her mind? On the bank of the river, to be sure, where her eggs are laid. In the same way thou mayest go about doing thy work in the world, but take good care that thy mind always resteth upon the Hallowed Feet of the Lord.

Suppose thou enterest into the world without acquiring by spiritual practice a love for the Lord. Then, depend upon it, thou wilt get entangled. Misfortune, grief and the various ills of the flesh will make thee lose the balance of thy mind. The more thou wilt throw thyself into the affairs of the world and trouble thyself with

worldly matters, the more will be thy attachment to the world.

Rub thy hand with oil if thou wishest to break the jack-fruit open; otherwise the milky exudation from the fruit will stick to thy hands. First get the oil of devotion, anoint thy hand and then deal with the affairs of the world. But to this end solitude is the one thing needful. Suppose thou wantest to make butter. Let the curds be set in a place beyond the reach of other people. The curds will not stand if disturbed. The next step for thee is to churn, seated in a quiet place.

The world may be likened to water and the mind to milk. Pure milk once mixed in water cannot be got back into the pure state again. Its purity is kept, if it is first turned into butter and then placed in water. Let then the milk of thy mind be turned into the butter of Divine Love by means of religious practices in solitude. The butter will never get mixed with the water but will come up to the surface. Thy mind likewise will remain unattached to the world. Though in the world it will not be of the world. True knowledge of devotion being attained, the mind will now stand apart from the world—unattached to it. Along with this, practise discrimination; lust and gold are unreal, the one reality is God.

*M.*—Sir, is it possible to see God?

*Sri Ramakrishna*—Certainly. These are some of the means by which one can see God: going from time to time into solitude; chanting His names and His attributes; discrimination; earnest prayer, with a yearning for the Lord.

*M.*—Sir, what state of the mind leadeth up to God-vision?

*Sri Ramakrishna*—Cry unto the Lord with a yearning

heart and then thou shalt see Him. The rosy light of the dawn cometh before the rising sun. Likewise is a longing and yearning heart the sign of the God-vision that cometh after.

Thou mayst see God if thy love for Him is as strong as these three attachments put together: the attachment of a worldly man to things of the world, the attachment of the mother to her child, and the attachment of a chaste and devoted wife to her husband. The thing is, in order to see God one must love Him, heart and soul.

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### **REALIZATION**

*By S. E. Waldo*

Behind everything that we see or know or think or even imagine is that one infinite ocean of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, that alone makes possible the known universe. A tiny drop of that ocean, as it were, gets caught in the network of time, space and causation and forms this world of experience. We can all see the world around us, the world of endless variety and ceaseless change. No one dreams of denying that this world is a fact in our consciousness. Having then this world clearly before us, the problem arises, how explain the existence of this marvellous universe. In the West, man has set to work with infinite patience to seek the solution of this problem by examining the seen, the tangible; thus endeavouring by careful study to reach an understanding of the origin of creation. Every branch of study has been laboriously pursued. The so-called sciences are a numerous family and the discoveries made in each have been most wonderful. In all these diverse researches and in all the divergent conclusions reached there has yet been a certain harmony. On one thing every student is agreed. Under-

lying all that man can see or know is what is called law. This law is manifested in different ways, and man has not yet begun to grasp its working; he has only come to perceive its existence.

The first great law, under which all the rest may be grouped, is the law of causation, the law that every effect must have a cause. The human brain is utterly unable to form any concept of an effect that had no cause, or of a cause without an effect. This endless and beginningless sequence conditions all man's thinking; and the great German philosopher Kant showed clearly that it was inherent in the very nature of man's thinking capacity. So nearly allied to this inevitable idea of causation as practically to form a trinity with it, come the ideas of space and time. As little as we can conceive an effect without a cause, just as little can we conceive any effect that occurs nowhere and at no time. As soon as the human mind tries to form such a concept, it finds out the impossibility of doing it; and any state of existence beyond this apparently impassible barrier seems to the ordinary thinker an impossible dream.

Yet we have the record of many great souls, in many different lands and of widely diverse creeds, who unhesitatingly claim to have arrived at a state which transcended the hard and fast laws that govern the working of man's mind. Of course objection can be taken and the assertion made that these statements are not true. Once an eminent archaeologist remarked that the fact that one fossil remain had been found by one man in any given locality, outweighed in value the testimony of a million people who might have walked there before him and not seen any such thing. He said that the trained eye and the disciplined mind and the learning of the student of archaeology



gave him such an immense advantage over the ordinary observer, that it was almost like comparing the faculties of a blind man with those of one of unimpaired power of vision.

If this can be so forcibly asserted of the realm of the seen, how much more must it be true of the realm of mind! The testimony from so many sources as to a state above and beyond ordinary sense perception, is at least worthy of consideration. In different countries and in different centuries, men who never even heard of each other bear testimony to having reached that state. It has been called by many names, usually being regarded as union with the Divine or God. The Hindus call it by a higher name, they call it *realisation*. By this they mean, not a vision of a God either without or within who is separate from the soul having that vision, but the awareness of the human soul that it is itself that Divinity; that there is but one Soul or Self and that all that appears as variety is still that one Self seen through name and form, or in other words, through limitation.

This realization is a matter of individual experience. All that any one, however great, can do for us, is to point the way or give such clues to the path as will guide us in the search; but every human being has to tread the road, step by step, just as he has to breathe for himself, eat for himself, live and die for himself. The mightiest power conceivable cannot give us the desired result. The wildest dream of science never imagines that a way can be devised for one human being to breathe for another. Neither can one soul realize for another. But the soul which has reached the goal itself can be of the greatest possible help to another who is still struggling towards it.

To aid man in this struggle, the Vedanta divides human

society into four prominent groups and provides for each a special method or Yoga. The end in view being the same in every case, these Yogas are but different paths to the same goal. The distinction between them is not at all a hard and fast line of demarcation, for they all have many points in common. It is merely that special stress is laid upon one particular side in each Yoga, leaving the other sides subordinate. The word itself means "joining" or union. In Karma-Yoga this union is between the worker and the whole of humanity. In Raja-Yoga it is union between the lower and higher self. In Bhakti-Yoga it is union between the worshipper and the God of love; while in Jnana-Yoga it is the union of all existence.

Every one of these Yogas tells us to hold fast to reason, never to deliver our reason blindfolded into the hands of any authority whatsoever. These Yogas also tell us that our effort must be to enlarge our reason until it goes beyond its ordinary limits and becomes what, for want of a better word, we have to call inspiration. This latter, to be genuine, must be the development of reason and to a certain degree agree with it, not contradict it. We may be sure that what contradicts reason is not true inspiration, no matter what its source.

In offering these various methods, Vedanta is careful never to become dogmatic. It leaves great latitude in the details of practice, believing it best that these be filled out by each one according to his special need. What it seeks to present is a universal basis for realization—a basis so broad that building on it, man may not merely reach "Heaven," but attain to a far greater height and realize his oneness with the Divine or the great underlying Principle of all that exists. With such a goal before him, what effort ought not man be willing to make!

### THE LIGHT UNCHANGEABLE

*From the Confessions of St. Augustine. 4th Century.*

And being thence admonished to return to myself, I entered even into my inward self, Thou being my Guide: and able I was for Thou wert become my Helper. And I entered and beheld with the eye of my soul (such as it was) above the same eye of my soul, above my mind, the Light Unchangeable. Not this ordinary light, which all flesh may look upon; nor as it were a greater of the same kind, as though the brightness of this should be manifold brighter and with its greatness take up all space. Not such was this light, but other, yea, far other from all these. Nor was it above my soul, as oil is above water, nor yet as heaven above earth: but above to my soul, because It made me; and I below It, because I was made by It. He that knows the Truth knows what that Light is; and he that knows It, knows eternity. Love knoweth It. O Truth Who art Eternity! and Love Who art Truth! and Eternity Who art Love! Thou art my God, to Thee do I sigh night and day.

When I first knew Thee, Thou liftedst me up, that I might see there was what I might see, and that I was not yet such as to see. And Thou didst beat back the weakness of my sight, streaming forth Thy beams of light upon me most strongly; and I trembled with love and awe; and I perceived myself to be far off from Thee, in the region of unlikeness, as if I heard this Thy voice from on high: "I am the food of grown men; grow, and thou shalt feed upon Me; nor shalt thou convert Me, like the food of thy flesh, unto thee, but thou shalt be converted unto Me." . . . And I heard, as the heart heareth; nor had I room to doubt; and I should sooner doubt that I live than that Truth is not, which is clearly seen being understood by those things which are made.

And I beheld the other things below Thee; and I perceived that they neither altogether are, nor altogether are not; for they are, since they are from Thee, but are not because they are not what Thou art. For that truly is which remains unchangeably. It is good then for me to hold fast unto God; for if I remain not in Him, I cannot in myself; but He remaining in Himself, reneweth all things. . . .

But after Thou hadst soothed my head, unknown to me, and closed mine eyes that they should not behold vanity, I ceased somewhat of my former self, and my frenzy was lulled to sleep; and I awoke in Thee, and saw Thee infinite, but in another way, and this sight was not derived from the flesh. . . Thus by degrees, I passed from bodies to the soul, which through the bodily senses perceives; and thence to its inward faculty, to which the bodily senses represent things external, whitherto reaches the faculties of beasts; thence again to the reasoning faculty, to which what is received from the senses of the body is referred to be judged. This finding itself also to be in me a thing variable, raised itself up to its own understanding, and drew away my thoughts from the power of habit, withdrawing itself from those troops of contradictory phantasms; that so it might find what that light was, whereby it was bedewed, when, without all doubting, it cried out, "That the unchangeable was to be preferred to the changeable;" whence also it knew that Unchangeable, which, unless it had in some way known, it had had no sure ground to prefer it to the changeable. And thus with the flash of one trembling glance it arrived at THAT WHICH IS. And then I saw Thy invisible things understood by the things which are made. But I could not fix my gaze thereon; and my infirmity being struck back, I

was thrown again on my wonted habits, carrying along with me only a loving memory thereof, and a longing for what I had, as it were, perceived the odor of, but was not yet able to feed on.

### MUNDAKA-UPANISHAD

*Translated and Commentated by Swami Paramananda*

(Continued from April Number)

#### THIRD MUNDAKA

##### PART I

###### I

Two inseparable companions of golden plumage perch on the same tree. One of them eats the pleasing fruit (of the tree), the other looks on as a witness without eating.

###### II

On the same tree (of life) man sits, drowned in grief, overpowered by his own helplessness. But when he beholds the other, the lord, majestic and full of glory, then his grief passes away.

The two birds represent the higher Self and the lower self. The lower self is absorbed in tasting the sweet and bitter fruits of this life, and imagines it cannot escape from the reactions caused by them. When, however, in its struggle it looks up to that other transcendent Self and perceives how alike they are, it realizes its true nature. The *Jiva* or individual soul is merely the reflex of the *Paramatman* or Supreme Soul. The apparent man has its root in the real man. As soon as we realize this, the two become one. It is the sense of ego in us which divides and separates; and whenever we separate ourselves from our Divine part, we feel a lack. When, however, we discover our relation with the inexhaustible Source, all our selfish appetites which now drive us from branch to branch of the

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tree of life will vanish and no cause for grief will remain.

## III

**When the sun perceives that Being of golden radiance, the Creator, the Lord, the Source of Brahma (creative power), then that knower, having cast off all sin and merit, and being stainless, attains the highest oneness (with the Supreme).**

In the Indo-Aryan conception, as sin is an iron chain, so merit can be a golden chain, which binds us through self-righteousness and love of name and fame. To gain ultimate union, one must transcend the consciousness of both sin and merit.

## IV

**He is the Prana (life-force) animating all living beings. He who knows this becomes truly wise and not merely a talker. He delights in the Self (Atman), he finds his highest happiness in the Self, and he is a true performer of duty. Verily he is the foremost of the knowers of Brahman (the Supreme).**

When a man beholds God, he gains true wisdom and no longer finds satisfaction in vain discussion and speculation. His joy and recreation are found in the Infinite. Because his mind and will are completely unified with the cosmic mind and will, he fulfills the law spontaneously and hence never fails in his duty.

## V

**This pure and effulgent Self, which dwells within the body and is realized by sinless Sannyasins (the spiritually consecrated), can be attained by truthfulness, self-subjugation, true knowledge and the steadfast practice of chastity.**

## VI

**Truth alone conquers, not untruth. By Truth the spiritual path is widened, that path by which the Seers, who**

are free from all desires, travel to the highest abode of Truth.

#### VII

That shines forth, immeasurable, divine and inconceivable, subtler than the subtlest, more distant than the distant, yet here (in the body). Residing in the cave of the heart, so it is seen by true Seers.

#### VIII

He is not perceived by the eye, nor by speech, nor by the other senses, nor by austerities, nor by Karma (sacrifice and good deeds); when the mind is purified by the serene light of knowledge, then alone does the Seer perceive the indivisible Brahman by means of meditation.

#### IX

This subtle Self is to be realized by a pure heart as seated there where the Prana (life-force) has entered in five-fold form. The mind of every creature is interwoven with the senses. When it is purified, then the Self shines forth of itself.

The five different forms through which the vital energy manifests in the body are *Prana*, *Apana*, *Samana*, *Vyana* and *Udhana*. These represent in-breathing, out-breathing, equalizing the breath, circulating the breath, and up-breathing. By these various actions of the vital energy different nerve currents are controlled. This has been elaborately worked out in the Indian Yoga system. *Prana* governs respiration; *Apana*, the organs of excretion; *Samana*, digestion; *Vyana*, the general nerve currents of the body, and *Udhana*, speech. The senses also are often spoken of in the Upanishads as *Pranas*, because they are the avenues through which the vital energy connects the outer world with the inner. The sense impressions gained through these channels color all our mental activities; and not until

the mind is freed from these obscuring impressions can the soul manifest its true nature.

X

**Whatever worlds the man of purified mind covets, and whatever objects he desires, he obtains those worlds and those objects. Therefore, let the man who longs for his spiritual welfare, worship that one who knows the Self.**

When a man's mind is purified, he realizes his oneness with the cosmic life and will desire only what is in harmony with the cosmic will; therefore, his desires fulfill themselves by the natural course of law. Purity of mind is most quickly gained by "worshipping," that is, by revering and serving those who possess the higher knowledge.

(To be concluded in the July number)

## THE THEORY OF INDIAN MUSIC

*By Swami Sharvananda*

The music of India, like all her fine arts, has a lofty philosophy behind it. It is based on the philosophy of creation. Creation or Nature as we perceive it originates, the Vedas declare, from vibrations of the primal energy. "Whatever there is in the universe is evolved from *Prana* and vibrates in *Prana*," it is said in the Katha-Upanishad. This energy in the first manifested form, at the beginning of creation, appears as subtle force (*Prana*) and subtle matter or ether (*Akasa*). Subsequently the subtle produces the gross by a change in the vibration of matter. So we find that there are three planes of existence, — gross, subtle and causal. Behind this gross world of sense perception there is the subtle world of finer force and matter, of emotions and ideas; and behind the differentiated subtle is the undifferentiated causal world, where all the possibilities of the subtle and gross worlds lie in unitary potential form. . .



Our sound-experience is caused by the vibration of matter. Although modern science holds that sound is experienced only when a certain kind of vibration in the form of wave is carried to the tympanum through some medium like air or water; yet it does not prove that the sound is the wave of these mediums. Moreover, experimental psychology shows that sound experience can be produced simply by stimulating the aural centres of the brain, without the activity of aural nerves and tympanum. On the other hand, all the different schools of Indian philosophy concurrently hold that sound is the quality of the vibratory ether; wherever the ether is in vibration, there also is sound. And as creation first proceeds from the vibration of ether, so there is produced the original sound — the Sound of all sounds; but this is a subtle sound, too subtle to be audible to the ordinary human ear. Furthermore when etheric matter evolves grosser and grosser states of existence, along with each state and each object there is produced a sound-counterpart. The sound and the equivalent object are denoted in Sanskrit philology by the words *Sabda* and *Artha*, which again are signified in philosophical language by the words *Nama* and *Rupa* (name and form). For a particular *Sabda* there is a particular natural *Artha* or object and *vice-versa*. So the relation between *Sabda* and *Artha*, or *Nama* and *Rupa*, is inseparable.

The undifferentiated causal sound, coeval with the causal world, is known to the Hindu Philosophy as *Om* or *Pranava*. It is called the *Sabda-Brahman* or the sound symbol of the Impersonal God, owing to its universal, all-inclusive nature. But this causal sound becomes differentiated and manifests in grosser and grosser form in the various stages of evolution. Thus, the philosophy of the Vedas holds that there is not only a sound and a melody for each and every aspect

of Nature, but there is also a grand symphony throughout the whole of Nature. Probably this symphony of Nature was characterized by Pythagoras as the "music of the spheres." This music becomes quite audible in a highly concentrated state of the human mind known to the Yogins as *Dhyana*.

The charm of music is patent to all, but very few know the real secret and explanation of this charm. Nowhere was the rationale of music sought and explained so scientifically as was done in India. The whole theory of Indian music is based upon this attunement of the human mind and voice to the music of Nature. Some Western musicians have been startled to find that "to such an extent is music an accompaniment of existence in India, that every hour of the day and season of the year has its own melody."

Therein lies the whole secret and the whole glory of Indian music. The very seven notes of the gamut were adopted from the seven kinds of sounds found in Nature. These seven notes are *Sharaja*, *Rishava*, *Gandhara*, *Madhyama*, *Panchama*, *Dhayvata*, *Nishada*, and they are usually denoted by their abbreviated forms, Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha and Ni. These notes were first discovered in India and were subsequently introduced into Europe under the names Do, Re, Me, Fa, Sol, La, Si. Sir W. W. Hunter says in his *Indian Gazetteer*: (p. 223) "A regular system of notation was worked out before the age of Panini (prior to the 6th Century B.C.) and seven notes were designated by their initial letters. The notation passed from the Brahmans through the Persians to Arabia and was thence introduced into European music by Guido d'Arezzo at the beginning of the eleventh century." Professor Weber also corroborates the above statement in his *Indian Literature*.

The origin of these notes, as described by Narada, is as follows: "The peacock crows in *Sharaja*, the cow bellows in *Rishava*, the sheep bleats in *Gandhara*, the swan cries in *Madhyama*, the cuckoo sings in *Panchama* during the spring season, the horse neighs in *Dhayvata* and the elephant squeals in *Nishada*." Some say *Rishava* is in the call of the sky-lark and *Dhayvata* in the croaking of the frog. These notes are found also, sometimes conjointly, sometimes severally, in the thundering of the heavens, the roaring of the sea, the blowing of the wind, the flowing of the river, in the falling cataract, the gushing stream and in other sounds of Nature. These seven principal tones contain again twenty-two subtones and semitones known as *Sruti*. Thus according to Hindu music the whole octave contains thirty tones. These sub-tones mark the grace notes of an air and enrich its chromatic modulations by the process known as *Gamaka* and *Murchana*.

According to the author of the *Sangeetadamodara*, music in India originated with the Sama-Veda; but other writers say that the great God Mahadeva is the originator of Hindu music. But whatever may have been its origin, there is no doubt that it sprang from a deep penetration into the inner nature of things. The modes of music are divided into six main classes called Ragas and thirty-six sub-classes known as Raginees, each Raga having six Raginees. The relation between the Ragas and the Raginees is something like that between a genus and a species. Again by permutation and combination of these thirty-six Raginees there arise innumerable Raginees.

The distinct individuality of each Raga or Raginee is marked not only by the principal key notes that are used, but also by the method of the use; that is, by the duration and accentuation of the notes. The duration and accentua-

tion, with the help of some grace-notes, sometimes change the entire aspect of an air; and the greatness and skill of a musician lie in the right expression of these. Though tones or *swaras* constitute the body of an air, yet time gives it its very soul. In Indian music time is called *Tala*. What is metre to poetry, *Tala* is to music. The time is marked by pulses (*Matra*) or beats, in a set of measures (*Pada*); and generally in Indian music a group of four measures or bars is taken together. . . . If one closely observes the movement of the pulses in the different Talas, one is sure to be struck by its similarity with the macrocosmic movements of the stellar worlds or with the microcosmic vibrations of atoms and molecules.

In conclusion it may be pointed out that the whole system of Indian music is developed along the line of *melody*, in contradistinction to Western music, which is based on *harmony*. The primary aim of Indian music is to awaken the nobler emotions of the human soul and attune it to the Cosmic Life. The effect of melody is the negation of the many and the affirmation of the One, whereas harmony accepts the many and enjoys them in the light of the One. Each has its own value. But it must be said that the seekers of the Supreme Unity will enjoy melody more than harmony, though the latter is pleasing to the enjoyers of the many.

Truly has it been said that the music of a nation marks its inherent tendency. Plato observed that no nation can change its music without having its political institutions changed. The spiritual, introspective nature of the Indian mind is marked by its music. When an Indian air is sung, you feel a deep hush stealing into your soul, you forget all your surroundings and your mind is transported to a state of profound ecstasy. While Western music is like the gushing of a mountain stream, leaping from rock to rock,

from gorge to gorge, filling the firmament with sonal exuberance; the Indian music is like the great Indian rivers, flowing like broad seas, noiseless, serene and potent to sweep all before them. Its charm is irresistible and all-absorbing.

The different Ragas and Raginees prescribed to be sung in different parts of the day and in different seasons, have such a wonderful effect upon the mind that a good musician with their help can really understand the music of Nature. For instance, if an expert musician, whose ears have been trained to *swaras*, concentrates his mind on the sound of a flowing river, or on the rustling of the wind, he will be able to detect the tunes in which Nature sings through these phenomena. He may or may not read "the book in the running brook," but he is sure to hear the song in it.

When the rosy shafts of the dawn bring out a new freshness in Nature and the delight of her soul is poured forth by all the winged creatures of the wood, that is the time for the Ragas *Bhairava* and *Hindol*, or for Raginees like *Vibhasha*, *Bhairavi*, etc. As these melodies are heard, the mood of early morning is re-echoed in the listener's heart. Again when the scorching summer sun has reached the noontide meridian and all Nature seems on fire, that is the time for the Raga *Deepaka*. Its effect is so terrible that, it is generally believed, if it is properly sung, it will produce flames from the body of the singer and even ignite anything at hand which is combustible.

In the rainy season, when the thundering monsoon clouds burst with their torrential floods and the parched earth speaks her gratitude by an answering fragrance, that is the time for the *Megha Mallar*. *Sri Raga* is to be sung in the evening and it produces the sense of joyous relaxation

which one marks in Nature at the sunset hour. Hearing it, a sweet feeling of serenity spreads over the soul. Introspection always deepens under the influence of this Raga. Again in the midnight stillness, when Nature is wrapped in meditation, the Raga *Malkosh* or the Raginees *Vibhash*, *Hambira*, should be sung.

Each of these Ragas and Raginees is specially adapted to evoke a particular kind of passion or feeling. According to Sanskrit rhetoric there are nine kinds of passions or feelings (*Rasas*). These are *Sringar* (love), *Hasya* (laughter), *Karuna* (pity), *Roudra* (ferocity), *Veera* (heroism), *Bhayanaka* (terror), *Vibhatsa* (disgust), *Adbhuta* (wonder) and *Shanta* (tranquillity). Each Raga or Raginee awakens one of these *Rasas* or feelings in the mind. Thus we see that Hindu music not only takes account of the fundamental feelings of the human mind, but strives to attune them with their macrocosmic counterparts in the Universal Mind. This, it declares, should be the goal of all real music.

(Extract taken from a lecture delivered in Colombo, Ceylon, and published in the "Vedanta Kesari," Madras.)

### REPORT

Swami Paramananda closed his season in Los Angeles on April 25th. During the seven weeks he spent there he delivered a lecture in a public hall every Sunday morning at 11, and held a devotional Service in the rooms of The Vedanta Centre every Sunday evening at 8. Besides these there were classes on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. On Wednesday of each week he delivered a lecture at Long Beach. The attendance was excellent and every effort was made to keep the Swami longer. He has now begun his return journey, but as he will stop at various places along the way, it is not yet certain just when he will reach Boston.

A recent letter from one of the faithful group of students in Geneva, Switzerland, tells us that they have been holding their regular weekly meetings and doing their utmost to foster interest in the teaching. Geneva has become a world centre in these post-war days and it is believed that much could be done there. They are urging the Swami therefore to resume his former custom of a summer season of lectures in Europe. Letters from friends in other places abroad are making the same appeal.

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The record of work at The Vedanta Centre of Boston during the month of April showed a substantial increase in attendance at the Services and classes; also every Sunday brought an unusual number of strangers to the Centre. During Holy Week devotional Services were held on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons at 5, as well as on Good Friday. The Good Friday Service was felt to be especially impressive. Following a short instruction there was a series of meditations on the deeper lessons of the Crucifixion, the intervals between being filled with music. Despite a severe storm the Chapel was well filled. On Easter Sunday also there was an excellent attendance and the Service seemed to call forth a deep response from the hearts of all present. Special music had been written for the occasion and contributed much to the spirit of exalted joy which pervaded the Service.

The schedule of meetings will remain unchanged for the month of May and Sister Devamata will continue to conduct all Services and classes until the Swami's return.

A new booklet by Swami Paramananda entitled "The Secret of Right Activity" has just come from press. It is an especially valuable pocket companion for those who are forced to live their spiritual life in the midst of exacting worldly occupations. (35 cents. Postage 2 cents).

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"TATV IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

# The Message of the East



JUNE, 1920

Issued by

**THE VEDANTA CENTRE**

1 Queensberry St., Boston, Mass., U. S. A.

SINGLE COPIES, 20 Cents

\$1.50 A YEAR

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Entered as second class matter May 1, 1915 at the post office  
at Boston, Massachusetts, under the act of March 3, 1879



**PUBLISHED MONTHLY EXCEPT IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER**

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—  
"And behold the glory of the God of  
Israel came from the way of the East"  
*Ezekiel.*

"Light shall come again from the East"  
*Tyndall.*

Published monthly except in August and September.

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**VOL. IX.**

**JUNE, 1920.**

**No. 6**

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### CONTROL OF BODY AND MIND

*Class Talk by Swami Paramananda*

For all observation we need to have a fitting instrument. Just as to observe the stars and planets one needs a good telescope; similarly, when we are to observe the spiritual aspect of our being, the instrument which we use must be the best possible one. The idea of *Tapas* or mortification, that is, giving discipline to the body and mind, is to prepare them for this end. Instead of allowing the body to rebel when we try to use it, we must make it obey us, just as a well-trained horse obeys the driver. We must bring it to a state of such perfect harmony with our spiritual aspiration that it will never rebel, but will work in accordance with our highest purpose in life. At present our body, mind and senses are very like untrained horses. We must learn to control them, therefore, and prove that we have the power to guide them instead of being dragged hither and thither by them. We have been made to believe that if we do not give certain comforts to the body, it will go to pieces. Such thoughts have led us to indulge the body until it has become like a spoiled child. Whatever it demands, we give without discrimination. So also with our mind and senses. It is for us to decide whether we shall yield to every impulse of our physical organism or hold it in check. This is the first step in giving discipline.

Discipline does not mean that we are to mortify or torture our flesh indiscriminately; it means that we must begin to act thoughtfully and teach our body and mind to be reasonable. We make ourselves slaves so long as we depend on certain fixed conditions; and our first lesson in the spiritual life consists in learning to be physically independent. When we have a comfortable bed to lie on and good food to eat, we enjoy them; but if we are not comfortable or well fed, we are not distressed. So through certain practices we teach our body to obey and to endure. Endurance, both mental and physical, is one of the greatest things to cultivate, and this can be done only by practice. In India these practices are carried almost to an extreme. A person who is sensitive to cold gradually trains his body so that no amount of cold can affect him. In the Himalayas Yogis are to be found sitting in the snow with scarcely any covering on their body. Sensitiveness increases according to our lack of control and also it can be decreased. What we want to do is to bring our body into a balanced state — neither dull, nor over-sensitive, but able to rise above conditions.

The purpose of austerity or self-discipline is not to gain merit or occult powers, but to acquire mastery over all our forces. As we do this, however, powers will come. When a man has learned to control his speech, for instance, whatever he says is bound to come true. This power is gained through silence, by controlling the energy which now is being wasted by unnecessary speech. The truly wise ones do not speak unless by their words they can accomplish something. If a person is indrawn and speaks seldom, every one pays attention to him; but the person who is constantly talking, no one heeds his words. What a blessing it is when we have the power to govern our

speech; for so much harm is done by unnecessary words. How often things are better left unsaid! Therefore if we can practise silence even a little, we shall have greater power. When a man learns to regulate his speech and thus avoid waste of energy, his intuition grows keener, his voice becomes stronger, and his language gains a new beauty.

The practice of posture also aids us in mastering our forces. When we can hold ourselves steadily in one position for any length of time even at the cost of a little discomfort, it will help us to overcome nervous tension and our body will grow more pliable. Even the long-standing habits of stooping shoulders, hollow chest, crooked spine, and all rigidity or abnormal muscular contraction can be straightened out through the right use of postures. As we learn these, we gradually rise above the body and realize that our comfort or discomfort is not dependent on place or surroundings. Regulating the body also increases physical health and strength. *Tapas* or mortification means the practice of balance. Excess in any direction is detrimental to our progress; both greediness and slothfulness in mind and body must be checked.

Indulgence means weakness. Why should we indulge the body, if by so doing we do not benefit ourselves? The purpose of denial or discipline is to make the physical instrument a perfect one. Whatever we do requires some discipline, otherwise our actions cannot be effective. Sitting in silence, controlling all involuntary motions, trying to bring our body and mind into a state of harmony and equilibrium, and holding our mind on one special thought: this is called practice. We must carry on this practice regularly. No matter how much heaviness we may feel, we must devote a fixed time every day to it; and our deter-

mination should be to increase rather than decrease the amount of time. In this way very soon we shall gain a hold on our physical and mental nature.

Daily study of the Sacred Books also has great value. We may not fully grasp their meaning at first; but if we make it a habit to study them faithfully and keep it up as a regular duty, in time we shall begin to understand them. As there are certain duties which are necessary for the up-keep of our physical body, similarly there are certain duties which are necessary for the sustenance of our spiritual nature. Now we may not find spiritual things interesting, because we have become buried in our physical consciousness; but regular study, together with the practice of self-control and concentration, will keep our mind turned in the right direction and revive our spiritual nature. The mind, as long as it is uncontrolled, is like a mad elephant. We may bathe it, but at once it rolls in the dust and makes itself unclean again. Therefore we must use many means to hold the mind, and study is one of these.

Study also brings a new association. If we study the lives of great souls with concentration, it enables us to enjoy their company. It seems to bring us into actual contact with them, as if we lived with them and heard their voices. Such is the value of spiritual study, when we keep it up persistently. We must not do it fancifully, reading a few verses to-day if we feel like it and perhaps to-morrow giving it up because we do not feel like it. We need firm determination and this is where the value of discipline comes in. We do not listen to the promptings of our body and mind, but we follow the impulses of our higher nature—choosing the path which our discrimination points out and following it with whole-hearted devotion.

The mind may not enjoy this, because it has formed the habit of lighter interests. The ordinary mind finds more pleasure in reading a novel than in sitting and studying the Bible or the Bhagavad-Gita. Yet one who wishes to sustain his spiritual nature has no other course than to cultivate such a habit until it becomes second nature and he begins to love it. In India no one will eat until he has gone through his spiritual practices, because there they believe that these practices are the most vital thing in life. Through them man attains liberation. He learns how he should live; how he may abide by the law and subdue his lower nature; how he may make his body a fitting instrument; and how he may increase the power of the mind to reflect, for the mind has reflecting power and it reflects according to our tendencies and desires.

When a person has gathered up his forces and proved himself the master, no one can stand in his way. No one can prevent his free action. Let us therefore cast off whatever binds us or leads us to show weakness, and let us strive to cultivate that which will uplift us and awaken our spiritual consciousness, so that in time this body and mind may work in perfect harmony with the Supreme Will. But this cannot be accomplished by calculation or by mere intellectual effort. It is to be attained through the silent practice of meditation. We must lose the sense that outward things are of primary importance and recognize that that is truly important which we gain by living close to the heart of God; and we must learn to be indrawn and to cultivate a deeper mode of thinking. The subjective is so full of vivid interest, it can never create dullness. When we imagine that the meditative life will disturb our outer life, it shows that we have not as yet experienced it; for when we gain access to it, our whole being is filled with new power and spiritual energy.

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**THE LIFE OF TRUTH***From the Letters of Isaac Penington**(A Quaker Mystic of England. 17th Century)*

The Lord God preserve you, and give you to watch against and to feel victory and dominion over all that is contrary to Him in any of you; and which stands in the way of your fellowship with Him, and of your joy and peace in Him. . .

They that seek the kingdom of heaven and the righteousness thereof in the first place, have other things also added: but they that neglect the kingdom and are unfaithful to Truth, seeking the world before it, the hand of the Lord goes forth against them and they many times miss of that also of the world which they seek and labor for.

If there be not a great care and watchfulness, there may be a neglecting to hear the voice of the Shepherd and to walk with Him; and then such miss of the pastures of life and of the pure rest, joy, peace, which He administers to others. . . .

Oh! feel the redeeming arm in thine own heart, and know the love which stretcheth it forth, and take heed of being prejudiced against its inward visitations to thee; for there is that near thee, which would darken thee and keep the seed of life in bondage. I know there is that in thee which pants and is not satisfied, somewhat that thirsts after the living waters. The Spirit of the Lord saith, Come, come to the fountain of eternal life; drink and live.

The path of life is living; and thy feet must be guided into it and walk faithfully in it to the end, if thou wilt sit down in God's eternal rest and peace.

I have had of late some deep and serious thoughts concerning thee, and a sense of thee, as between the Lord and my own soul; yet I have not had anything to signify

or express to thee till this morning. But somewhat this morning sprang up in my heart, sweetly and freshly, which I had pure drawings to impart to thee.

There was a quick sense of thee upon my heart, and in that sense this cry was in me;— Oh! that thou wert acquainted with the pure, eternal power of the Lord, and mightest feel His outstretched arm revealed in thee, and witness the faith which stands in that power; and in that faith believe and wait for what God is doing, and willing to do, in and for His children.

The Lord so enlighten and guide thee, that thou mayest obtain the desires of thy heart; for I really believe thy desire is after holiness and after communion with the Father and the Son and with the saints in light. Oh! that thou mayest be led into the true, pure light of life, that there thou mayest enjoy what in this kind thou desirest.

Ah! little dost thou know the loving-kindness of the Lord in visiting thee with His Truth, in giving thee a sense beyond others, in so tenderly drawing and inviting thy heart; or what this will come to, if thou faithfully give up to, hearken to and follow Him.

Oh! wait on the Lord, fear before Him, pray for His fear in the upright breathings (which are not of thy spirit's forming, but of His pure begetting;) that thou mayest be led by Him out of that wisdom which entangles into that innocency, simplicity and precious childishness, in which the Father appears to the soul, to break the bonds and snares of iniquity.

Then shall ye live the life of Truth, and no life but the life of Truth, and dwell and walk in the Truth, than which, there is no greater joy, delight, or peace to be desired or enjoyed.



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## HEALTH AND HEALING

*Lecture by Sister Devamata*

Health means wholeness, and it resides permanently at that point of our nature where we are in unveiled contact with the Whole. It is not something which we gain or lose. It is an inherent quality of our being. Therefore somewhere within us we must be whole to-day. The schools of teaching which recognize this and tell their followers to affirm "I am perfect," "I am divine," are defective in their results because they do not make plain what is divine and perfect. They fail to define the "I," for which this may be claimed. Such statements to be effective cannot be mere theoretical affirmations. They must be based on a clear conviction rooted in our own experience.

When we set out to discover the seat of sickness or ill-health, soon we find ourselves baffled and bewildered. In our physical organism there is not one fixed point on which we can fasten. We see matter rushing round and out as in a whirlpool. Three minutes suffice for the blood to make the circuit of the system, depositing new material and carrying away the old; each breath takes in and casts out; food is consumed, assimilated and thrown off. The change of material particles is incessant. Granted then that some deleterious substance enter the system, how can it create any lasting effect? It seems impossible. Yet we cannot deny that conditions which we call chronic or acute disease exist. There must be elsewhere then a matrix which continues to mould the new material into the pattern of the old; but it cannot be in the body, since the whole of body is nothing but a continuously flowing stream of matter. It must lie deeper. When we realize this, anxiety regarding our physical condition lessens.

The idea that "mind governs matter" carries us little

further; for what is mind? A finer form of matter, and more mobile because it is finer; just as gas is more evasive and volatile than earth or water. The incalculably subtle material of thought moves and changes with a velocity which we cannot measure. Our states of mind are far more difficult to maintain than our bodily states. They vary from moment to moment. Of itself, also, mind has no operative force; it is only an instrument. Behind it stands the thinking agent. And here we lay our hand upon the real seat of our various ailments.

The sense of I-ness is the matrix which gives form to all the in-flowing matter. "I am weak," "I am ill," "I am miserable"—these are the thought-moulds which perpetuate our discomforts and sufferings. If we can break our identification with these bodily conditions, Nature will be left free to work; and by her wisely elaborated system of continuous cosmic circulation, she will wear down and efface the most hardened condition. All her methods are constructive and curative. She cannot be suppressed. She converts even decay and death into new forms of life. It is we who defeat her efforts by this habit of false identification. When our sense of I-ness is vigorously diverted to a new association, we lose all consciousness of illness; and if the impression is strong enough, the physical disability is permanently wiped out. How many cases are on record of men and women who were believed to be hopeless cripples, yet who in a panic ran long distances without cane or crutch and perhaps never again needed either.

Herein lies the secret of all so-called miraculous cures. Intense faith by one violent blow snaps the thought connection with the physical affliction and establishes a new association, through which the system is opened to a surging current of restorative energy. All cures would be instantan-

eous, if the vital energy applied were sufficient in quantity and pure and subtle enough in quality, and also if the one seeking help were open enough to receive the full force of the spiritual current. A Christ charged with an inexhaustible store of vital energy and able to sweep away lethargy or doubt by the power of His God-filled personality has no need to heal by installments. One touch, one word, one moment's contact suffices.

The efficacy of certain affirmations finds its explanation in this same principle of shifting the thought association. So long as the attention is fixed on the constructive idea embodied in the affirmation, the patient co-operates with Nature and the suffering or discomfort is relieved; but the result is in exact proportion to the knowledge and conviction of the patient. If these are superficial, the cure will not go far below the surface and the disturbance will reassert itself. Denial is a still more ineffective means. To deny anything in reality affirms its existence and strengthens our association with it. In order to deny it we must turn our attention towards it, and attention is the connecting link between our consciousness and the objective universe. Also denial acts artificially, like a narcotic or a stimulant; and whenever we try to force Nature, sooner or later she springs back into her proper course and we have to begin again. We may declare over and over that dynamite will not explode, but strike it and the explosion takes place just the same.

The wise method is to understand that there are different planes of being, and that we do not escape from the conditions of a lower plane by remaining there and denying them; or by trying to apply the principle belonging to a higher plane. We escape from them only by lifting our self-identity to the plane where that higher principle acts

spontaneously without any coercion on our part. Thus, to assert "I am divine and perfect" in order to make our human nature and imperfections more comfortable cannot bring a lasting result, because our method has no foundation in Truth. If, on the contrary, by our daily living we strive to manifest the latent Divinity within us, the Divine power, as it acquires full expression, will accomplish its own ends. In reality, health, wholeness and holiness are merely different forms of one root word and are intended to convey the same root idea. The "w" in wholeness was added later to emphasize a peculiarity in pronunciation.

We cannot attain real health or wholeness until we reach a final unit of existence. So long as we are conscious of a "not-I," which threatens our health or happiness or comfort, we are not secure. We may lift ourselves for a time above bodily conditions; but when some unexpected blow strikes on our consciousness, disturbing our balance, the sense of unity or wholeness within us will be lost again. Complete immunity from these disintegrating attacks can be found in our spiritual nature only. As the ego is the seat of disease; so is the soul the seat of health. In that are stored all the curative forces of man's being, and until they are roused to action no true healing can take place. It is indeed the essential wholeness in us which makes healing possible.

Health cannot be applied from the outside. Even an ordinary thought cannot be given to another. The other person may try to take our thought, but without meaning to do so he will completely transform it by his interpretation. Still less can we transmit wholeness. All we can do is to divert the attention long enough to let the soul power within act without hindrance. Health, like salvation, must be worked out by the man himself — and from

within. The nearer he draws to his soul life, the more truly healthy will he be. But we cannot connect ourselves with that fountainhead of strength and wholeness so long as we believe our happiness or usefulness or well-being depends on any material condition! Our vital concern must not be to have a strong body, but to be in touch with Spirit. That inner spiritual power can convert even a feeble body into a pulsing centre of force, whereas without it the strongest body is only a useless mass of flesh.

The men who have done the mightiest work in the world have not been physically the strongest. How many have had to push against serious bodily disabilities, yet they have rendered heroic service to mankind. Also in times of crisis we know how a fragile little woman will rise to a point of endurance which will put to shame the trained athlete. Have we not all watched beside sick beds and borne strains which seemed far beyond our strength to bear? All the power, the health and the strength we have come from the soul; and they will flow through a frail body with as great a force as through the strongest, if we will but open ourselves with unwavering faith. And as they flow they will heal. We block the channel by the ready attention we pay to every little ache and pain. This destroys our sense of proportion and lends reality to conditions which, if left to themselves, would disappear. The best way to deal with them is to think about something else; if they will not be forgotten, then they must be handled in the way which appeals most strongly to our reason and individual conviction.

There are certain forms of bodily disturbance which are more difficult to reach because they are Karmic — that is, they are brought over from previous lives and their root lies in our character. They stubbornly resist all forms of

treatment and the only way by which we can remove them is to work upon certain defects in our inner nature. These are truly our "original sins," because they have originated with us. God did not give them to us; we have picked them up along the way, as a boy picks up shining pebbles and weights his pockets until they tear out. We all have certain deep-lying tendencies which neutralize our best endeavour, and we cannot be at peace until these are eliminated. But dwelling upon them or even "treating" them will not efface them. We must choose an object of meditation which will cultivate a counteracting habit of mind; and by keeping our thought diligently turned towards that, we shall gradually remove the weakness. This is what the healer tries to do for us; but he can only offer the suggestion. The real work must be done by ourselves.

Uneven distribution of *Prana* or vital energy is a frequent cause of our physical disorders. If too much *Prana* is centred at one point we have inflammation or congestion. If there is too little, the depleted part ceases to function or functions haltingly. Again, constant restless activity of mind or body draws an over-supply of energy into the grey matter of the organism and the fine wires of the nervous system, becoming overheated, give way, causing a distressing break-down. A corresponding excess of passivity is then prescribed, and finally Nature by a laborious effort restores the equilibrium. Through habitual over-eating an undue supply of life-force is concentrated in the alimentary system, and digestive troubles are sure to follow. An excess of brain work draws too much *Prana* to the head and serious disturbances begin there.

There are special breathing exercises coupled with concentration which are designed to stimulate and regulate the circulation of the life-force; but they must be practised

only under the direction of a teacher. Each one of us, however, by the evenness of his thought, the regularity of his life and by steadfastness of devotion in his spiritual practices can keep the vital forces flowing in a strong, even, revivifying current. If a healer is abundantly supplied with *Prana*, he may transmit a portion of it and quicken the vitality of the patient; but unless the patient can continue to keep it circulating, the treatment will prove of momentary benefit only.

Nature meant us to live a balanced life. Every part of the organism should be brought into daily activity. A properly regulated routine for each day should include a certain amount of manual labor, a certain amount of intellectual work and an equal amount of spiritual work. Upon this last we should lay special stress, because our soul-life has had the least place in our past habit and has greatest need of being fostered. It is because it has been allowed to starve that we are not in a healthy condition. Yet whenever any disorder appears in the system, at once we swing our whole attention back on the body and begin to pamper it. We lie in bed, abandon our usual routine and cut ourselves off from the association which would keep alive our soul consciousness. By degrees we induce a spiritual aenemia, which undermines both our health and our morale. If, on the contrary, we were more fervent and regular in our religious practices, more eager to remain in contact with those who sustain our spiritual rather than our bodily consciousness, very soon we should discover that there is no limit to the supply of strength and power and life at our command, granted that we make ourselves receptive to it.

We should give all necessary care to our body, but only that it may be a more efficient vehicle to carry us to our

goal. Our primary aim must be to reach God — whether we go in a whole body or a crippled body is secondary. When we behold His face and feel the benediction of His Presence, the body and the things of the body will be forgotten. And this is the main purpose of health. If we long for a strong body in order to enjoy more fully bodily pleasures and pursuits, health will not be a blessing. Rather will it sow the seeds of future disorders by creating a new sense slavery. If on the contrary we court health in order that we may turn all our thought towards higher things, then have we the benefits of health at every hour of whole-hearted prayer or meditation.

Sturdy muscles, well-functioning organs, quiet nerves are not the full measure of our strength. Only when our entire being is gathered up and brought into union with Godhead shall we be made truly whole; and only as that unity persists, shall we continue whole. Christ offered the basic cure for all ills, whether of flesh or thought, when He told us that we must love the Lord our God with all our heart and all our mind and all our strength and all our soul; because love alone will bind us close to the Source of life. More than a thousand years before, Sri Krishna prescribed a like remedy in these words: "He who worketh for Me (the Lord) has Me for his highest goal; is devoted to Me, is free from selfish attachment and beareth enmity towards no creature, he entereth into Me"; that is, he attains the full realization of wholeness and perfection.

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Pain is in some wise the artist of the world, which creates us, fashions us, sculptures us, and with the fine edge of a pitiless chisel. It limits the overflowing life; and that which remains, stronger and more exquisite, enriched by its very loss, draws thence the gift of a higher being.

—*Michelet.*



## THE SPIRIT WITHIN

### *Selection from the Samhita*

(A dialogue between the Sage Astavakra and King Janaka.)

King Janaka said :—

I dwell in my inner Self. Silence reigns on the empty throne of speech. The mist of anxieties and cares has melted away from the firmament of my thought. The glow of health and the depression of disease do not affect me. I breathe the serene atmosphere of peace, which permeates my whole being.

My heart throbs in unison with the Infinite! No longer can the magic wonders of color, the melodious notes of music, the fragrance of flowers absorb all my affection. The beauties of the world of sight and sound have lost their hold on my mind. He who is still struggling on the path, looks forward to the moment when he will reach the goal; but he who has seen the Spirit within and has realized his absolute unity with that Spirit, can no longer look upon himself as apart from that Spirit. Longing and desire vanish when this goal is reached. Then man enjoys the calm satisfaction of attainment.

My Spirit lives in freedom, unstained by the desire to dominate or possess. The Spirit within stands not in need of purification. Never is it impatient, perturbed, or in anguish.

I dwell in the serenity of my inner Spirit. The beautiful does not call forth my praise, nor the unbeautiful my disdain. Loss of person or property does not cast me down. My understanding has transcended the sphere of utility and inutility. To my mind, harm is no longer harmful. I am a stranger to the transports of elation.

The consciousness of dual existence is the source of the ills of all beings. One and one remedy only is there for

these ills — realization of the Spirit as joy and purity and serene intelligence. All else is vain show.

Rare indeed is the enjoyment of spiritual health, born of a sense of the fleeting value of this phenomenal world.

Uncertain is the duration of human life. Uncertain is the duration of heaven and earth. Certain only is the pure conscious Spirit within.

I am pure consciousness. . . . Neither am I this body nor is this body mine. I desired to live in a body, hence my bondage.

In the shoreless ocean of Spirit the bubbles of (bodily) life rise, sparkle for a time and break.

In the boundless ocean of Spirit the universe forms and dissolves, but I am formless. I live in peace.

The limitless, formless Spirit is subject to no state or condition. Thus without thirst and without attachment I live in peace.

I am one with Absolute Truth. The world is but a magic show. It cannot bind me by the loveliness or unloveliness of its objects.

O Spirit all-wonderful! Adoration to that imperishable Spirit within (Atman), which survives the destruction of all things, from the Builder of the universe to the blade of grass.

O Spirit all-wonderful! Adoration to that Spirit within, which is uncreate though with a body. It comes from nowhere, it goes nowhere, yet it exists everywhere.

O Spirit all-wonderful! Adoration to that Spirit within. None can surpass the Spirit in its power to bear the weight of the universe untouched by bodily existence.

O Spirit all-wonderful. Naught has it, yet has it all that can be imagined or described. Adoration to that Spirit within!

---

**THE TRUE SAGE**

*From the Teachings of Chuang-Tsu, 4th Century B.C.*

Yeh Ch'ueh asked Wang I, saying, "Do you know for certain that all things are subjectively the same?"

"How can I know?" answered Wang I. "Do you know what you do not know?"

"How can I know?" replied Yeh Ch'ueh. "But can then nothing be known?"

"How can I know?" said Wang I. "Nevertheless, I will try to tell you. How can it be known that what I call knowing is not really not knowing, and that what I call not knowing is not really knowing? Now I would ask you this. If a man sleeps in a damp place, he gets lumbago and dies. But how about an eel? And living up in a tree is precarious and trying to the nerves;—but how about monkeys? Of the man, the eel, and the monkey, whose habitat is the right one, absolutely? Human beings feed on flesh, deer on grass, centipedes on snakes, owls and crows on mice. Of these four, whose is the right taste, absolutely? In my opinion the standard of human virtue, and of positive and negative, is so obscured that it is impossible to actually know it as such."

"If you then," asked Yeh Ch'ueh, "do not know what is bad for you, is the Perfect Man equally without this knowledge?"

"The Perfect Man," answered Wang I, "is a spiritual being. Were the ocean itself scorched up, he would not feel hot. Were the milky way frozen hard, he would not feel cold. Were the mountains to be riven with thunder, and the great deep to be thrown up by storm, he would not tremble. In such case, he would mount upon the clouds of heaven, and driving the sun and the moon before him, would pass beyond the limits of this external world,

where death and life have no more victory over man;—how will he regard anything as bad for him?"

Chu Ch'iao addressed Chang Wu Tzu as follows:—"I heard Confucius say, 'The true sage pays no heed to mundane affairs. He neither seeks gain nor avoids injuries. He asks nothing at the hands of man. He adheres, without questioning, to Tao (the Divine). Without speaking, he can speak; and he can speak and yet say nothing. And so he roams beyond the limits of this dusty world. These,' added Confucius, 'are wild words.' Now to me they are the skilful embodiment of Tao. What, Sir, is your opinion?"

"Points upon which the Yellow Emperor doubted," replied Chang Wu Tzu, "how should Confucius know? You are going too fast. You see your egg, and expect to hear it crow. You look at your cross-bow, and expect to have broiled duck before you. I will say a few words to you at random, and do you listen at random.

"How does the sage seat himself by the sun and moon, and hold the universe in his grasp? He blends everything into one harmonious whole, rejecting the confusion of this and that. Rank and precedence, which the vulgar prize, the sage stolidly ignores. The revolutions of ten thousand years leave his Unity unscathed. The universe itself may pass away, but he will flourish still.

"How do I know that love of life is not a delusion after all? How do I know but that he who dreads to die is not as a child who has lost the way and cannot find his home?

"Those who dream of the banquet, wake to lamentation and sorrow. Those who dream of lamentation and sorrow wake to join the hunt. While they dream they do not know that they dream. Some will even interpret the very dream they are dreaming; and only when they awake

do they know it was a dream. By and by comes the Great Awakening, and then we find out that this life is really a great dream. Fools think they are awake now, and flatter themselves they know if they are really princes or peasants. Confucius and you are both dreams; and I who say you are dreams, I am but a dream myself. This is a paradox. To-morrow a sage may arise to explain it; but that to-morrow will not be until ten thousand generations have gone by.

"Take no heed of time, nor of right and wrong. But passing into the realm of the Infinite, take your final rest therein."

---

### **FLESH AND SPIRIT**

*Adapted from the Brahnavadin*

Throughout the universe as we know it both soul and non-soul are real and inter-related; and this is a position which is maintained even by the monistic school of Vedanta. The body presupposes the soul and the soul has the body as its field of activity. In practical life we cannot and ought not to ignore either. The Bhagavad-Gita distinctly condemns self-torture and enjoins the proper regulation of eating, sleeping, amusement and activity. It is not good to gain the whole world and lose the soul; but it is not possible to gain the soul without caring for the body and regulating its activities.

One of the central ideas in the theology of St. Paul is the dualism of spirit and flesh, the common tendencies of the flesh being supposed to be against the true interests of the spirit. This idea is said to have been characteristic of the thought of Paul's time in Palestine and in Egypt. But at all times and in every religion there have been schools of teaching which have advocated the belief that to subject

the body to unnecessary suffering furthered the soul's progress. This point of view, however, is not possible to one who has understood the essential unity of God and man. He sees the body, not as the enemy, but as the ally of the soul; and any asceticism or religious practice which threatens to disturb the balance and destroy the harmony between physical and spiritual is looked upon by him as undesirable and injurious. It is doubtful whether even St. Paul believed in any abnormally harsh treatment of the "warring members," although he admonishes the Romans "to mortify the body" and warns them: "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die."

Common sense calls upon us to recognize that in the union of spirit, mind and matter in each individual, the interests of matter are to be held in subordination to those of mind; and the interests of mind, together with those of matter, are to be subordinated to the supreme end of Divine realization. As body must subserve the purposes of mind, so body and mind must subserve the purposes of God. The relation of body, soul and God is one of successive orderly subordination. "The senses are greater than the gross body," the Gita tells us; "greater than the senses is the mind (*manas*); greater than the mind is the intellect (*buddhi*); and greater than the intellect is He."

Whatever may be the apparent conflict between flesh and spirit, the over-zealous ascetic is wrong when he tries to suppress the body-part of his nature. To suppress or distort either the physical or the mental life is to impoverish the spiritual life. But though his method may be wrong, the motive which prompts him is right. The spirit of self-denial is an essential one in the development of the higher consciousness. Jesus made it the foundation of His teaching; while Sri Krishna admonishes Arjuna again and

again not to yield to the desires of the outer bodily man. No part of our being is to be either indulged or annihilated. What we must strive for is a life of wholesome self-restraint and self-sacrifice, in which every faculty and member through proper care and training will be brought up to the highest state of efficiency.

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### REPORT

Swami Paramananda has returned to Boston and resumed charge of the Services and Classes at the Vedanta Centre. The attendance throughout the month of May grew steadily and many new-comers were seen at the meetings. The Swami intends to remain in Boston until the late summer, when he will set out on another lecture tour through the North-west, accepting invitations to speak in Helena, Seattle, Portland and other cities.

\* \* \*

Urgent requests for further lectures forced the Swami to extend his stay in Los Angeles. On one evening he spoke at Krotona before a large and enthusiastic audience, his subject being, "The Poetic and the Spiritual Value of The Upanishads." Mr. A. P. Warrington presided and in his introductory and closing remarks expressed warm appreciation of the Swami and his work. Another prominent officer of the Theosophical Society, in referring to the occasion, writes: "The Swami's lecture at Krotona was a pronounced success. He was charming and radiant, a very real blessing poured from him. People were appreciative and I think he felt well repaid by their kind words."

Another lecture out of the Swami's usual routine of public speaking was one delivered at the University of Southern California before "The Palette and Brush Club" on "The Mystic Poetry and Symbolic Art of India." A special

course of four lectures at the Metaphysical Library brought the teaching to a new and earnest group. The weekly series of meetings at Long Beach closed with a reception at the Arlington Hotel. Although the Swami this year made less effort than heretofore to reach the general public, the work in Los Angeles proved especially gratifying. The members still continue to meet twice a week and they are doing their utmost to maintain the fervent spirit of devotion which has always characterized the Los Angeles Centre.

\* \* \*

Among the Reports, which have reached us recently, of the varied philanthropic undertakings of the Ramakrishna Mission in India, the account of the year's work done by the Home of Service at Vrindavan gives a picture of the Mission's rapid growth, through its fast multiplying branches. The Vrindavan Home is only a few years old, yet in the twelve months under review it relieved 25,152 patients, besides providing food and care for 255 persons in their home quarters. A serious flood in the neighborhood also led to the organizing of a vigorous and effective relief work. Besides food and clothing, 800 blankets were distributed in the afflicted area. During the terrible epidemic of influenza the member of the Mission in charge of the Home not only cared for the sick, at times single-handed, but carried the dead on his own shoulders to the burning-ghat and cremated them. No service was too difficult or too humble for him. At all times the work of love in the Home is carried on in a strictly non-sectarian spirit, service being rendered to all in need without any consideration of caste, creed or nationality.

A younger institution of similar character and utility is to be found at Allahabad. From remotest times Alla-



habad has been one of the holiest places of pilgrimage in India and the congested condition of the city, especially at special festival seasons, creates a continuous need for disinterested service to the sick and suffering. During the year covered in the last Report, 12,212 persons—Christians, Mohammedans, Hindus and others—were cared for. Although all branches of the Ramakrishna Mission are constantly extending their fields of usefulness, it seems impossible to meet the demand. Always hundreds of helpless poor and afflicted stand at their doors appealing for aid, and always is there an enlarging need for the co-operation of the public in sustaining, by sympathy and offerings, the tireless efforts of the members of the Mission. It was to provide another avenue of help in the relief of the struggling poor of India that Swami Paramananda opened an Indian Relief Fund and offered to sell autographed copies of his translation of *The Upanishads* and, if desired, of any other of his works for its benefit. The response has been most encouraging and already many hungry, suffering souls have been fed and succored through the money sent.

\* \* \*

The latest booklet by Swami Paramananda "*Secret of Right Activity*" is one which should be in the hands of every student of Vedanta. The problem of combining the inward life with the relentless demands of an over-crowded outward life is one which confronts everyone at the present time; and this little book solves it in a peculiarly clear, practical, satisfactory way. The headings of its five chapters give an idea of the trend of thought carried through its pages. They are: "Religion of Work," "Duty and Service," "Value of Non-Attachment," "Work and Renunciation" and "The Spirit of Consecration." (35 cents. Postage 2 cents).

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—*Rig-Veda*

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VEDANTA MONTHLY

# The Message of the East



JULY, 1920

Issued by

**THE VEDANTA CENTRE**

1 Queensberry St., Boston, Mass., U. S. A.

SINGLE COPIES, 20 Cents

\$1.50 A YEAR

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Entered as second class matter May 1, 1915 at the post office  
at Boston, Massachusetts, under the act of March 3, 1879

**PUBLISHED MONTHLY EXCEPT IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER**

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## THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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"And behold the glory of the God of  
Israel came from the way of the East"

*Ezekiel.*

"Light shall come again from the East"

*Tyndall.*

Published monthly except in August and September.

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Vol. IX.

JULY, 1920.

No. 7

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### THE UNITING POWER OF DEVOTION

*By Swami Paramananda*

It is through the power of devotion that we gain the Vision. Devotion always draws the Spirit to us. God is one and unconditioned. That is, He is not bound by mortal laws, yet He is very much bound by the law of love. Whenever we can approach the Unseen Being with a love that is unquestioning and unhesitating, we get our answer at once. Which kind of prayers are answered? Not the written prayers, nor the prayers which are uttered with calculation; but the prayers which spring forth from our being spontaneously through the power of devotion. But devotion to anything that is indefinite is impossible. We can never express our spiritual devotion spontaneously until we have some definite idea of God. We may condemn people who cling to symbols and images and spiritual forms; but behind all these what do we find? Reality. Of course no symbol can ever represent the Infinite, no matter how it is conceived. But all these forms and symbols are like substitutes. Just as when some one whom we love very much is away, we have his portrait to serve as a reminder of him, so all these spiritual symbols and rituals, altars, temples, images and ceremonies are to remind us of something. They become vulgar and superstitious only

if we lose sight of their significance and do not have the feeling which originally inspired them. Without that feeling we can never profit by anything.

The book of life is very complicated and perplexing until we get the power of devotion. Devotion unfolds and reveals all things to us. Devotion to what? That is the question. To whom shall we express our devotion? To whom do we owe our devotion? What is the source of this life? Are we God-made or are we man-made? If we are God-made, then our devotion should unite us with God. If we really believe in a soul existence we should be devoted to that before all else. That should be our foremost consideration. Nor is this so difficult when the soul becomes a reality to us. Our natural craving is for beautiful things, and our heart is full of craving for love; therefore when we find that One who is most loving, our heart naturally flows towards Him.

Devotion destroys all distance, and that which now seems indefinite and intangible becomes definite. The true definition of God is Spirit. Philosophers call Him the Unknowable, but that is because we cannot know Him with our physical senses. We must cultivate another sense of perception and this we do through spiritual devotion. Through this a new sense of seeing and perceiving opens. As this develops, we feel our consciousness expand. At first we are capable of loving only a few people who are connected with us through blood, or at the utmost our special community. We cannot love all, because our capacity for love seems limited. We can be friendly only towards the members of our family or towards our own countrymen. When we enter into the realm of spiritual devotion, however, and our heart goes towards God, that outpouring of devotion enables us to love more and more

and we feel greater joy, greater understanding and greater sympathy. Our whole life becomes saturated with the atmosphere of Divinity.

This spiritual atmosphere can be created just as we create a material atmosphere by our mental attitude. When we focus our thoughts on a spiritual Ideal, we create such a sense of God-union that we never breathe even without a living consciousness that it is God's breath. It is not that a person who devotes himself to spiritual things sits down and thinks of nothing else, or that he becomes peculiar and abnormal in any way. That is not the proper attitude. What is meant is that by finding our relationship with the inner essence of our being, we so adjust our life that material things never overbalance our consciousness or influence our thought and actions. We cannot attain this state accidentally, however. That is impossible. We must cultivate it. This is the aim of the devotional life.

Spiritual devotion naturally varies. I may have one way of expressing it and you may have another; but the fundamental idea is one and the same, and in every case it must come from our own heart. We form our own conception of Deity and we can only worship this conception. If we try to worship another's conception, our feeling will not be genuine. Spirituality is a natural spontaneous evolution of the individual soul. We evolve our conception of Deity and we also evolve the power of devotion. At first you may say: "I do not feel any real devotion. What can I do? It is not natural to me." But you can have a certain craving, a certain restless feeling, a vague longing to know and realize. That is the seed. If you care for that seed, if you water it with sincere yearning, you will find eventually that you are evolving a new consciousness of spiritual reality and a genuine power of devotion.

As our intensity of feeling grows, however, we must try to combine with it the spirit of tolerance and allow to others the same privilege of devotion to their special Ideal, knowing that all paths lead to the same goal. Unless we have warm loving feelings towards all living beings, our devotion is not acceptable to God. The kind of love we must feel is one which knows no hatred. That is the only real devotion. When we really learn to love and worship, we shall find that there is no room for hatred or other unworthy thoughts. Everything is melted away and there is only One permeating and pervading the whole universe, watching over all, protecting all, supporting all. This is the theme of Indo-Aryan philosophy and religion. This is the goal of all spiritual living. He who perceives that all-loving and all-abiding Spirit within himself and without himself, in all things, how can there be any more delusion for him? How can he shrink from anything, when he realizes the Divine Presence and knows that he can never be separated from God?

May that Infinite Spirit make our hearts free from all blemish of selfish thoughts and feelings, that we may have strength to follow the path with unwavering faith and undaunted courage. May He free our minds from all egotism and self-seeking, that we may truly learn to say from our hearts, "Not my will but Thine," and to feel the blessing of doing the will of God. May He free us from the bondage of ignorance and fill our whole being with His Divine Love that we may serve Him and His children and make our lives productive of the highest good. May He awaken in us a more yearning spirit and a deeper sense of consecration. May He give us greater wisdom that we may be able to discern the real and forsake the unreal. May we never fail to trust His guiding hand in all things.

## IN THE ESTUARY

By B. E. Baughan

"Take me home! Take me home!" cries the stream to the  
Sea.

"Out of Thee was I sent, I have done Thy decree,  
I have run my due course. Take me back, into Thee!

"I have left my pure snows, and my forested steep,  
My fields full of flowers, my paddocks of sheep;

"I have left the bright light of the city lamps falling,  
The wealth of the wharves, and the men's voices calling;

"No streams meet me now; I must fare on alone;  
I have given up my beauty; my music is gone;

"I have given up my banks—through mud-flats now I flow;  
And my clean, pebbly bed; and the mud makes me slow.

"Take, take me home!" cries the stream to the Sea.  
"I have riven, I have striven, I have given, towards Thee,  
I have come the whole way. Take me home, into Thee!"

*(The tide flows in.)*

"O, what is this meets me, this terrible force?  
It arrests—Woe is me! it reverses my course.  
Turn me not, turn me not to the trees and the towers!  
The mud-flats are nearer the Sea than the flowers.

"I choke— Ah, the saltness! I struggle and shiver,  
Foaming and drowning, no longer a river;  
Yet turn me not back to my sweet mountain water—  
Brackish and blurr'd I am more the Sea's daughter.

"Nay, but what is this singing, the struggle inside?"  
*Woulds't thou come to the Sea, child, accept the Sea-tide!*



"Is it Thou? O sweet saltness! No sting is too much!  
Be it torture, Sea-water, it still is Thy touch!

"Wilt Thou inland? Then inland return me, and take  
Through my current Thy course. Turn me back for Thy  
sake!

"Turn me back!" cries the stream. "Have Thy whole way  
with me;

Drown me and drink me and make me all Thee;  
Till the turn of Thy tide carry sea out to Sea!"

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### THE INWARD LIFE

*By Sister Devamata*

Man can never attain lasting happiness in the outer spheres of his being. The reason becomes apparent when we study his constitution. At the very base of the human organism there seems to be an insatiable desire for expansion. No matter what we have or what we are, our mind overlaps and craves for more. We move into a larger house and in a short time we have filled it and feel the need of more space. We inherit a fortune and imagine ourselves rich; but soon our wants have outstript our income and we are coveting greater wealth. We spend years acquiring technical efficiency in some trade or profession and in the end we are as dissatisfied with our ability as we were when we began. In whatever direction we move, added knowledge merely intensifies the consciousness of a vague unknown beyond which lures us on.

The limit of expansion varies according to the density or subtlety of the form of manifestation. In our physical organism it is reached quickly. Even though we may have innumerable opportunities for enjoyment, the body can take only so much and then it begins to deteriorate. Our

senses grow numb and the further pursuit of enjoyment, instead of bringing joy, only serves as an irritating reminder that joy is denied. The pleasure-seeker is striving constantly for the sensation which he never fully experiences. Try as he may, he cannot force his bodily organism beyond its normal bounds. The scholar and the philanthropist also sooner or later come to the limit of satisfaction in their intellectual or altruistic life. The amount accomplished invariably seems painfully small in comparison with the energy expended. One part only of the human constitution appears to possess unlimited power of response and that is the spiritual nature. Here alone are we able to expand indefinitely and thus escape from the gnawing hunger for more. Every great teaching has proclaimed this truth and our own experience has confirmed it, yet still we go seeking our happiness on the outside.

Inwardness is the law of creation. Everywhere material manifestation shows a tendency to revert to the finer state. Ice melts into water, water evaporates into vapor; the solid rock crumbles into dust. When we move away from the grosser towards the subtler part of our being, we throw ourselves into line with the cosmic current and reduce the friction and distress of life at once. The effect is immediate. If conflict remains, it is in that part of our nature which is still tied to the external. God is all-power, all-peace, all-beauty. Just one touch exalts and sweetens us. And we touch Him the moment we turn towards Him. He is not far distant from us. We have only to enter that silent inner shrine of our heart and instantly there comes the soothing sense of benediction which His Presence alone can bring. People recognize this and even experience it, yet they advance a thousand arguments in favor of out-

ward living. The inner life, they say, is a selfish life. It takes us away from the strain and stress of human society. Those men are most helpful who lead a useful active outer life. But is it selfish to learn before we begin to teach? Would we have our children stay out of school to do chores at home and grow up illiterate? No man can give joy until he has found joy; and no man finds true joy until he has found God.

The things which we carry round in a basket and distribute to our fellow-beings are very poor substitutes for real succor. Even the loving words we speak or the bits of knowledge we dispense are laden with our limitations. We go to humanity steeped in humanity and accentuate the humanity in others. Among the countless thousands everywhere who have not subdued their brute nature we turn with relief to the man who is really human; but among the smaller number in any community who are sincerely human, what a blessing seems the man or woman who has begun to be even a little divine. Only those who have learned to merge their self-consciousness in God-consciousness have anything of permanent value to give; and they are the least aware of giving. Their mere living is a benefit to mankind. What they do is of minor importance. A natural radiance envelops them, lightening the darkness wherever they chance to be. Their counsel is always the counsel of wisdom and by the uprightness and consecration of their life they raise the standard for humanity at large. Ten such men would have saved Sodom and Gomorrah.

Worldly ambition and even a love of physical comfort ultimately drive us to the inward life; for no one can be at ease or gain success without quiet nerves and a calm mind, and these are the result of an inner state. No outer condition can bestow them. God is the source not only

of all that the unselfish man is striving for, but also of all that the selfish man covets. Therefore from the standpoint both of material and of spiritual advantage, the inward course is the wiser one. Our outer life will always be the projection of our inner. It will be just what we are. If we are peaceful and happy and illumined, it will be peaceful, happy and illumined. What is it now? Full of unrest, indecision, anxiety, uncertainty. But it is the reflection of ourself. No change on the outside therefore can alter it. We must begin deep down within.

We need never be afraid that when we move towards reality, we shall sacrifice anything that is real; and the sooner we sacrifice the unreal, the better. There is no greater danger to society than ignorance; and so long as we remain ignorant of the spiritual realm, we constitute a part of that danger, because our sense of values will be shifting and our proportions false. The immediate and temporal will be our first concern, while the ultimate and eternal will be given a secondary place. Until we have known Truth, how can we know what is true or untrue? Until we have linked our life with the great Life, how can we be sure that the foundations of our daily living are safe? Until we have gained contact with Righteousness, how can we know what is really right or really wrong?

If society could make spiritual education obligatory, as it has secular education, it would be the greatest safeguard for it. Unfortunately the spiritual life is the one life which must be wholly voluntary. Freedom is its goal and it must be lived freely. Unless our thoughts and actions are free offerings to God, they are not offerings at all. But men would turn eagerly to this deeper training, if they could be persuaded that it is to their advantage; and we can persuade them by our own daily lives. We ourselves,

however, must have the conviction first. No one ever tested out the practical value of the inward life and found it wanting. Every mighty achievement has begun on the inside and worked outward. The masterpiece is invariably the fruit of a spontaneous out-pouring of inward power. The great picture paints itself, the great sermon preaches itself, the great book writes itself, out from unsounded depths. The true artist or writer or prophet can never tell how his work was done. He only knows that in some hour of thoughtfulness he struck an underground river of inspiration which surged up to the surface by the force of its own current. Even business efficiency and integrity imply inwardness. They spring from the habit of viewing things from the inside. No man can have a masterful sweep in handling events who has not seen deep enough to grasp the fundamental principles of life and action. It was in the silence of earnest prayer before some village altar that General Foch gained the vision for his victories on the battle-field. The habit of secret appeal and God-communion lies at the base of all true greatness.

Now the inward life serves us poorly because we live it falteringly. We are too ready to compromise between the inner and the outer. When the world serves us well, we trust in it; when it fails us, we turn to God. Sometimes we move inward, sometimes outward; thus we neutralize our own effort and are less successful than the frankly worldly man, who is consistent and undeviating in his course. All success is the result of cumulative striving. Our conviction and resolution must be strong enough to carry us over the barren stretches. The athlete knows that it is his "second wind" which takes him to the goal. No human heart is always brave and fervent; but the momentum of the strong hours will bear us through the weak ones, if we are steadfast and prayerful.

Let us begin to cultivate a yearning for the inner life. This means a yearning for contact with all that is holiest and loveliest and tenderest and highest. It would seem as if the longing for these things would be natural to us; but our life does not indicate it. The outward habit still dominates us. Yet a taste for God can be cultivated. As we cultivate a taste for art by studying the best pictures or hearing the best music, so we must go where we hear constantly about God. We must read and think about Him. We must seek Him wherever we are, whatever we are doing. There must be something in us calling ceaselessly to Him; and we may be sure that this continuous call will open a broad channel of communication with the Divine.

No man ever called to God with a sincere heart that God did not answer and pour out upon him His richest blessings. If we keep on calling, He will bestow that greatest of all gifts—Himself. But no one can receive the whole who does not give the whole. We cannot make terms with God in our inner life. We must give ourselves as fully in hardship as in ease, in failure as in success. When we can do this, we shall find that it is in the dread stillness of some great sorrow that we shall hear His voice; in the solitude of a lonely life that we shall taste His companionship. When the inward life becomes a reality to us, we shall not be afraid of affliction or hard work or pain; for we shall live close to that which never suffers or labors, but which feeds upon that "infinite bliss born of contact with the Supreme."

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The wisdom of men grows according to what is before them.

—*Empedokles*

## THE LIGHT OF THE ONE

*From the Writings of Plotinus*

(Leader of the Neoplatonists. 3rd Century.)

When a man sees this Light, he moves towards It, and rejoices in the Light which plays over the spiritual world. Even here we love not bodies for themselves but for the beauty which shines in them, bestowing grace upon the object and love upon the subject. As soon as the soul receives into itself the Effluence from above, it is moved, it is filled with holy ecstasy and becomes Love. Before that, it is not moved by the sight of Spirit, for all Its beauty. Its beauty is inactive, till it receives the light of the Good (i. e. of the Absolute) and the soul lies supine before it... cold and stupid even in the presence of Spirit. But when warmth from the Good enters into it, it becomes strong and wide-awake, and though troubled by what lies near at hand, it ascends more lightly to that which a kind of memory tells it to be greater. And as long as there is anything higher than what is present to it, it rises, lifted up naturally by that which implanted the love. If it abides in the region of Spirit, it beholds indeed beautiful and noble things, but is not completely in possession of all that it seeks.

The fullest life is the fullest love; and the love comes from the celestial light which streams forth from the Absolute One, the Absolute Good, that Supreme Principle which made life and made Spirit, the Source and the Beginning. This is the true end and aim of the soul, to apprehend that Light, and to behold It by the Light Itself. How can this come to us? Strip thyself of everything! For it is not possible to see It, or to be in harmony with It, while one is occupied with anything else. The soul must remove from itself good and evil and everything else, that it may

receive the One alone, as the One is alone. When the soul is so blessed and is come to It, or rather when It manifests Its presence; when the soul turns away from visible things and makes itself as beautiful as possible and becomes like the One (the manner of preparation and adornment is known to those who practise it); and seeing the One suddenly appearing in itself, for there is nothing between, nor are they any longer two, but one, for you cannot distinguish between them while the vision lasts: this is the Union of which the union of earthly lovers who wish to blend their being with each other is a copy. The soul is no longer conscious of the body.

When, having sought the One, it finds itself in Its presence, it goes to meet It and contemplates It instead of itself. What itself is when it gazes, it has no leisure to see. Its happiness is no titillation of the bodily senses, it is that the soul has become again what it was formerly. All the things which once pleased it, power, wealth, beauty, science, it declares that it despises; it could not say this, if it had not met with something better than these. It fears no evil while it is with the One, or even while it sees Him. Though all else perish around it, it is content if it can only be with Him, so happy is it. For when the Spirit is inebriated with the nectar, it falls in love.

If you are perplexed because the One is none of the things which you know, apply yourself to them first, and look forth out of them, but so look as not to direct your attention to externals. The soul must forsake all that is external, and turn itself wholly to that which is within. God, as Plato says, is not far from every one of us; He is present with all, though they know Him not. But he who has learnt to know himself will know also whence he is.

We always move round the One, but we do not always



fix our gaze on It. We are like a choir of singers who stand round the Conductor, but do not always sing in time, because their attention is directed to some external object; when they look at the Conductor, they sing well. When we always look toward the One, we attain the end of our existence and our repose, and we no longer sing out of time, but form in very truth a divine chorus round the One.

We are not cut off from our source, nor separated from it, even though the bodily nature intervenes and draws us towards itself. But we are more truly alive when we turn towards It, and in this lies our well-being. In It our soul rests, out of reach of evil; it has ascended to a region which is pure from all evil; there it has spiritual vision and is exempt from passion and suffering; there it truly lives. For our present life without God is a mere shadow and mimicry of the true life. But life Yonder is an activity of the Spirit, and by its peaceful activity it engenders gods also (through its contact with the One) and beauty and righteousness and virtue; for these are the offspring of a soul which is filled with God.

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No knowledge which we can have here of Thee can satisfy my soul seeking and longing without ceasing after Thee... Alas, my Lord God, what is all Thou canst give to a loving soul which sigheth and panteth after Thee alone, and esteemeth all things as dung that she may gain Thee? What is all I say whilst Thou givest not Thyself, who art that one thing which is only necessary and which alone can satisfy our souls?... For that soul that hath set her whole love and desire on Thee can never find any true satisfaction but only in Thee.

—Gertrude More

**MUNDAKA-UPANISHAD***Translated and Commentated by Swami Paramananda*

(Continued from May Number)

**THIRD MUNDAKA****PART II****I**

**He (the Seer of Truth) knows the highest abode of Brahman, in which all this universe rests and which shines with pure radiance. Discerning men, without desire, by serving reverently such a knower (of Self) go beyond the seed.**

The Seer who has realized the Supreme and has united himself with the source of knowledge, becomes a connecting link between God and the worshipper. Whatever homage or reverence is paid to him, he does not take for himself. Being entirely free from egotism and self-importance, he offers it all to God. Those who seek out and serve such an illumined soul gradually partake of his wisdom and pass beyond the need of birth and death. Every desire is a seed from which spring birth, death and all mortal afflictions. Illumination alone will destroy this seed.

**II**

**He who broods on objects of desire and covets them, is born here and there according to his desires; but he whose desires are fulfilled and who has known the Self, his desires vanish even here.**

A selfish man, who is identified with the flesh, clings to the small and finite; and however covetous of a larger life he may be, he cannot attain it. A man may wish to go to the other shore; but if he does not pull up the anchor, his boat will not move.

## III

**This Self cannot be attained by the study of the Scriptures, nor by intellectual perception, nor by frequent hearing of it. He whom the Self chooses, by him alone is It attained. To him the Self reveals Its true nature.**

This same verse appears in the Katha-Upanishad (Part II, V. 23) and is explained at length there. Only he whose heart is wholly purified and made ready can receive the revelation; therefore the Self naturally chooses that one and no other. This means that we have to give ourselves wholly before we can get the higher vision.

## IV

**This Self cannot be attained by one who is devoid of strength, or by one who is unmindful, or by one whose austerity is without renunciation. But if the wise man strives by these means, his Self enters into the abode of Brahman.**

The Upanishads lay frequent emphasis on the idea that no weak person can attain Truth; but this does not mean mere physical weakness. The strength required for spiritual vision is an inner vigor. The sages in choosing their disciples were careful to choose those who were full of energy, faithful and willing to do anything. Even arduous practice of austerity, however, will be unfruitful, unless the heart is freed from lower desires.

## V

**The Rishis (wise Seers), after having attained It, become satisfied through knowledge. Having accomplished their end and being free from all desire, they become tranquil. The self-possessed wise ones, realizing the all-pervading Spirit present in all things, enter into all.**

They enter into all because they realize the universal oneness of cosmic life. They "see the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self." (Bhagavad-Gita.)

## VI

Sannyasins (spiritually consecrated seekers), having apprehended with certainty the true meaning of the knowledge of Vedanta, having purified their nature by the practice of renunciation, and having realized the highest immortality, after the great end (death) become liberated in the world of Brahman.

## VII

Their fifteen parts return to their source; all the senses go back to their corresponding deities; the Self, together with his deeds and acquired knowledge, becomes one with the highest imperishable Brahman.

The fifteen parts referred to are *Prana* (life), faith, ether, air, fire, water, earth, senses, mind, food, vigor, austerity, *mantras* (holy texts), sacrifice and the worlds (of name and form). Faith is mentioned after *Prana* because it is the greatest impelling power in life. When the final realization comes, the various parts of man's physical, intellectual and moral being are blended into one harmonious whole and become united with the Supreme.

## VIII

As flowing rivers lose themselves in the ocean, giving up name and form, so also the knower, freed from name and form, attains the highest effulgent Purusha (Being).

As man's consciousness expands into the universal consciousness, the limitations of self-consciousness necessarily melt away; but he does not lose his true entity. As soon as he attains knowledge of his true Self, he transcends

the realm of name and form and enters into conscious union with the universal Source of existence and knowledge. As it is said in the Prasna-Upanishad: "He becomes without parts and immortal."

## IX

He who knows that highest Brahman becomes like unto Brahman. In his family no one is born who is ignorant of Brahman. He overcomes grief; he overcomes sin; and being freed from the knots of the heart, he becomes immortal.

## X

Thus it is declared in the following text: Let this knowledge of Brahman be taught to those only who have performed sacrifices enjoined in the Scriptures; who are well versed in the Vedas; who are devoted to Brahman, who with faith have performed the fire sacrifice Ekarshi; and who have fulfilled the vow of carrying fire on their head (Shikrevrata).

This verse signifies that only those who have purified themselves by performing with proper humility and devotion the various rites and vows given in the Scriptures, will be able to understand or follow the higher knowledge. Therefore to them alone should it be taught. To others it will bring only confusion of mind and impede their progress.

## XI

The sage Angiras in ancient times taught this truth (to Suanaka). It should not be studied by one who has not fulfilled the vow of self-sacrifice and service. Adoration to the great Rishis! Adoration to the great Rishis!

Here ends the Mundaka-Upanishad.

**THE STORY OF GOPAL-MA**

*Told by Swami Ramakrishnananda*

Gopal-ma was left a widow at the age of eight. She began her life of devotion even then and always thought of herself as the mother of the Baby Krishna. Whatever she did she did for her Gopala (the name of Baby Krishna). If she cleaned her room, she thought that it was Gopal's room which she was cleaning; if she prepared a meal, she did it for Gopala; so she grew up with the idea of Gopala firmly fixed in her mind. One day she was cooking as usual, but the fire would not burn, the wood was heavy with moisture, and there was an adverse wind which blew the smoke into her eyes. Finally when the bit of rice and curry was done and she was about to pour it out on the leaf, the same adverse wind blew away the leaf. Then she began to scold God for making everything so bad for Gopala. As she was talking, a little boy brought back the leaf, held it out flat on the ground until she had put the food on it and then disappeared. She began to feed her Gopala; but suddenly she began to ask herself who that little boy was and she realized that it was Gopala himself. From that moment she became mad. All day and night she kept crying, "Where is my Gopala?" "Where is my Gopala?" She could not sleep or eat. Only at night would she prepare a little food for Gopala, and everyone thought that she had really become mad.

One day some of her friends, thinking to distract her mind, told her that they were going to see a great soul called Sri Ramakrishna at the Temple of Dakshineswar and asked if she would not come with them. As it was contrary to the Scriptures to go to a *Sadhu* empty-handed, she collected the little rice, *dal* (pulses) and curry stuff she had and joined them. But when they reached the Temple, the

others had such rich presents of fruit, flowers, and other things to offer that she was ashamed of her little bundle and, hiding it, she took her place in a far corner of the room. As soon as the other presents were offered, however, Sri Ramakrishna walked back to where she sat and said to her:

"I am feeling very hungry, can you not give me something to eat?"

"Oh Sir," she replied, "What can I do? I am a poor woman. I have no money. What can I get for you?"

"But what is that?" he asked, pointing to her little bundle. With shame she opened it and showed him.

"Oh," he said, "will you not cook it for me? The kitchen is right over there." And he himself took her and showed her where it was.

Shyly she began to prepare the food, thinking all the while: "How can I offer it to him! I have no *ghee* (clarified butter), nothing to make it tasty." But just as it was ready he came eagerly to inquire if it was done and she laid it before him. "You would better feed me," he said to her. She mixed the rice and curry and as she put the first mouthful into his mouth, she again saw her Gopala.

"You are my Gopala," she exclaimed. Sri Ramakrishna then finished the food, declaring that he had never tasted anything so good; and to everyone he kept saying: "I have eaten real nectar today."

From that moment Gopal-mother's grief vanished and she was perfectly happy. Occasionally she would come to Dakshineswar with some rice and *dal* and vegetables and a few pise worth of fire wood, cook for Sri Ramakrishna and go away content. The rest of the time she spent serving her Gopala at home and making *Japam* (repeating the Name of the Lord).

One day after Sri Ramakrishna had passed away, some of his disciples went to see her and found her room full of mosquitoes and other troublesome creatures. Although she did not appear to mind them and kept on repeating the Name of the Lord, it distressed them to see her in such discomfort, so next day one of the disciples carried her a mosquito curtain. That night when she sat down to repeat the Name, she found her mind constantly wandering to the curtain, thinking whether a cockroach or a rat might not be eating off a corner of it. Seeing this, she said: "What! This wretched curtain thus to take my mind away from my Gopala!" and without ado she made it up into a bundle and sat down again to her devotions with the mosquitoes all about her.

The next morning we were just getting up at the Math when Gopal-ma appeared. She had walked all the way (at least five miles) and must have started at three o'clock. She laid the bundle down.

"What is it?" someone asked.

"It is the curtain you gave me yesterday. It takes my mind away from God. I don't want it," was her answer; and nothing could persuade her to take it back.

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### REPORT

Swami Paramananda spent the first four days of June in Cincinnati. His opening lecture was to be given on Monday evening, May 31st., at the New Thought Temple; but failure in making train connections so delayed his arrival that he could not reach the Temple until 9 o'clock, yet about 300 people waited patiently for over an hour in order to hear him. One of those who followed all the meetings closely, writes:



"I wrote you how successful was Swami's last visit here, how much interest was manifested and how much deep appreciation shown. This time the results surpassed by far any previous visit. Wednesday evening the hall was packed; we had to bring in extra chairs and all space was taken. Thursday evening too there was a full capacity house. The afternoon attendance was excellent also. When the same people come out twice a day, you know that their interest is awakened. Despite all the heat and the noise from the street, Swami held their attention unbroken. 'Spiritual Consecration,' 'Life After Death' and 'Unity and Universality' are three of the best lectures I have heard him give. I wish every minister and university professor in this city could have heard his last lecture on 'Unity and Universality.'

"The instructor in psychology at the University of Cincinnati attended all the lectures. I do not believe he missed one, and I see that his name is on the list to form a class. Swami gave him something which he could not find in his 'leaf-counting' books. Such an open mind is not intellectually bound. Another young man told me that he was a druggist and had long hours; but he was determined to read the Swami's writings and had got up that morning at 5 o'clock so as to spend an hour reading 'Concentration and Illumination.' I note his name is on the class list. The first meeting of the new class will be held on Sunday evening, June 13. The Swami promised to send an outline of procedure. I hope by next October that we shall be able to have rooms of our own, on the plans which the Swami mentioned. This will be our aim."

This was the Swami's fourth visit to Cincinnati. His first lectures were given in the Parish Hall of Christ Church. The steady growth of interest during each visit

has now led to the formation of a study group, which will meet regularly once and perhaps twice a week.

\* \* \* \*

We have recently received an interesting account of a Society founded in Germany for the furtherance of interest in Indian spiritual teachings and called "The Friends of Indian Wisdom." Prof. Paul Deussen of Kiel University acted as first president and at his death Prof. Hermann Beck of Berlin was elected to succeed him. Besides organizing study classes in many different parts of Germany, the Society plans to bring out German translations of books and pamphlets on Vedanta. The first of this series of publications has just reached us and contains an able rendering into German of a lecture on "Self-Knowledge" by Swami Paramananda, and of extracts from his book "The Path of Devotion." It also includes the Sanskrit prayers and Salutations given at the close of this work with the Swami's English translation put into German.

This admirable movement is the outcome of a visit to New York 15 or 16 years ago made by a resident of Hagen in Westphalia, a man of exceptional earnestness and understanding. A long and fruitless search for Truth had led him finally to the Vedanta Society in New York, where a copy of "The Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna" was put into his hands. He read it from cover to cover the same night and from that moment his life received a definite bent. He returned to Hagen and began zealous efforts to make known the teaching to others. He was extremely eager to have the Swami Paramananda transfer his activities to Germany and establish a definite work there. He himself offered to bear all the Swami's expenses during the time needed to learn the language and prepare for public teaching. The Swami could not consider this, but he paid two

visits to Germany as the guest of this gentleman and did much to stimulate and strengthen the movement. The war made further visits impossible; now they are eager to have the Swami come to them again. The gentleman was called to the front and fell in battle in 1917; but having devoted some time to the study of Sanskrit at Gottingen, he spent his idle hours in the trenches translating the Bhagavad-Gita. This translation has just appeared in print. His wife and the earnest students of those earlier days are now the prime-movers in the present organization.

\* \* \* \*

Swami Paramananda gave his annual dinner to the students and friends of the Vedanta Centre of Boston on the evening of June 24th. All the dishes served were prepared by the Swami himself and the guests thus had the opportunity of making acquaintance with various choice Indian ways of cooking. There were nearly one hundred present, the greater number being seated at two long tables joined at one end by a third cross table where the Swami presided. After the dinner the Swami welcomed his guests by a few loving words and called upon Dr. Frank Granger to tell something of his war experiences. Prof. Baker of Oberlin College next paid a graceful tribute to India, which so charmed his hearers that he was asked to add some further account of his Indian experiences. Mr. Johnson, who had come to Boston especially for the dinner, told something of what was being done by the new Cincinnati group. Mr. Burnham, Mr. Orth and Dr. White were the other speakers, and Miss Shepherd contributed to the evening's pleasure by her impressive recitation of "The Vision Beautiful" by Longfellow. The Swami gave an account of his first efforts at cooking in the Monastery at Madras and in closing he invited all present to next year's dinner.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

# The Message of the East



NOVEMBER, 1920

Issued by

**THE VEDANTA CENTRE**

1 Queensberry St., Boston, Mass., U. S. A.

**SINGLE COPIES, 20 Cents**

**\$1.50 A YEAR**

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Entered as second class matter May 1, 1915 at the post office  
at Boston, Massachusetts, under the act of March 3, 1879

**PUBLISHED MONTHLY EXCEPT IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER**

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## THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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"And behold the glory of the God of  
Israel came from the way of the East"  
*Ezekiel.*

"Light shall come again from the East"  
*Tyndall.*

Published monthly except in August and September.

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VOL. IX.

NOVEMBER, 1920.

No. 9

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### RIGHT DISCRIMINATION

*By Swami Paramananda*

Without proper discrimination our progress is always slow and unsatisfying. In Indian philosophy it is considered one of the strongest factors in spiritual training. By reasoning alone, it is true, we cannot attain to God, but it is a vital aid in reaching the highest. Without it we are constantly hampered and held back in our onward course. Discrimination strengthens our spiritual nature and enables us to overcome our imperfections. It is like a guide, like a light which illumines our path; and there is no living being who can afford to neglect this faculty, for it is as necessary in our active daily life as in our spiritual study. Our life is not meant to be spent merely in following the trend of physical activities—eating, drinking, sleeping, taking a little pleasure through the senses. We are expected to use our higher faculties. These lower tendencies we have in common with animal life; but there is one thing in which we excel and that is in the faculty of reasoning, of right discrimination. It is through this that a man rises from his lower brute instincts to his higher, spiritual instincts. It is by this that he conquers his selfish aims and embraces that which is good for all.

There is no essential difference between man and his

Creator. The real is always in the background and the reality of man is God. At first it is a tremendous thing even to imagine, that there is no difference between us and the Infinite. But it seems less impossible when through discrimination we learn to define our true nature. What part of myself is myself, is the question the wise and discriminating person asks. Is it my hands, or my feet, or my senses, or my mind? As he begins to analyze, he finds that none of these parts of his physical being can be called himself. His real nature is something other than the body. "I am not the body; nor am I any of the conditions of the body—heat and cold, pleasure and pain. These things cannot afflict me, because they only afflict the physical man. The real which abides within is never affected by these conditions." Thus he proceeds by the method of discrimination and elimination.

As an expert mountain climber reduces his luggage to a minimum, because he knows if he carries too much he will not be able to make headway and also he will more quickly tire, so in this journey of life we must throw out all the non-essential. How much time and energy are consumed in doing things which easily might be eliminated! And all that time and strength could be devoted to better ends. Our modern life may have blessings, but also it has its curses in making us dependent and robbing us of all our power of originality. The more a man relies on artificial means, the less he is able to use his own faculties. You will be surprised when you go to the East. You will find there that they care less for outside comforts. They depend less on tools and are more deft with their hands. They use their minds more also because there are not so many machines made for them. Every advantage has its disadvantage. An artificial life, which makes us wholly de-

pendent on material conditions, gradually robs us of the habit of independent thinking. Men are not meant to be machines. A little discrimination will show us at once that we have not begun to use the amount of power that is latent in us; and it is through this power that we are able to accomplish anything worth while.

Discrimination shows us what to avoid and what to accept; then how to eliminate. When we learn to differentiate between the real and the unreal, the essential and the non-essential, and when we are able to abide by the essential, no matter how much past habits may try to overwhelm us, we gain a totally different outlook. After we have been able to accomplish this even once, we have greater confidence, but this confidence is in something within ourselves which before was hidden from us. The largest part of our being remains unexplored, because it is not through outward activities that we know our inner depths. It is through right reasoning, reflection and contemplation. Right reasoning proves to us intellectually that God exists and that everything rests in Him; but we learn to remain steadfast in that consciousness through the practice of meditation. When discrimination is combined with contemplation, we gain fullness of life. Without meditation we never acquire steadfastness. There is not a soul who can afford to be without this deeper consciousness. So long as we have health and strength and life runs smoothly, we may think we can disregard these things; but the vanities of the world do not endure. It is the spiritual essence of our being which we carry with us always. When we realize this, we have a serene quality in our heart.

Discrimination makes our path clear, smooth and stable; because when we have it, we do not base our thoughts



on the vanishing and unreal. At present we live in a sphere where everything is changeable, so we feel separation and grief; but when through discrimination we learn to live in the world without being contaminated by worldly associations, as the lotus leaf floats on the water and is not moistened by it, then we are safe. Within all the varied conditions of life there is One Who never fails and that is God, that is Truth, that is the very Soul of our souls. When once we feel that and grasp that, not with our hands or senses, but through a purified intelligence, we can live in the world and not be touched by worldliness. Then even in the midst of grief we shall enjoy a blissful state of consciousness. Heaven is not a special realm to which we shall go some day. We create our heaven here through knowledge. Whenever we are fortunate enough to find a person who is self-controlled, who has conquered anger, envy, jealousy and every poisonous quality of mind, what a sense of rest he brings. If we are tormented, we grow quiet; if we are unhappy, we are made happy.

We can all become centres of peace and spirituality in this afflicted world, if only we will develop these qualities. Wise men do not wish to hoard wealth or possessions which do not last. They do not lay up treasures where thieves can break through and moths corrupt; but they gather treasures of mind, of soul. And we all have an equal right to these treasures. Among these one of the greatest given us by God is the faculty of discrimination—the power to separate the true from the false, the ungodly from that which is godly. But it requires courage. It may require even great self-denial. We only deny ourselves, however, the things which are fleeting and mundane for the sake of things which are spiritual and lasting, and our reward is great. Nor is it something which we gain

for ourselves only ; we also bring a world blessing. Whenever a saint or a sage is born anywhere, his birth does not exalt himself alone, but his community, his country, the whole world enjoys the blessing of his coming.

Truth is the property of the soul. It is the property of all living beings. There is no exclusion. It is like the sun. As the sun shines equally on a pure object and an impure object, but is not contaminated even though it shine on an impure object ; so is it also with the soul which dwells in this body. The body may try to corrupt it by its bad deeds ; we may think even that we have lost our Divinity and all hope of salvation ; but the soul cannot be contaminated. Through discrimination we learn this. Then strength comes to us, inspiration comes to us, and we become like that island about which Buddha told His disciples. A wise man can create for himself a spiritual island which no storm may approach. It is not by running away from difficulties that we escape. It is not by being fearful that we prevent dangers. It is through strength ; and the greatest strength we have is the knowledge that we are of God and not, as we think, of the world. Within this body there is a mighty soul, which is part of God. Our real nature, our real strength comes from God. When we realize this we have found a safe island of protection, where no weakness or failure can come near us.

We become established in this knowledge through constant discrimination and through devotion. As we grow more and more absorbed in the Spirit of God, naturally we find ourselves detached from the things which now give us pain and sorrow. This is a quality of mind which we cultivate within us. We may not possess it now in full measure, but we can all develop it. Every one has the power of thinking and this thinking faculty can be turned

in the right direction. It depends wholly on ourselves. As we cultivate this faculty, the mind will become so keen that it will cut asunder all false perception. At the present moment we may not be aware of this great gift of discrimination embedded in our deeper nature and it may not seem natural to us to live with the larger vision of the real; but the patient practice of discrimination will gradually so transform us that what may appear unnatural for us to-day, will become perfectly natural for us to-morrow. All foolish vanities and fears will seem unnatural to the soul that has reached the threshold of Truth and God.

### **THE SLAVERY OF SELFISHNESS**

*From the Teachings of Gautama Buddha*

He who knows the nature of his self and understands how his senses act, finds no room for the ego and thus he attains peace unending. The world holds the thought of ego and from this arises false apprehension.

Ye that are slaves of the ego, that toil in the service of self from morn to night, that live in constant fear of birth, old age, sickness and death, receive the good tidings that your cruel master exists not.

The ego is an error, a dream. Open your eyes and awake. See things as they are and you will be comforted.

He who is awake will no longer be afraid of nightmares. He who has recognized the nature of the rope that seemed to be a serpent ceases to tremble.

He who has found there is no ego will let go the lusts and desires of egotism.

The cleaving to things, covetousness and sensuality, inherited from former existences, are the causes of misery and of vanity in the world.

Surrender the grasping disposition of your selfishness and you will attain to that sinless calm state of mind which brings perfect peace, goodness and wisdom.

As a mother even at the risk of life protects her son, her only son; so let him who has recognized the Truth, cultivate good will without measure among all beings.

If a man by causing pain to others, wishes to obtain pleasure for himself, he, entangled in the bonds of selfishness, will never be free from hatred.

He who lives for pleasure only, his senses uncontrolled, immoderate in his food, idle and weak, him Mara, the tempter, will certainly overthrow, as the wind throws down a weak tree. He who lives without looking for pleasures, his senses well-controlled, moderate in his food, faithful and strong, him Mara will certainly not overthrow, any more than the wind throws down a rocky mountain.

Pleasure destroys the foolish. The foolish man by his thirst for pleasures destroys himself as if he were his own enemy. The fields are damaged by hurricanes and weeds; mankind is damaged by passion, by hatred, by vanity and lust.

Let no man ever take into consideration whether a thing is pleasant or unpleasant. The love of pleasure begets grief, and the dread of pain causes fear; he who is free from the love of pleasure and the dread of pain knows neither grief nor fear.

This is the sign that a man follows the right path: Uprightness is his delight, and he sees danger in the least of those things which he should avoid. He trains himself in the laws of morality, he encompasseth himself with holiness in word and deed; he sustains life by means that are pure; good is his conduct, guarded is the door of his senses; being mindful and self-possessed, he is altogether happy.

## WORK AND REALIZATION

*By Swami Vivekananda*

Direct perception of the universal *Atman* (Spirit) which is more inner than the innermost, is not easily attained. Reading of it in the Scriptures or hearing of it from the mouth of the teacher brings some conception of it. When the hard lashes of worldly sorrow and pain make the heart sore, when in the hour of grief over the loss of near and dear ones the individual soul feels helpless and without support, when impenetrable and insurmountable darkness enshrouds the mind, then even more the *Jiva* (individual soul) turns to the *Atman*. Therefore sorrow is helpful to the knowledge of the *Atman*. But there must be the power to retain the lessons which sorrow and experience bring us. Those who live and die listlessly like cats or dogs, are they men? He is a man who even when agitated by the sharp interaction of pleasure and pain remains thoughtful and discriminating. Remembering that both pleasure and pain are evanescent, he becomes devoted to the *Atman*. That which is nearest is least observed. The *Atman* is the nearest of the near; therefore the listless, unsteady mind of man gets no clue of it. But the calm, controlled and discriminating *Jiva*, transcending the external world, enters the inner world, realizes the glory of the *Atman* and becomes great.

So long as you have the body-consciousness and the ego-consciousness, the sense of the reality of these outer things will persist. When, however, you get rid of the body-consciousness and become devoted to the *Atman* and live in the *Atman*, these will cease to appear permanent realities to you. . . . In the highest truth of the Parabrahman (the Supreme Being) there is no distinction of sex. On the relative plane of "I" and "Thou" we notice this difference

of sex; but the more the mind becomes introspective and inward, the more all ideas of difference vanish; and ultimately when the mind is merged and one with the homogeneous, undifferentiated Brahman, then such ideas as "this is a man," "that is a woman," do not remain at all. Therefore I say that though outwardly there may be difference between men and women, in their real nature there is no difference. This being so, if a man can be a knower of Brahman (God), why cannot a woman attain to the same knowledge? If one among women becomes a knower of Brahman, then by the radiance of her personality thousands of women will be inspired and awakened to Truth.

What helps the manifestation of Brahman is good work. All work can be done so as to be helpful, indirectly if not directly, to the manifestation of the truth of the *Atman*. Following the path laid down by the Rishis (Seers of Truth), knowledge of the *Atman* comes quickly; but doing works declared by Scriptural writers to be wrong brings bondage to the soul and this bondage of delusion sometimes does not vanish for many lives. In all ages and places, however, freedom will be attained by every *Jiva* ultimately. The *Atman* is the real nature of the *Jiva*. Know that the attainment of the knowledge of it is the highest object of life. . .

Sankara after saying that *Jnana* (the path of wisdom) and *Karma* (the path of work) are antagonistic, acknowledges *Karma* as a subsidiary help to the manifestation of *Jnana* and to purification. I do not contradict the conclusion of Sankara that in absolute transcendent knowledge no touch of work or activity remains; but so long as man is within the realm where he is conscious of work, the doer of work and the object of work, he is powerless to sit idle without doing some work. Since therefore work is the

inevitable nature of the *Jiva*, why not do such works as are helpful to the attainment of knowledge of the *Atman*? That all work is tainted with ignorance may be true from the transcendent view-point; but within normal relative consciousness, work has a great fitness and efficacy. . . .

So long as the body endures, one cannot live without doing work of one kind or another; therefore one should do such work as is conducive to the good of others. What is the use of that spiritual practice or realization which does not benefit others; which does not contribute to the well-being of souls sunk in ignorance and delusion; which does not help in rescuing them from the clutches of lust and greed? Do you think that while one soul remains in bondage, you will have liberation? So long as that soul is not liberated, it matters not through how many births, you will have to be born to help him, to make him realize Brahman. Every soul is a part of yourself—that is why you must work for others. As you desire the good of your wife and children, knowing them to be your own, similarly when the same love and concern for every soul will awaken in you, then I shall know that the God in you is awakening—not a moment before. When feeling for the good of all without respect to caste or color begins to rise in your heart, then shall I know that you are advancing towards the Ideal.

There is a class of Vedantins who holds this view—that individual salvation is not the real and perfect form of salvation, but universal and collective salvation is true salvation. By this, however, individual salvation is not barred. But think of the greatness of the heart of him who wishes to take the whole world with him to salvation! . . . When the *Atman* is realized, the performance or non-performance of work will be within your

control; and whatever you do in that state will be meritorious work, conducive to the well-being of all mankind and the world. When Brahman is manifest in you, your every breath will do good to your fellowmen. Then you will not have to do your work on the level of the lower ego, consciously calculating and planning.

Day and night think and meditate on Brahman (the Supreme). Meditate with great one-pointedness of mind. And during the time when you are awake to outward life, repeat mentally: "Let only good come to every soul and to all the world"; "Let the mind flow constantly towards God." By such a continuous current of thought the world is benefited. Nothing good in the world can be fruitless, be it work or thought. By the influence of your thought perhaps some one even far away in America may be helped.

See that you do not swerve from the Ideal an inch. Never manifest low spirits or lack of courage. In eating, drinking, playing, working, in health or disease, manifest the highest moral courage. Then only will you attain the grace of *Mahasakti* (Divine Mother). Think, "Whose child am I?" "Going to Him, shall I have low spirits or a despondent mind?" Putting under your feet all such weakness and lack of courage, stand up and say: "I am possessed of strength, I have intelligence, I am the knower of Brahman." Keep such a noble pride alive in the heart. He who has not such faith, the God in him does not awake. Have you not heard the songs of Ramprasad? He used to sing: "Whom do I fear in the world, whose queen is the Divine Mother of the universe?" Keep such pride awake in the mind. Then depression and discouragement will not be able to approach you. Remember the Lord. All weakness, all cowardice will vanish at once.

(Extract from familiar conversations noted down by a disciple and now appearing in the "Prabuddha Bharata," India.)



**THE GRAIL***By G. O. W.*

"Fearless of peril, solitude and pain,  
To seek Thy Grail I leave the ways of men.  
Oh Uttermost and Perfect! Shining Star!  
Lead Thou my feet there where Thy mysteries are."

'Twas thus I prayed, on this high errand bent  
In pilgrim's garb forth from the city went,  
While farther and more faint the voices grew,  
Of love and friends and all the joys I knew.

Long are the roads that only pilgrims tread,  
Those paths no shelter give, no well, no bread.  
Lonely the nights, starved and athirst the days,  
While the blest vision evermore delays.

Yet even as birds are by a wind upborne,  
So driven by heart's desire, midnight and morn  
Found me upon the mountains still, in lands  
With hope alone for guide,—on eastern sands

Whose golden waters, soundless wave on wave,  
Horizon's swift receding footsteps lave;  
Where endless shores vestments of silence wear,  
And the lone spirit craves no speech save prayer.

Yet all my offering of weary years,  
Of youth and sheltering love, of bitter tears  
And steadfast quest, found me unworthy still;  
The Grail held from my sight, hid in His Will.

At last I turned me home. With cloak grief-rent,  
Unworthy pilgrim, stricken, old, and spent,  
Christ's sinful wanderer,—one evening late  
As beggars pass, I passed the city gate.

Now darkness deepened; and the city's roar  
Ebb'd like a tide. The leprous, crowding poor,  
Vanished in gloom, and like a sea-swept stone  
Left high upon the shore, so I was left, alone.

Then in the silence, up the empty street  
I saw a Shadow move; not slow, nor fleet,  
But as a cloud drifts up the endless sky,  
O Love, O Christ! that Shadow came to me,

And grave unfathomable eyes looked into mine  
So long tear-blind. "Give Me that pilgrim cup of thine,"  
He said; and stooping o'er the city street  
Some dust He gathered, trod by sinners' feet;—

"O man! My Heart bleeds here."—And then a veil  
Fell on my sight, but in my hands I held the Grail.

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It hath been asked whether it be possible for the soul, while it is yet in the body, to reach so high as to cast a glance into eternity and receive a foretaste of eternal life and eternal blessedness. This is commonly denied; and truly so in a sense. For it indeed cannot be so long as the soul is taking heed to the body and the things which minister and appertain thereto, and to time and the creature, and is disturbed and troubled and distracted thereby. For if the soul shall rise to such a state, she must be quite pure, wholly stripped and bare of all images, and be entirely separate from all creatures and above all from herself.

—*Theologica Germanica.*

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**SELF-CONTROL AND CHARACTER**

*By Sister Devamata*

Self-control is not a problem concerning our relation to the outer world, as commonly supposed; it is wholly a problem dealing with our relation to ourself. The unthinking man regards himself as an independent unit entering into a purely external relation with the universe. If under stress he falls short of his standard in dealing with it, he believes that he must make an effort to improve his behavior; that is, whatever may be his inward state of mind, he must curb all apparent display of it and learn to meet every condition of life with outward composure and courtesy. If he feels anger surging up, he struggles to keep it down; if someone irritates or disgusts him, he endeavors not to show it. His whole practice in control is directed towards specific events or people and is carried on only at the moment when the test of endurance rises.

Very different is the attitude of the thoughtful man. He recognizes that self-control is not a question of facing a particular situation manfully, through an isolated act of will. It is a question of building up a strong resisting force within, which is constantly strong without regard to outside irritations and temptations. A control which rests on the negative practice of suppression is not control at all. It is merely delayed defeat; for however far we may push our point of resistance, sooner or later something will break it down. Serenity of manner can be counted on only when behind it there is serenity of mind. No behavior is admirable or dependable which does not rest on character; and character is reshaped only by altering our fundamental values.

When we set out to cultivate self-control, therefore, we

must devote all our attention to the basic springs of action within and pay as little heed as possible to the momentary disturbances which sweep over the surface of our being. In other words, we must work on that in us which is disturbed, not on the disturbance or on the external cause of it. Whenever our balance is shaken or destroyed, it means that we have lost our sense of proportion. We are giving too large a place in the universe to some isolated incident or object and identifying ourselves too closely with it. This erroneous self-identity is the pivotal point of the whole difficulty. Theoretically we may believe that we are souls, but in practice we are bodies. The real accent in all our motives of action is laid on the physical. It is the needs of our body or of other bodies which consume our time and effort. The needs of our spiritual life are remembered only at rare intervals, if at all.

Our irritations also are in greater part physical—some one has interfered with our comfort, we have not the ease or leisure we desire, our work is unsympathetic, people do not treat us as they should, we are lacking in health or grace or gifts. These are the grievances which keep our disposition raw and sensitive. Envy, hatred, malice, jealousy, anger, discontent, are all reactions of our physical being. They are the remnant of our subconscious habit when we snarled and snapped at some quadruped neighbor over a disputed bone. That bone seemed the largest thing in the universe to us then, naturally we fought for it. Our present tempers and resentments may be less apparently brutal, but they rise from the same plane of our being; and until we have ceased to identify ourselves with that, we shall not escape from them.

The physical organism will be much healthier and stronger when we pay less heed to it. Its vitality is de-

creased by keeping our attention fixed upon it, just as it weakens a child to be worrying over it constantly. We should learn to treat the body like a useful vehicle or instrument—give it the necessary care, use it wisely and forget it. If it cannot be forgotten, then by steadfast practice we must dis-identify ourselves with its varying conditions and demands. The same method should be adopted in dealing with our subtle body—that inner body consisting of mind, intellect and ego.

Our likes and dislikes must be no longer the standard by which we determine our action. We must find a larger measure to live by. A great deal of our irritability, depression and impatience arises from indecision. But we shall never acquire decisiveness so long as we make our own comfort or discomfort, advantage or disadvantage, pleasure or pain, the basis of our calculation; because these are shifting quantities. What is pleasant to us at one time is extremely unpleasant at another, the comfort of to-day is the discomfort of to-morrow. That which seems an advantage from our present outlook appears a great disadvantage when we view it from another angle. The habit of firm decision comes only when we refer the situation to some fixed point and the one truly fixed point in the universe is the Supreme Will. When all our acts of choice are referred to It, our life moves on in a strong unswerving current and we feel none of the rebellions against circumstance which now so often disturb our balance.

In reality there is no occasion for choice. So perfect and homogeneous is the cosmic plan that at every instant there is just one course to pursue. If we try to move along other avenues, we shall be thrown back again and again, until we are forced into the path which in the universal scheme

of things we are meant to travel. It is these frequent corrective rebuffs, called by us disappointments, failures, catastrophes, which overpower our most resolute efforts at self-control; but the pressure will be wholly removed when we fall in line with the universal law. Then we shall not be overwhelmed even by great sorrow, so the Bhagavad-Gita assures us. A mere calculating attempt to unify ourselves with God's Will in order to enjoy greater joy and peace, however, will not bring the desired result. We must be convinced that His is the wiser way, and we take it by an act of free choice because no other way tempts us.

A mathematician is not tempted to work out his problem contrary to the rules of mathematics; a chemist does not long to perform his experiment in defiance of the laws of chemistry. Why should we prefer a small personal measure of action rather than the vast and universal one? Or why should we imagine ourselves freer when we move against the law than when we go with it? To attain this state of willing conformity to the cosmic plan, however, we must exercise our power of discrimination with ceaseless diligence, until we have fully adjusted our values and spontaneously view everything from the broader standpoint. It is the petty childish personal self in us which is hurt and angered and discouraged and rebellious. It sees all these distresses on the level and necessarily they assume grave proportions; but the most grievous insult, the most crushing disaster cannot reach to the height of the soul. What prevents us from living on that height and building there a strong fortress of character which no misfortune can overpower? Nothing is keeping us back except ourselves. Rather is all the force of evolving nature pushing us upward, as it has pushed us up from the sub-human forms of life.

So long as a thing seems vital to us we cannot help growing angry or despondent or nervous over it. Even the buzzing of a mosquito can make us lose our temper, if a night's sleep for the moment appears to be the most essential thing in life. And no amount of negative reasoning can alter the situation. We must proceed, not by the method of elimination, but by substitution. We cannot persuade ourselves by abstract reasoning that the present vital thing is of no importance. When we finish all our arguments, it is there just the same, pushing hard against the foundations of our self-control. We must bring in something else more vital, which by comparison will make the first thing dwindle into nothingness. In order to do this successfully we must form the habit of holding our thought on the truly vital things of life. This is the purpose of all higher study and meditation and holy association.

We can completely obliterate some weakness in our character by choosing as our object of meditation in our daily practice a strong counteracting picture; and it must be the same picture day after day until the source of the weakness is wholly effaced. In this way our meditation may be made to serve a double end. While on the one hand it is teaching us to gather up our scattered energies and direct them through higher channels, it may also wipe out past habits of thought and create for us a new scale of values — substituting the real for the unreal, the essential for the non-essential. No one can dwell persistently upon any word or act of a Christ, a Buddha, of any holy saint or prophet, without gaining unconsciously a new point of view.

Our thought is the material out of which we build our character. If it is flimsy and unsteady, we shall be like a

house built upon the sands; the first rushing storm will throw us down. But if our mind is firm and one-pointed, the wind and rain of circumstance may beat upon us, but cannot shake us. It is not possible, however, for the mind to be fixed and one-pointed unless it has a definite point on which to fasten. And here we touch the innermost secret of all self-control. We can never be truly the master until we have a clearly defined ideal. Our lack of control is due wholly to the scattered state of our energies. We are like an unmobilized army. When the enemy strikes, he takes us unawares and routs us before we have had time to gather together our defensive forces. Also we invite attack when we are thus off our guard. People feel free to show their ill-tempers and annoyances and the pressure against our power of control is doubled. But when our forces are fully mobilized and on guard, the very sense of calm impregnable strength thus created will silence the petty word or shame away the hostile action, and our occasions for irritation will be reduced immeasurably.

The causes for defeat within our own self also will be less and less. An ideal is necessarily something higher and nobler and bigger than we are at the present moment. It represents our furthestmost point of vision, and our heart cannot rest upon it from day to day without being transformed into its likeness. What we think upon, that we become; and as we think on God, in whatever form, we are re-created gradually in His image. Then we perceive instinctively the relative value of the things of the world and the things of Spirit, and the passing trials of the outer life leave us untouched. The whole universe cannot tempt us to sell our soul's peace and serenity.

Nor will this state of exalted detachment cheat us of anything. It will only save us from cheating ourselves.



We shall not lose our power of enjoyment. We shall enjoy the world even more, but our enjoyment will be in proportion to the value of each thing. It will not be out of scale; and if the person or object or event fails us, we shall experience no reaction; because we expected nothing which was beyond the nature of the occasion to give. A true mother does not grow angry when her little child kicks her and screams at her. She is only grieved at its folly and feels a greater eagerness to save it from itself. It was the mother-heart of Jesus which prayed on the cross for those who had hung Him there. And such will be our attitude towards all these outer stings and blows, when we have gained a truer sense of values. There will be calmness on the surface as at the depths; and our whole tender concern will be for the one who, in striving to wound us, has only hurt himself.

### SPIRITUAL FRUITION

*By Jan Van Ruysbroeck. 13th Century.*

If a man would have fruition of God, three things are needful thereto; these are true peace, inward silence, and loving adherence. Whosoever would find true peace within himself and God must love God in such a way that he can with a free heart renounce for the glory of God everything which he does or loves inordinately, or which he possesses or can possess, contrary to the glory of God. This is the first thing which is needful to all men.

The second thing is an inward silence; that is, that a man should be empty and free from images of all things which he ever saw or of which he ever heard. The third thing is a loving adherence to God, and this adherence is itself fruition; for whosoever cleaves to God out of pure love, and not for his own profit, he enjoys God in truth and feels that he loves God and that God loves him.

There are still three other points, which are higher still and which establish a man and make him able to enjoy and to feel God continually, if it be His good will to have it so. The first of these points is to rest in Him Whom one enjoys; that is, where love is overcome by the lover, and love is taken possession of by the lover, in bare Essential Love. There love has fallen in love with the lover, and each is all to the other, in possession and in rest. From this there follows the second: and this is called a falling asleep in God; that is, when the spirit immerses itself and knows not how, nor where, nor in what it is.

And therefrom follows the last point that can be put into words, that is, when the spirit beholds a Darkness into which it cannot enter with the reason. And there it feels itself dead and lost to itself, and one with God without difference and without distinction. And when it feels itself one with God, then God Himself is its peace and its enjoyment and its rest. And this is an unfathomable abyss wherein man must die to himself in blessedness, and must live again in virtues, whenever love and its stirring demand it.

The man who is sent down by God from these heights into the world is full of truth and rich in all virtues. And he seeks not his own but the glory of Him Who sent him. And hence he is just and truthful in all things, and he possesses a rich and a generous ground, which is set in the richness of God, and therefore he must always spend himself on those who have need of him; for the living fount of the Holy Spirit, which is his wealth, can never be spent. And he is a living and willing instrument of God, with which God works whatsoever He wills and howsoever He wills; and these works he reckons not as his own, but gives all the glory to God. And so he remains ready and willing

to do in the virtues all that God commands, strong and courageous in suffering and enduring all that God allows to befall him.

And by this he possesses a universal life, for he is ready alike for contemplation and for action, and is perfect in both of them. And none can have this universal life save the God-seeing man; and none can contemplate and enjoy God save he who has within himself the six points, ordered as I have described heretofore. And therefore all those are deceived who fancy themselves to be contemplative, and yet inordinately love, practise, or possess, some creaturely thing; or who fancy that they enjoy God before they are empty of images, or that they rest before they enjoy. All such are deceived; for we must make ourselves fit for God with an open heart, with a peaceful conscience, with naked contemplation, without hypocrisy, in sincerity and truth. And then we shall mount up from virtue unto virtue, and shall see God and shall enjoy Him, and in Him shall become one with Him, in the way which I have shown to you. That this be done in all of us, so help us God. Amen.

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### REPORT

Swami Paramananda returned to Boston from his Western tour on October 15th and at once resumed charge of all Services and classes. On Thursday evening, the 21st, he held an informal reception for the students and friends of the Centre. Although it was arranged at the last moment, the rooms of the Centre were full. The first part of the evening was devoted to music and impromptu speeches. Professor Perrin of the Boston University told something of his recent experiences while teaching at the University of Nankin, China. Mrs. Spaulding dwelt with warm appre-

ciation on the pervading influence of the Centre, which brought constant blessing into the lives of many who were deprived of the privilege of attendance at the meetings; and Miss Shephard recited one of Longfellow's poems with deep feeling. The Swami spoke at intervals as he called upon the various ones who contributed towards the evening's entertainment. In giving an outline of his Western tour and of the many lecture invitations now coming to him, he showed how rapidly the interest in Vedanta is spreading and how many are the new links being formed between the Centre in Boston and the outside world. Later, refreshments were served in the Community Room and the rest of the evening was spent in friendly conversation.

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The Swami's recent visit to Los Angeles, although shorter than usual, proved very fruitful. The numbers at the meetings of the Centre grew so large that they taxed the seating capacity of the Centre to the utmost. The Swami also spoke on one Sunday afternoon at Krotana, the National Theosophical Headquarters, to an overflowing audience. The lecture hall was so crowded that it was necessary to seat people on the platform. His subject was "The Science and Practice of Yoga". A special lecture was arranged at the Hotel Darby by several prominent ladies of Los Angeles and the keen interest awakened led to a second meeting in one of the most beautiful homes of Los Angeles. Another outside lecture was at the Metaphysical Library. The Swami was asked to speak also at the Woman's Suffrage Victory celebration, given by the Friday Morning Club, one of the largest Woman's Clubs in the United States. He chose as his subject, "Ideal of Womanhood in India".

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**FAMINE IN INDIA**

When Swami Paramananda published the first volume of his translation of the Upanishads, it will be remembered, an Indian Famine Relief Fund was created by selling special autograph copies. So ready was the response of the friends of the Boston Centre that during the past year it has been possible to send several generous remittances to the Ramakrishna Mission for their relief work. In acknowledging the last draft, Swami Brahmananda, President of the Mission, gives the following heart-rending picture of the misery prevailing in the famine swept areas:

"A little while ago I received your draft. The amount according to your wish will be utilized in Famine Relief Work. In these days, in the district of Puri, the famine is very severe. Night and day men and women, boys and girls, come in flocks to us from the villages crying pitiably 'Give us food, give us rice. O, fathers, give us something to eat or we'll die.' Listening to their pitiful appeals, one can hardly bear it. One is frightened in looking at them. They look as if they might drop dead at any moment. Their bodies are only just skeletons covered with skin and barely anything to wear. They turn specially to us, but the help we are able to give is not adequate, owing to lack of sufficient funds. We give them what we can."

No one, we feel sure, can read this account without longing to do something to alleviate such harrowing distress. Immediately on receiving the President's letter, the Swami decided to set apart all the proceeds of his lecture tours for Indian Famine Relief, and he was able to forward a substantial sum on his recent return from the West. He now hopes many others will be glad to join him in an earnest effort to bring succour to the starving poor of India. (Contributions may be sent to The Vedanta Centre of Boston.)

DEC 16 1920  
UNIV. OF MICH.

TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES.—Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

# The Message of the East



DECEMBER, 1920

Issued by

**THE VEDANTA CENTRE**

1 Queensberry St., Boston, Mass., U. S. A.

**SINGLE COPIES, 20 Cents**

**\$1.50 A YEAR**

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Entered as second class matter May 1, 1915 at the post office  
at Boston, Massachusetts, under the act of March 3, 1879

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REPORT

## INVITATION

The Vedanta Centre of Boston closes its twelfth season of work with the present year. It will celebrate the anniversary of its establishment on Thursday evening, January 6th, 1921, at 8 o'clock. All friends of the Centre are cordially invited to attend and bring with them their friends.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST completes its ninth volume with the present number. We urgently request our subscribers to renew their subscriptions for the coming year as promptly as possible. Owing to the excessive cost of production, we are forced once more to make a slight advance in the subscription price. We hope that all those who recognize the unique spiritual value of this monthly will do their utmost to aid it in its earnest effort to bring to all its message of unity, love and tolerance.

**Subscription for 1921 will be \$2.00.**

## THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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"And behold the glory of the God of  
Israel came from the way of the East"  
*Ezekiel.*

"Light shall come again from the East"  
*Tyndall.*

Published monthly except in August and September.

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VOL. IX.

DECEMBER, 1920.

No. 10

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### UNIVERSAL TOLERANCE AND THE CHRIST IDEAL

*By Swami Paramananda*

The Christ Ideal to me has a universal appeal. In the East there are people who have neither read the Bible nor come in contact with Christians, yet their lives exemplify in a remarkable degree what was taught by Jesus of Nazareth. This must make us realize that like the sky over every head the real spirit of religion is universal; but through our narrow vision we limit it and make a mockery of it. It does not matter what we profess. Name and form have very little to do with the soul of religion. It is all-embracing and we feel it in our heart. According to my conception, the import of the teachings of Christ and of all the great Lights of the spiritual world is one and only one. Their sole aim is to show us how we may bring the living presence of our Ideal into our consciousness and actions. Whoever does this is a follower of the Christ Ideal, whatever may be the nature of his creed. It is living according to our highest concept which makes us a worshipper of God. If we do not do this, praising our special form of faith and exalting it above all others will not avail much. It is only our life which will uphold it. If we do not glorify it in our life and activity, we may talk of universal love and tolerance and of all the beautiful things taught in the



great Bibles of the world and by the great Teachers, but our words will not carry weight. It is our life alone which counts, and a Divine Incarnation comes to show us how through concentrated thought and actions we may unite ourselves with Divinity.

A Divine Incarnation is divine enough to be in touch with Divinity and human enough to be in touch with humanity. He comes to point the way Godward; to help us break down all the fictitious barriers of caste and creed which divide us. When we come in contact with such manifestations we see how quickly the non-essentials vanish and the ice of misunderstanding melts away. It is the sun of wisdom which melts all coldness from the human heart and unites us. And that is the only real worship. It is not in theory, it is not in dogma that religion consists; it is in feeling and realizing. That is the dominant note running through all Vedic philosophy.

It brings a greater blessing when we take a Divine Ideal from the broader point of view than when we confine him to any one form. In India there are many who are regarded as Divine Incarnations. The Vedic Scriptures declare that whenever virtue subsides and vice prevails, when people become immersed in materialism and selfishness, then the Lord embodies Himself and once more manifests the Truth. He comes whenever and wherever there is need. There is no limit set for His coming; and however and whenever He comes, it is always the same Infinite Being. There can be no essential difference between the spirit of Christ and the spirit of Buddha, or the spirit of any manifestation before or since. There is only one Absolute Being and all Divine manifestations are from that Source. In a family a father may appear one day in one garment and on another day in another, and the children

would be foolish indeed if they did not recognize him in the different garments he may wear. We are equally foolish when we fail to recognize the one universal Father under all His various forms, and condemn those who invoke Him by other names.

An interesting story is told in India of a fanatic who worshipped Siva, the third person of the Hindu Trinity. He was so ardent a follower of his Deity that he did not want to hear any other name of God. He wished to exclude every aspect of Divinity except his own. At last the Lord Himself said: "I must teach this man that it is I Who manifest Myself in all forms, that there is no difference between one and another." So He came to him in a form which was half Siva and half Vishnu. The devotee was half pleased and half displeased. He shut one eye and with the other looked at the Siva side only. Even this visible proof did not convince him. The children in the street, seeing that he was a fanatic and that it irritated him to hear any other name than that of Siva, began shouting other sacred names whenever he passed. This made him so desperate that he hung bells on his ears to drown the sound of their voices.

Many among us are sincere and fervent in upholding our Ideal, but in our zeal we overlook that the whole universe is part of that Ideal and that all men, of whatever nation or faith, are just as much children of God as we are. If we are not kind, tender, loving and forgiving towards all, we have no share in the religion we profess. Jesus the Christ taught this through His life, through His self-abnegation and His all-embracing love, a love which was not confined merely to those who followed Him and loved Him and were related to Him. Gautama Buddha, who was called the Compassionate One, preached: "You must so adjust

your heart that you long for the welfare of all beings, including the happiness of your enemies." Universal love and universal tolerance — these are the notes which sound through the teachings of all great Incarnations, who uphold these transcendent ideals not only in their words, but in their actions. They make them real by living them. We struggle and stumble and fail; then we imagine that these lofty ideals are not attainable for us. Through such Divine Manifestations, however, we see that they are attainable, that it is possible for a man to rise to so great a height of spiritual reality that, when he is struck by an enemy, he not only controls himself and does not strike back, but he actually loves that enemy. The story is told in India of a saint who was struck down by an ignorant man in the market-place and made unconscious. His brothers came from the monastery to nurse him. As they saw him recovering consciousness, one of them leaned over him and asked: "Do you know who is caring for you?" The saint replied: "The same verily who struck me." To him all men were alike in God. When we have the vision of Divinity, we can see no difference. A saint gives his benediction without limit to every living being.

We do not prove our greatness by belonging to this religion or to that religion. We prove it by our faithfulness, by our loyalty to our Ideal, and by carrying our Ideal into our life. The man who forgives most, who loves most, is a true Christian. He has reached the Christ Ideal, and also he has reached the universal spirit. He perceives that there is no difference between one child of God and another. There are many paths which lead to the same goal, and only by realizing this do we realize true brotherhood. Not through exclusiveness, not through denunciation, not through fanatical zeal of any kind, can the spirit of broth-

erhood be attained. It is right for us to be devoted to our Ideal; but do not let us attach too much importance to outer form and creed. Let us lay all stress on the inner life, for it is the inner life alone which counts. We must try to unfold that life. So long as we lack it, we may hold all the lofty ideals given in the Sacred Books, but what good will it do?

We cannot accept anything truly until we know it and we know the truths given in the Scriptures and by the Great Ones through our inner life. That alone enables us to read the book of Truth unerringly, and it is the spirit of religion which we need to touch. We shall always find difference in forms. So long as men cling to these forms, one will say: "My creed is the only creed through which you can attain salvation." And another will make the same claim for his creed. Which one shall we believe? They speak with equal fervor and devotion. In this world of diversity necessarily there is a great variety of temperaments. One person likes to worship God by elaborate ceremonies, another feels irritated by ritual. He prefers philosophy and reason. Should he not have a share in God's life also? God has provided for all amply. His storehouse is inexhaustible, and one who has touched that Divine Being knows that he cannot exhaust it or confine it within one special creed.

An ordinary man says, "This is my religion, that is your religion; this is my land, that is your land." The spirit of wisdom, however, teaches us that this "mine" and this "thine" do not exist in the realm of reality. When we merge our life in the universal life and unite our hearts with the inexhaustible Source, we rise above the sense of separateness. That is why we must seek the kingdom of heaven first. When we have found it, selfishness drops

away from us; all harshness, all discordant feelings disappear; and we live in another sphere altogether. That kingdom is already within us, but we must discover it. We cannot discover it, however, through any book or creed. No one can reveal it to us. An earnest, yearning spirit alone will give us access to it. We must voluntarily, ardently, hungrily seek it; then we shall find it. There is no other way.

There is no one who can eat for us and give us the benefit of the nourishment. How can any one do our thinking about God and give us the vision? It is not possible. All the great Seers tell us to know the Truth and the Truth will make us free. This knowing is accomplished only by going within our own being. It is there we realize that our true heritage is God and that we are children of Divinity. Whenever we try to keep any one out, we strike a discordant note. It takes us away from our Ideal, even though apparently we have devotion for It. Real religion teaches us the fundamental principles of life—love and tolerance for all humanity. When we bind our hearts to these principles, then Divinity shines through us and for us from within and from without; all quarters are pervaded and permeated by that Divine influence and we find that we have risen above the God of tradition.

When that inner Truth begins to shine, then we feel what is true brotherhood. How can we realize the brotherhood of man until we have learned something of the Fatherhood of God? Do we really feel that God is our Infinite Father? If He is, then all are His children and we have no right to raise our voice against the least of His creatures. When we gain this universal feeling, we have reached the threshold of true religion. Before that we merely talk theories. The way to gain it is from within, not by making outside adjustments and changes.

There are many to-day who claim that religion is not proving successful. There are ministers even who believe that we must have more attractions and amusements in the churches to draw the public. People are not drawn in that way to the altar of God. Such things may attract them for the moment, but Truth alone can draw the heart. Truth can reach us, however, only when we have thrown away the blemish of selfishness and all the things which now hide the Truth. That gem of Truth must shine clearly; and when it shines thus in our life, we shall see; and when we see all things in Truth, all our small, harsh, unworthy feelings will be destroyed and our hearts will be filled with love and universal tolerance.

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### TEACHINGS OF THE GREAT ONES

#### BUDDHIST

That which is most needed is a loving heart.

All who are wise spurn the pleasures of the body. They loathe lust and seek to promote their spiritual existence.

When a tree is burning with fierce flames, how can the birds congregate therein? Truth cannot dwell where passion lives. Without a knowledge of this the learned man, though he may be praised as a sage, is ignorant.

To him who has this knowledge true wisdom dawns. To acquire this wisdom is the one aim needed. To neglect it implies the failure of life.

There are ways from light into darkness and from darkness into light. There are ways, also, from the gloom into deeper gloom and from the dawn into brighter light. The wise man will use the light he has to receive more light. He will constantly advance towards the knowledge of the Truth.

Exhibit true superiority by virtuous conduct and the ex-

ercise of reason ; meditate deeply on the vanity of earthly things and realize the changefulness of life.

Elevate the mind and seek sincere faith with firm purpose ; let your happiness depend, not upon external things, but upon your own mind. — *Gautama Buddha.*

#### CONFUCIAN

The Master said: He who aims to be a man of complete virtue, in his food does not seek to gratify his appetite, nor in his dwelling place does he seek the appliances of ease ; he is earnest in what he is doing and careful in his speech ; he frequents the company of men of principle that he may be rectified : — such a person may be said to love to learn.

The Master said: I do not open up the Truth to one who is not eager to get knowledge. When I have presented one corner of a subject to any one and he cannot learn from it the other three, I do not repeat my lesson.

The man of virtue makes the difficulty to be overcome his first business and success only a subsequent consideration.

Admirable indeed was the virtue of Hwuy. With a single bamboo dish of rice, a single gourd dish of drink and living in his mean narrow lane, while others could not have endured the distress, he did not allow his joy to be affected by it. — *Confucian Texts.*

#### INDO-ARYAN

Self-control, tranquillity, compassion for all creatures, restraint of the passions, abstention from cruelty as also from appropriating what belongs to others, refraining even mentally from all acts which are false or injurious to any living creature on the earth . . . these are said to constitute good conduct. From observance of such conduct arises Righteousness, which protects all creatures eternally.

That man who is the friend of all, who endures all, who

has conquered his senses, who is devoid of fear and anger, who behaves towards all creatures as towards himself, who is restrained, pure, free from vanity and without egoism, he is truly liberated.

He who is free from desire, whose understanding is fixed on renunciation and whose eyes are always directed towards his own faults, soon succeeds in breaking the fetters which bind him. Free from longing and possessed of a tranquil mind, he is never shaken by pain or sorrow or fear, which spring from attachment (to material things). Weapons do not wound him; death does not exist for him. Nowhere in the world can be seen any one that is happier than he.

— *Sri Krishna. (Mahabharata)*

GREEK

He who loves the goods of the soul will love things more divine; but he who loves the goods of its transient habitation will love things human. The felicity of a man does not consist either in body or in riches, but in upright conduct and justice.

— *Democrates.*

Blessed is the man who has gained the riches of divine wisdom; wretched is he who has a dim opinion of the Gods in his heart.

— *Empedocles.*

Let thyself be guided and directed by the understanding which comes from above and that ought to hold the reins.

Consult and deliberate before thou dost act, that thou mayest not commit foolish actions. For it is the part of a miserable man to speak and act without reflection.

— *Pythagoras.*

To vice belongs excess and defect and to virtue belongs moderation. The further we remove ourselves from error, the nearer shall we come to the middle course. But most of all must we upon all occasions keep a watchful guard



against that which gives us pleasure and against Pleasure herself. For we cannot pass judgment upon her unmoved by her bribes.

— *Aristotle.*

INCA INDIAN

He who envies the wise and good is like the wasp which sucks poison from the finest flowers.

Drunkenness and anger admit of reformation, but folly is incurable.

He who kills another unlawfully, condemns himself to death.

A noble and generous heart is known by the patience with which it supports adversity.

— *Pacha Cutic.*

HEBREW

Be thou the cursed, not he who curses. Be of them that are persecuted, not of them that persecute. Look at Scripture: there is not a single bird more persecuted than the dove, yet this is the bird which God has chosen to be offered on His altar. God said, "Bring me a sacrifice, not from them that persecute, but from them that are persecuted."

The aim and end of all wisdom is good works.

The dying benediction of a sage to his disciples was: "I pray for you that the fear of heaven may be as strong upon you as the fear of man. You avoid sin before the face of the latter; avoid it before the face of the All-seeing."

— *From the Talmud.*

CHRISTIAN

Come, my soul, depart from outward things and gather thyself together into a true interior silence, that thou mayest set out with all thy courage and bury and lose thyself in the desert of a deep contrition.

— *Little Book of Eternal Wisdom.*

If thou wilt arrive at a perfect knowledge and enjoyment of Me, the Eternal Truth, thou shouldst never go outside the knowledge of thyself; and by humbling thyself in the valley of humility thou wilt know Me and thyself, from which knowledge thou wilt draw all that is necessary. . . . In self-knowledge then thou wilt humble thyself, seeing that in thyself thou dost not even exist.

— *St. Catherine of Siena.*

Happy then will it (the mind of man) be when, no distraction interposing, it shall joy in that only Truth, by Whom all things are true. . . . For there is a joy which is not given to the ungodly, but to those who love Thee for Thine own sake, whose joy Thou Thyself art. And this is the happy life, to rejoice to Thee, of Thee, for Thee; this is it and there is no other.

— *St. Augustine.*

## SEERS AND INCARNATIONS

*By Swami Ramakrishnananda*

(Conversation in the Monastery Hall at Madras)

Were those who wrote down the Vedas Incarnations of God?

They had realized God and he who has realized God is the same as God Himself. They were the embodiment of purity and so they were able to perceive all Truth.

Is it because God has given His Message once for all and does not need to repeat it that there are no such *Rishis* (Seers) to-day?

God is always giving His message, but now there is no one to hear it. We are all like walls. Does any man talk to a dead wall? So God does not talk to us because we are all filled with impurity and *Tamas* (heaviness). But let this dead wall become living and at once God will speak to it.

The life the sages lived in those days in their hermitages was very wonderful. These hermitages were in the most hidden nooks of the forest. They were large villages, perhaps a thousand souls, and those who lived in them were all so wonderful that sometimes the little children were *Atma-gnanis* (knowers of the Self). They had no anxiety as regards food, for one-sixth of the king's revenue was always set apart for the maintenance of these people; and it was paid, not in money, but in kind. So they were able to devote all their time to deep meditation.

The wives were as great sages as their husbands. The young people were allowed simple enjoyments, but the life was very strict and each had his or her fixed duties to perform. Their wants, however, were very few. When one of these sages came to a court, the king would at once come down from his throne, take the dust-stained mendicant and place him on it and then sit at his feet to learn. Such was the great reverence they had for their sages.

What is the difference between the *Rishis* who had realized God and an Incarnation of God?

The *Rishis* were incarnations of purity. They were *Sannyasins* (those who had renounced everything for the sake of Truth) and they preached renunciation to every one. But when an Incarnation comes, He recognizes that very few are fit to become *Sannyasins*; so He preaches the householder's life to a householder, and out of a thousand householders He may make perhaps two *Sannyasins*. He has the power to see what kind of life each man is fit to live. These Divine Teachers are living examples of Truth and to attain Truth we must sit at their feet.

If you will study all the personal religions, you will find that they all preach renunciation. Renunciation is their fundamental teaching. Christ says: Give up all and follow

me. Mahommed says: Allah is the one God and you must worship Him alone. Buddha says: Give up all desires; that is the only way to salvation. Zoroaster says: Renounce Ahriman (the principle of evil) for Ahura Mazda (the principle of good). This is the whole theme of the Upanishads. You must renounce to attain freedom. All Vedanta is built on this principle of renunciation.

The Vedas were not mere poetical imaginations. They represented the actual experience of the *Rishis*, who merely wrote down what they themselves had seen. The Upanishads are the most wonderful books. One should learn Sanskrit merely in order to study them. They are a concise statement of all the great truths of the universe. Every line is the expression of a mind that has realized.

In the West they preach to masses of people and that is what is understood as religion there. But in India one man whispers one or two words in the ear of another in a solitary place and this is religion according to the Hindus. Man receives religion through the *Mantram*. The spiritual power is transmitted through the Sacred Word; and this must be made known to none. The wife must not tell it to the husband or the husband to the wife. It is the person's individual property. So religion in India is altogether an individual thing. It is for this reason that Swami Vivekananda says there must be as many religions as there are people. This is literally true. As one coat cannot fit both you and me, so one form of God cannot suit all. In the West they give one God and expect Him to suit every one, but in India every man is given the aspect of God fitted to his peculiar need. That is the meaning of the thirty-three million gods about which you hear; and it is the *Guru* or spiritual teacher who determines what aspect of God is specially suited to the disciple.

### THE LIGHT OF DIVINE WISDOM

*By Hugh of St. Victor. 12th Century.*

(A Franciscan Monk at the Abbey of St. Victor in Paris)

All the world is a place of exile to philosophers. It is a great beginning of virtue for the mind to learn by degrees, by exercise, first to change these visible and transitory things, that afterwards it may be able also to relinquish them. He is yet delicate to whom his native soil is sweet. But he is already strong to whom every soil is his country, and he is perfect to whom the whole world is a place of exile. The first has fixed his love on the world, the second has scattered it, the last has quenched it. I have been an exile from my boyhood, and I know with what grief the mind sometimes deserts the narrow space of a poor cottage, with what liberty it afterwards despises marble dwellings and panelled ceilings. . . .

Philosophy is the love and the study and, in a certain sense, the friendship of wisdom. This love of wisdom is the illumination of the understanding mind by that pure wisdom, and in a way the calling back and summoning of the mind to wisdom's self, in order that its study of the divine wisdom and its friendship with the pure divine mind may be seen. Therefore this wisdom impresses the character of its divinity upon the soul and leads her back to the strength and purity of her true nature. From this is born the truth of thoughts and speculations, and holy and pure morality of actions.

After the darkness of sin entered the soul, the eye of contemplation was quenched, so that it beheld naught; and the eye of reason became bleared, so that it saw doubtfully. Only the eye of the flesh remained in its clearness.

But the whole heart being converted into the fire of love, God is felt verily to be all in all, since He is received with

such intimate delection, that save Him nothing is left to the heart even of itself.

The Bridegroom is God, the bride is the soul. The Bridegroom is at home, when He fills the mind through internal joy; He goeth away, when He withdraws the sweetness of contemplation.

If a man were sufficient to investigate these things he would find in them the wondrous light of God's wisdom. And would I could explore this (the divine wisdom) as subtly, describe it as completely, as I can love it ardently. For it is a delight to me, exceeding sweet and joyous, frequently to treat of these things, wherein at once the sense is instructed by reason, the mind is delighted by sweetness, and the affection stirred by emulation; so that we are amazed with the Psalmist and cry out in admiration: "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works, in wisdom hast Thou made them all."

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### MARCHING ORDERS

*By J. P. Dabney*

I know not when the trump will send me forth;—  
Whether I am to march or south or north.  
I only have mine orders to prepare,  
So I make ready to go anywhere.

Light-weight I go. One needs not many things  
To carry on such fruitful journeyings;  
And he goes farthest who shall go most free,  
Armed but with faith and immortality.

I cannot miss the way, for I shall know  
The finger-posts along the way I go,  
As they are limned in fire to point the quest;—  
I need but march;— and God directs the rest.

## APOLLONIUS OF TYANA

*By Sister Devamata*

The coming of every Incarnation is marked by the appearance of towering characters who have each one a part to play in the task of spiritual renewal. Among these some, like St. Paul, become disciples and co-workers of the Bearer of the new message; others cleanse and rehabilitate the old; but both are expressions of the one all-embracing cosmic effort to restore and revivify the religious consciousness. Among the Apostles of the old none stands out in more salient relief than Apollonius of Tyana. So far-reaching and transforming was his influence on the religious life of his time that he was worshipped for four centuries after his death with divine honors, a temple was raised to him at Tyana, his statue was placed among those of the Gods and his name invoked as one who possessed divine powers. Vopiscus, a writer of the third century, speaks of him as "a sage of the most wide-spread renown and authority, an ancient philosopher, a true friend of the Gods and himself worthy to be worshipped as a god. For who among men was more holy, who more worthy of reverence, who more god-like than he? He it was who gave life to the dead. He it was who did and said so many things beyond the power of men."

Hierocles, Governor of Palmyra, Bithynia and Alexandria, as also a philosopher of merit, wrote in 305 "A Truthful Address to the Christians," in which he compared Apollonius to Jesus. This stirred the early Christian Fathers and at once his name suffered an eclipse which has persisted down the centuries. Yet we find Sidonius Apollinaris, Bishop of Claremont, translating his life into Latin for Leon, the councillor of King Euric, and writing to his friend: "Read the life of a man sought out by the rich, yet

who never sought for riches; who loved wisdom and despised gold; a man frugal in the midst of feastings, clad in linen in the midst of those clothed in purple, austere in the midst of luxury. . . . In fine, to speak plainly, perchance no historian will find in ancient times a philosopher whose life is equal to that of Apollonius."

The life which Sidonius translated was the work of an eminent Athenian writer Philostratus, one of the brilliant circle of men of letters gathered round the Empress Julia at the court of Septimius Severus. "I have collected my materials," Philostratus tells us, "partly from the cities which loved him (Apollonius), partly from the temples whose rites and regulations he restored from their former state of neglect; partly from what others have said about him, and partly from his own letters. More detailed information I procured as follows. Damis was a man of some education who formerly lived in the ancient city of Ninus (Nineveh). He became a disciple of Apollonius and recorded his travels. . . . A member of Damis' family brought the Empress Julia the note-books containing these memoirs, of which up to that time nothing had been known. As I was one of the circle of this princess, she ordered me to rewrite these sketches and improve their form of expression."

Apollonius was born three or four years prior to the Christian era at Tyana, a Greek city of Cappadocia in Asia Minor, which in 17 A. D. became a Roman province. His family was a rich and ancient one. From his childhood the boy was remarkable both for his beauty and for his exceptional intellectual attainments. At the age of fourteen he was taken to Tarsus to complete his studies, and being of the same age as the young Saul, afterwards St. Paul, it is quite possible that they may have passed and repassed daily



as they frequented the schools, for Tarsus was at that period a notable seat of learning. Evidently, however, the young Apollonius did not find there what he sought, for before long he repaired to the nearby town of Aegae. Here he came into close contact with the priests of the Temple of Aesculapius, where cures still were wrought. He also received instructions from followers of the Platonic, Stoic, Peripatetic and Epicurean philosophy. To each one he listened with grave attention; but it was to the Pythagorean teaching that he turned with greatest eagerness and at the age of sixteen he gave himself over wholly to it.

When his teacher Euxenus asked him how he meant to begin his new mode of life, his answer was: "As physicians purge their patients." He refused to touch any form of animal food, declaring that it made the system dense and impure. He also abstained from wine, because "it rendered turbid the ether in the soul" and "destroyed the composure of the mind." He let his hair grow long, wore only coarse linen, went always barefoot and slept on the hard ground. He took up his residence at the Temple and the fame of his asceticism and piety soon spread abroad. When he was twenty years of age, his father died, leaving him a considerable fortune. One half of his inheritance he made over to his elder brother; the other half he distributed among other relations, reserving for himself a mere pittance, because, he said, he had few needs and he would never marry. He then returned to Aegae and with increased fervor resumed his rigid life of austerity. "The soul which does not take trouble to train the body to be self-sufficing," he writes in a letter to Euphrates, "is not able to make itself content with little." And one of his most frequent prayers, we learn from Damis, was: "Grant me, ye Gods, to have little and need naught."

One day Euxenus asked him why he did not set down in writing the lofty thoughts which came to him, since he had so rare a gift of expression. Apollonius replied: "Because I have not yet practised silence," and at that moment he took a vow of five years' silence. Again and again was he sorely tempted to break it, as he found himself the butt of railing jest or unjust attack; but always he checked the rising rejoinder with the admonition: "Heart be patient; and thou, my tongue, be still." Silence was with him truly "another mode of speech." By a motion of the hand, a look, or a few words on a tablet, he was able to protect or help or admonish. It is said even that he quelled a riot by the majesty of his bearing and the authority of his gesture.

The years of silence were spent chiefly in Pamphylia and Cilicia. At their close we find Apollonius at Antioch and from now on his wanderings are continuous and distant. Philostratus states that he spent some time among the Arabians, being taught of them. The places he sought were the quiet places far from the highroads of travel, where the spirit of sanctity still lingered. It was in the Temples and Shrines that he sojourned or with isolated communities devoted to higher searchings and holy living; for what he required, he said, were "*men*, not people." And wherever he might be, he held strictly to his daily routine. At sun-rise he went through certain religious practices, which were made known only to those who had undergone the discipline of a four years' silence, for like Pythagoras he believed that there could be no true spiritual attainment without a complete curbing of the tongue. "Men of light and leading use fewest words," we read in one of his letters; "if babblers felt as much annoyance as they inflict, they would not be so long-winded."

After his early morning exercises he spent some time in

conversing with the priests or the head of the community where he chanced to be. Those who were following the inner life received his special attention and he gave most freely of himself in the hours devoted to their instruction, but after mid-day he did not refuse to teach the general public. Those who lived the inner life, he said, should at dawn enter the presence of the Gods (presumably through meditation); then spend the time until the noon-hour in giving and receiving instruction in holy things. Only after noon was past should they devote themselves to human affairs. He admitted no compromise in the spiritual life. "If any say he is my disciple," he writes to a would-be follower, "then let him add he keeps himself at home and does not frequent the public Baths, he slays no living thing, eats no flesh, is free from envy, malice, hatred, from slander and hostile feelings; and has his name inscribed among those who are free."

One of the chief aims in all of Apollonius' wanderings was to restore the sacred rites and cults to the purity of their ancient tradition. He refused to enter a Temple where blood-sacrifice was performed, and in a passage (quoted by Eusebius) he declares: "It is best to make no sacrifice to God at all, no lighting of a fire, no calling Him by any name that men employ for things of sense. For God is over all, the first; and only after Him do come the other Gods. For He doth stand in need of naught e'en from the Gods, much less from us small men—naught that the earth brings forth, nor any life she nurseth, or even anything the stainless air contains. The only fitting sacrifice to God is man's best reason, and not the word which comes from out his mouth.

"We men should ask the best of beings, through the best thing in us, for what is good—I mean by means of mind,

for mind needs no material things to make its prayer. So then, to God, the mighty One, who's over all, no sacrifice should ever be lit up." And to a priest of Aesculapius he said one day: "Since then the Gods know all things, I think that one who enters a sanctuary with a right conscience should pray thus: 'Give me, O Gods, what is my due.'"

Apollonius was one of the greatest travellers of antiquity. "The whole earth is mine and it is given me to journey through it," was his answer to the officer who asked him how he dared enter the dominion of Babylon without permission. Spain, Africa, Asia Minor, Persia, Greece, Italy, Sicily, Rhodes and Alexandria all came within his line of travel. He visited the Phoenicians, Cicilians, Ionians, Achaeans. The mystic communities in upper and lower Egypt drew him irresistibly and more than once he was in Rome. It was not strange that, as Philostratus puts it, "his mind should turn to India and the Indian sages called Brahmans or Forest-men," especially as it was an accepted tradition that Pythagoras had been there before him. His disciples tried to dissuade him from the perilous venture. "Since ye are faint-hearted," was his reply, "I bid you farewell. As for myself, I must go whithersoever wisdom and my inner self may lead me." Passing through Nineveh, where he met the faithful Damis, and on to Babylon and the Indian frontier, he pushed across to the valley of the Ganges and finally arrived at the "monastery of the wise men," where he spent four months. In speaking of his teachers there he says: "I ever remember my masters and journey through the world teaching what I have learned from them."

That Apollonius possessed extraordinary powers cannot be denied. It was his wonder-workings which aroused the interest of the Empress Julia, for she and the Emperor

and their son Caracalla were all impassioned students of the occult. Apollonius himself, however, indignantly rejected the accusation of magic. His fore-knowledge, he carefully explained, was not divination in the vulgar sense, but the outcome of "that wisdom which God reveals to the wise." And he tells his friend, the Roman Consul Telesinus, that for him wisdom was a making divine of the whole nature, a sort of perpetual state of inspiration. There can be no doubt that his miracles were the outward expression of deep spiritual knowledge. His gift of healing was phenomenal, but he never used it cheaply. In a letter to Criton he writes: "Pythagoras said that the most divine art was that of healing. If the healing art was most divine, it must occupy itself with the soul as well as with the body, for no creature can be sound so long as the higher part in it is sickly." He himself was strong and healthy in every limb and organ even at the age of four-score years.

Stern in his own discipline, but gentle and loving towards others, the miraculous deeds which are recorded of him were unquestionably acts of compassion, bred of a sympathy which made his own the pain of others. He cast out evil spirits, cured the sick, stayed the course of pestilence and foretold events. On one occasion, it is related, when Apollonius was on trial at Rome, he vanished from the tribunal at noon, and on the evening of the same day he suddenly appeared before Damis and some friends at Puteoli, more than a hundred miles away. Seeing that they doubted his actual presence, he stretched forth his hand saying: "Take it, and if I escape from you regard me as an apparition." Even the Christian writer, Justin Martyr, bears witness to his powers, for he exclaims in one of his works: "How is it that the talismans of Apollonius have power in certain members of creation? for they prevent,

as we see, the fury of the waves and the violence of the winds and the attacks of wild beasts."

Because of these super-human powers many have tried to class Apollonius as a charlatan and a juggler; but too lofty was his life to bend under the pressure of such belittling judgment. No charlatan could voice such words as these: "The law requires that we die for liberty; Nature ordains that we die for parents, friends or children. The duty of the sage is to die for that to which he has devoted his life. It is not the law that lays this choice upon him, nor is it nature; it is the strength and courage of his own soul. Though fire or sword threaten him, it will not overcome his resolution or force from him the slightest falsehood. . . Again, I think that a wise man does nothing alone or by himself, no thought of his so secret but that he has himself as witness to it. And whether the famous saying 'know thyself' be from Apollo or from some sage who learned to know himself and proclaimed it as good for all, I think the wise man who knows himself and has his own spirit as his constant companion will neither cower before what the vulgar fear, nor dare to do what others do without the slightest shame."

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### REPORT

Swami Paramananda, after conducting the Services on three Sundays and the intervening classes at The Vedanta Centre of Boston, again set out on a three weeks' lecture tour. He spent the first eight days in Cincinnati, delivering six public lectures at the Woman's City Club and holding several classes at the temporary home of the Cincinnati Centre. In spite of the excitement incident to the presidential election, the attendance was excellent and increased steadily until at the closing lecture the hall was

crowded. From Cincinnati the Swami went to Louisville on November 9th. Here he delivered four lectures at the Truth Centre to attentive and appreciative audiences. He also spoke twice for another New Thought Centre and conducted two classes at the meeting-place of the Vedanta study group established last winter. A special devotional Service was arranged on Sunday afternoon and so great was the response that it was almost impossible to find room for all who came. The Swami returned to Cincinnati on the 15th and remained until the evening of the 18th. He lectured three times at the New Thought Temple and held two classes for the members of the local Centre. This was the longest visit which the Swami had paid to Cincinnati and it so stimulated the enthusiasm that the members are eager to secure a permanent home for the work, feeling that it is now firmly established.

In response to an invitation of nearly two years' standing, the Swami stopped over in Buffalo to lecture before the Larkin Men's Club. He was met at the station by the President of the Club, Mr. S. S. Burnett, and invited to lunch at the Masonic Lodge. A conversation with the Commander-in-Chief led to a cordial request to address the Masons and a lecture was immediately announced for the same evening. "This was the first time such a privilege was granted," Mr. Burnett writes, "but after the Commander's interview with the Swami he was convinced that the message that the Swami had for them was of the utmost importance to all humanity. At the close of his Address, which was before an audience of Masons numbering nine hundred, it was wonderful to see the members file by and thank the Swami. Request after request was made for a repeated visit, when the Masons could also bring their families to hear him. We all anxiously await his early return to Buffalo."

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