

SWAMI SIVANANDA'S 108TH BIRTHDAY MESSAGE 1995

by

SWAMI KRISHNANANDA

The Divine Life Society

Sivananda Ashram, Rishikesh, India

Website: www.swami-krishnananda.org

Today we are at the commencement of the 108th birthday anniversary of Worshipful Guru Bhagvan, Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. What are we going to think in our mind at this moment? What would we like to think? Naturally we would like to think him, conceive him, and make him our own.

But who was he? What was he? If these ideas about him are not clear to us, we may not be able to think him. He was a super-person, not an ordinary person; a super-individual, not an ordinary individual; a superman, not an ordinary man.

These persons of this characteristic, quality and category cannot be regarded as human beings. That is why we say they are superhuman. If that is so, their vision of life also is not human. They do not see things as we see them. They do not behave as we behave. They do not feel as we feel. They do not work as we work. And, their evaluation of things is quite different from our way of evaluating things. They are, to put it in the language of a great scripture, *mahakarta*, *mahatyagi* and *mahabhokta*. Their actions are great actions—not mere actions that produce some reaction. An action that does not produce any reaction is a *mahakarma*. But an action that

produces a reaction, as in the case of all people, is ordinary karma that binds and causes suffering.

They are also not merely *mahakartas*, but *mahatyagis*. Their renunciation is not a renunciation of something, as in the case of people who imagine that they have made this kind of *tyaga*, this renunciation or that renunciation. Someone might have renounced salt or chili, or a family or a pension, and so on. These kinds of *tyagas* also are known as renunciations, but *mahatyaga* is a renunciation of everything. That is to say, a total renunciation of whatever we consider to be existing. The word '*sannyasa*' implies a renunciation, but the word does not tell us what it is that is to be renounced. Without knowing what is the object that is to be renounced, people imagine that they have to renounce their family, their land and property, their bank balance, their relationship with friends, and this and that. But, this *mahatyaga* does not mean this kind of small renunciation that we have in our minds.

It is the renunciation of the very idea of there being a world outside the sense organs. Who can have such a renunciation? Does the world exist before us? Even to a renunciate, the world exists in front of the eyes. But, in *mahatyaga*, it does not exist in front of oneself. Where does it exist then? It has merged into the very perceiver's universal vision of life. Impossible to conceive, because if the renunciation still maintains the consciousness of there being a world outside, there is a likelihood of, one day or the other, reverting to the belief that the world is worthwhile and it would be not improper to maintain some kind of personal relationship with the world.

This *mahatyagi* has no necessity to maintain a relationship with the world, because he himself has become one with the world. So, when he beholds the world, we do not know whether he is beholding the world outside or himself as the world.

How many people in this world can think in this manner? And, it is also worth knowing whether there is any benefit in

maintaining an awareness of this kind, or this is only a scriptural dictum. If we have a little common sense and a little capacity to think impartially, we will know what a grand benefit it would be for us to make the world our own rather than keep it as a segregated object to be dealt with by our sense organs.

The world is to be renounced by being the world itself. We need to know what kind of renunciation this is. Is it a renunciation at all? Yes; no renunciation can be equal to this, and nothing beyond this can be conceived. By being the world, one has renounced the world.

Such a person was this mighty being whose birthday anniversary we are observing today. They are *mahakartas*, great doer of things, not little doers like the people of the world. We do some good things here and there, a little bit of it, but they do a total good in the performance of their total action. This is the reason why we call them supermen. Total action is inconceivable; and, what could it be? Some hint as to what it could be, we have in the fourth and fifth chapters of the Bhagavadgita. Every being is All-being at the same time, because of the fact there is only one doer everywhere. The identification of the great *mahakarta* with the Great Doer of all things is the reason why his actions also become all-actions.

They are also *mahabhoktas*. As everything is theirs, it can be said that they are also the possessors of all things—possessors of all things in the sense that the things are inseparable from themselves. To that extent, we may say they are the greatest enjoyers of things. They are enjoyers of all things because they themselves are the things. There is a difference between enjoying a thing while it is outside you and enjoying it when it is your own self. Do you enjoy yourself? Do you eat yourself? If that could be possible, that is the concept of the wonderful, inconceivable, all-inclusive enjoyment of these great masters.

So, Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, and many others of his category, have been designated as *mahakartas*,

mahatyagis and *mahabhoktas*. We call them God-men, or sometimes we say man-gods. All the gods are within them, so we call them man-gods, because they look like man with all the gods inside them. So, they are man-gods; or, they are God-men because God has entered them.

This super-individual, this divine mentor of humanity, we remember today at this moment of the observance of his 108th birthday anniversary. He is the life of every one of us. He is the being of every one of us. He is the breath of every one of us who are his followers, who are his devotees, who are his admirers, who endeavour to follow his footsteps in the way he lived in this world.

He used to tell some of us that his teaching consists in his behaviour. He did not speak much, and if anyone, any *chela* asked him, "Gurudev, please instruct us" he would say, "See what I do". Their being is a teaching, their behaviour is an instruction, and their doing is a path-maker for every one of the disciples, to lead oneself along that direction of doing, which ought to be a comprehensive doing, and not a binding doing. It is necessary to work, but it is not necessary to work in such a way that work binds. It is necessary to do service in as many ways as possible, but not service that will affect one's welfare.

The great, masterly teaching of Sri Gurudev to all of us, which we have to remember at this moment, is: Keep God, the Creator of the universe, first in your mind, and everything shall follow you, because when the great universal comprehensiveness is in your heart of hearts, all that has been created by that Mighty Being also will follow you spontaneously. With this deep feeling of a mood of meditation may you spend your day today, for the benefit of you all.