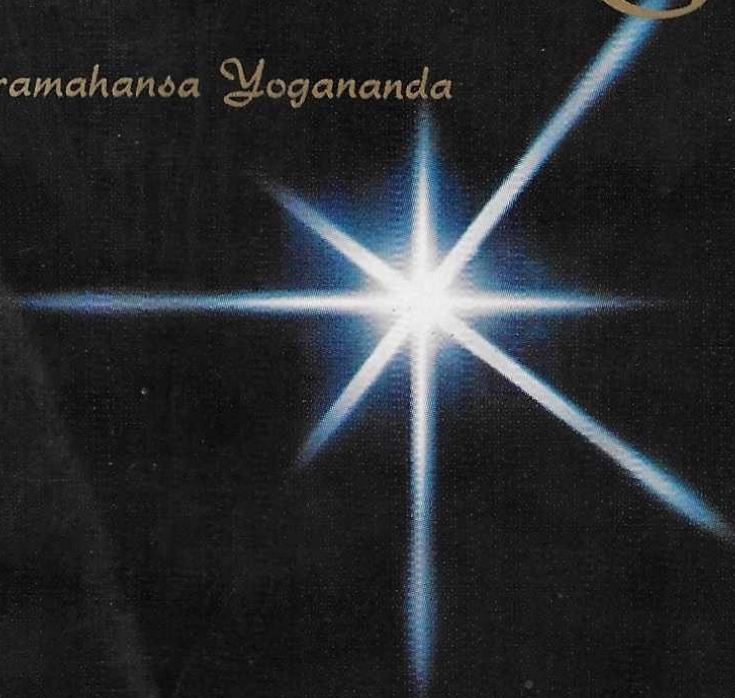




Self-Realization

Founded by Paramahansa Yogananda





BERNARR MACFADDEN WITH PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA
Dansville, New York, 1921

Self-Realization

Founded in 1925 by Paramahansa Yogananda

A Magazine Devoted to Healing of Body, Mind, and Soul

(Healing the body of disease by proper diet, right living, and recharging the body with God's all-powerful cosmic energy; removing inharmonies and inefficiency from the mind by concentration, constructive thinking, and cheerfulness; and freeing the ever-perfect soul from the bonds of spiritual ignorance by meditation.)

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The Wonder of Creation

(Front cover)

Albert Einstein once said: "He who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed. . . . To know that what is impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their most primitive forms — this knowledge, this feeling, is at the center of true religiousness."

The capacity to wonder at the marvels of creation is inherent in man, and man alone. Astronaut James B. Irwin, member of the Apollo 15 expedition to the moon, expressed his feelings in these words: "You are almost struck dumb sometimes by the beauty you see. . . . I think that as we go out to the moon and other planets, it will make us appreciate God's creation more, and in giving us a closer relationship with Him, will give us a closer relationship with each other."

As the Christmas season approaches, who cannot but respond wholeheartedly to the prayer of astronaut Colonel Frank Borman, transmitted to a listening world from 230,000 miles in space on Christmas Eve, 1968:

"Give us, O God, the vision which can see Thy love in the world in spite of human failure. Give us the faith to trust Thy goodness in spite of our ignorance and weakness. Give us the knowledge that we may continue to pray with understanding hearts, and show us what each one of us can do to set forward the day of universal peace."

The Infinite Nature of God

BY PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

*A talk at Self-Realization Fellowship international headquarters on
Thursday evening, January 28, 1937*

The Hindu scriptures state that God is beyond comprehension by mind and intellect. Powerful as they are, their scope is insufficient to contain Him. So the human mind is incapable of a true conception of God. The question "Who made God?" arises only because mind cannot comprehend That which has neither beginning nor end.

When you are looking at the sun millions of miles away in the sky, that huge luminary seems smaller by far than our earth. Yet the diameter of earth is roughly 7,900 miles; and the sun is more than a hundred times that wide. If you could place our planet next to the sun, earth would appear by comparison a tiny dot. Let us suppose the giant solar orb is expanding, growing more and more huge, until the vast blue expanse of the sky is entirely swallowed up by its mass. The space thus filled is nevertheless but a particle, a mere speck, of the space that spreads through countless universes and into infinity. Were the sun to go on endlessly enlarging in space, still it would not be able to take the measure of infinity. The cosmic delusion of finitude prevents the mind from conceiving such vastness. Where are its boundaries? Whence came this endless void? The Originless Immeasurable is God. Omnipresent in the farthest reaches of space, He is in the distant stars, and in you and me; and He is conscious every moment of every place He is.

God is not mind — He created it and He is beyond it. Otherwise we could conceive Him in our minds. We can accurately call Him Divine Consciousness, Divine Joy, Divine Existence, but not mind.

Though mind is incapable of encompassing Omnipresence, it is nevertheless able to *feel* God. Feeling His presence and measuring it are two different experiences. The wave cannot measure the ocean, but there is a point of contact between them. So where the Infinite becomes the finite there is a point of contact: the superconscious mind. That mind can feel God. When we expand the ordinary mind until it impinges on the superconscious mind, we are able to feel His presence.

We Have Descended from the Infinite into the Finite

We have descended from the Infinite into the finite. Yoga is withdrawal of the attention from externals in order to focus it on the inner source of Truth. Only in this way can we discover how God has condensed His consciousness into the multitudinous finite forms of His creatures and the universes they inhabit. The human body is the most intricate of all His creations. A single original cell, the united sperm and ovum, divides; and by multiplication of the process builds up infinite numbers of cells around itself to create the bodily temple that houses our divine soul consciousness.

You don't realize how much energy is locked in even one little gram of flesh. Its release would spread countless electrons far into space.* And the power and extent of the consciousness that is present in the body is beyond human conception. Though externally we are made of flesh, behind its gross cells are electrical currents, life currents. And behind these subtle energies are the thoughts and perceptions, an infinite number of thoughts.

Thought is inexhaustible. Since the world began, thoughts in unimaginable numbers have passed through the ether. One could not begin to count them, but it is possible to get some idea if you reflect on how many thoughts and feelings you express during your own lifetime. Millions! Try to remember all you have thought in just one year, or even in one day. Consider the accumulation of thoughts of every human being through unrecorded ages past. God knows them all!

* The awesome power of the release of nuclear energy was first demonstrated under controlled conditions within a few years after this talk, when the first atomic bomb was exploded at Alamogordo, New Mexico, on July 16, 1945.

Mind cannot measure even the subtle phenomena of nature. How many protons and electrons whirl in the electricity that flows into the light bulbs here in the chapel? Trillions, dancing together, make this light you behold. These ultramicroscopic particles travel so fast, they can cover the distance from here to New York, or to any other part of the world, instantly. Scientific experiments are proving this.

If you try to calculate how many protons and electrons are condensed in our earth, the mind goes only so far and then stops. What is revealed to the searching mind seems infinite, but there is a point beyond which ideas become too subtle to follow. From that sphere where the mind cannot penetrate, God is pouring forth His essential Light — the Cosmic Intelligent Vibration that structures finite creation.

God's True Nature Known Only Through Intuition

If we use the mind properly, we can understand how God is beyond mind and intellect; and how His true nature can be felt only through the power of intuition. We must find His consciousness through the superconscious mind — the nucleus of mind and intelligence. His infinite nature is revealed to man through the intuitive superconsciousness. The joy felt in meditation reveals the presence of Eternal Joy spread over all creation. The light seen in meditation is the astral light from which our tangible creation is made. Beholding this light, one feels a unity with all things.

The ordinary person lives in the world but is relatively unconscious of its nature and purpose. A life of such limited perception is not unlike that of the animals. A goat that we used to have here at Mount Washington was always attracted to my voice. One day, while I was speaking in this chapel, it came trotting in and right on up the aisle to me! I am sure the goat didn't know what I was saying, but it had been drawn by my voice. You come to these lectures not just to listen to the words but to feel God's presence. If you attune your consciousness with His consciousness, and remain in that current of bliss, you will feel at-onement with Him. Whatever understanding I have attained has been acquired by becoming

attuned to God's consciousness within. This you too can accomplish.

As one develops spiritually and realizes his kinship with all that lives, his responsibility to share the suffering of others increases. Even as Jesus suffered in sharing the afflictions of others, so must we do our part for those who are shivering with cold and disease. It is a nightmare for them; and whatever of their woes we can remove, we are removing them from God also. He is not happy when His children are in misery, for He suffers in them.

At this moment most of you are enjoying beauty and peace, but think of those in Louisville today! Thousands are suffering there because of the floods. Once long ago I was thinking how wonderful America is, without the disasters that afflict so many countries; then God showed me the floods that are occurring now. The vibrations of the thoughts and feelings of thousands being killed in the fighting in Spain have caused atmospheric changes that are responsible for these floods and other disasters around the world. War spews out vibrations of wrong that throw all nature out of balance and harmony, causing "natural" catastrophes.

God gave freedom to man, and man has misused that freedom; this is the cause of all suffering. The misuse of our God-given free will has terrifying consequences. I would rather someone tell me when I am about to do wrong than allow me to wake up years later and see the harm I had done.

Satan Created Ignorance, Cause of All Suffering

Suffering is therefore not the work of God, but of Satan (or *Maya*, delusion). This force created the ignorance that blinds people to the consequences of their actions, causing them to err and thus bring suffering upon themselves. Those who are fighting in Spain — both the government forces and their opponents — think they are trying to do right. The only way to avoid error is to develop the discriminative wisdom to know what is wrong and then resolve not to do it. One wrong fighting another wrong doesn't make a right. The true enemy of man is ignorance. It must be driven from this earth.

We have everything necessary in the world today to bring

about the millennium. Only man's selfishness makes it impossible. Tremendous unnecessary suffering is created by man's short-sighted self-interest. Money that could feed and clothe needy people is used instead for destruction. The root cause of the world's troubles is this selfishness born of ignorance. Each person thinks he is doing right; but when he seeks to satisfy only his own interest, he is setting in motion the karmic law of cause and effect that will destroy his own and others' happiness.

The more I see of world tragedies caused by man's ignorance, the more I realize that even if every street were paved with gold, happiness would not be lasting. Happiness lies in making others happy, in forsaking self-interest to bring joy to others. If each one would do that, then everyone would be happy; and all would be taken care of. That is what Jesus meant when he said: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."*

A federation of all religions and all nations is necessary. But such a union will come only when every individual engages in that meditation which leads to direct contact with God. Communion with Him is the solution. When one has realized God, he no longer feels that others are different from himself. Unless such wisdom comes, not to just a few, but to all men, there will be no freedom on earth. Even here in America freedom is not total; suffering still abounds. Each one of us has a responsibility to bring peace and happiness to our country and to all men. One should care, not only for his own nation, but for all countries; not only for one's own family, but for all mankind. The ordinary man's interest is limited to himself and his surroundings, but the man of God identifies with the whole world. Don't think the contribution made by your spiritualized consciousness is small. Your part may mean very much.

In order to know God you must become like Him. In spite of our transgressions, in spite of our forgetfulness of and great indifference to Him, still He lovingly gives us life and all that supports life in this world. Nothing is greater than God; indifference to Him is the highest sin.

* *Matthew 7:12.*

Those who are not willing to give up all they have to find Him, will not know Him. Whoever would know God must be able to forsake all else for Him. Jesus was trying to make his disciples understand this truth when he told them to keep watch and pray with him at Gethsemane. But when they fell asleep, he sadly observed: "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

Man is like a puppet. The strings of his habits, emotions, passions, and senses make him dance to their bidding. They bind his soul. He who is unwilling or unable to cut himself free in order to know God will not find Him. I see myself apart from these attachments. I eat, and sometimes I don't eat; I sleep, and sometimes I don't sleep. I gave up all physical necessities to prove to myself that I do not need them. God doesn't eat or sleep; He isn't bound by senses and habits. That is what makes Him God; and we are made in His image. We should be able to give up everything to know Him: "Seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you."† Despite all the tests I have gone through for Him, in the end God has given me everything I wanted or needed of this world. And I have given it all back, for He has bestowed on me a gift infinitely greater: Divine Joy, day and night. In that Joy all desires that come into my heart are satisfied.

Meditation Lifts the Fog of Ignorance

In the Bhagavad-Gita, recorded by Sage Vyasa, Lord Krishna explains that if your innate wisdom is covered over with ignorance, you are deluded and thus stumble through life. When the fog of ignorance is removed by meditation you will see the right path. You will be troubled no more; you will find fulfillment eternal.

These truths are all real to me. Truth is Reality. Self-realization is not something one can learn from books; it comes only through personal experience. Realization of truth, experience of God — not dogma merely — is what every religion should bring to its followers. What Jesus Christ realized, we too must experience. He didn't teach that we should worship him as a personality, but rather that we should experience what he experienced in his one-

* *Matthew 26:41.*

† *Luke 12:31.*

ness with God. That can be attained only by meditation and by following God's laws. To worship Jesus because he is Jesus is not enough. We must embrace the universal ideals he taught, and strive to be like him.

We are here on earth in this particular body-form for just a little while, to learn our lessons and move on. Whither are we headed now? Think how many pages of the Lord's dream novel of creation have already been turned! When I visited Salt Lake City I saw in vision a great ocean, and mammoths walking on the shore. Later I learned that the skeleton of an ancient mammoth had recently been found there.

As human beings we have God-given power to cast away every habit and limitation and spread our consciousness throughout creation, penetrating not only the hearts of all creatures, but reaching out beyond the stars. Our native vastness encompasses even greater space. Such tremendous possibility lies within us! We are infinite! I live in that sphere of infinity, and am conscious of the body only once in a while.

You are limited now; but when by deep, daily meditation you become able to transfer your consciousness from the finite to the Infinite, you will be free. You are not meant to be a prisoner of the body. You are a child of God; you must live up to that divine birthright. That is why Jesus said: "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off."*

Give God First Place in Your Heart

Wherever your mind is, that is where you will spend your time. What if God had not given you the power to play or read or work? You could do nothing. So He should come first in your life. God knows what is in your heart; give Him first place there.

The only way to catch God is by love. Meditate upon Him, and then deeply pray: "Lord, I cannot live without You. You are the Power behind my consciousness. I love You. Reveal Yourself to me." When you give up sleep to meditate upon Him, when you

* *Mark 9:43.*

forsake selfishness and cry because of His suffering in your brothers, He comes to you. When you actually sacrifice for Him, He is caught in the net of your love. Nothing else can capture Him.

Knowledge prepares the way to love. You cannot love that which you do not know. Knowledge of God must therefore precede love for Him. That knowledge comes by practice of the technique that Lahiri Mahasaya gave, *Kriya Yōga*.^{*} When you know God, you will love Him; and when you love Him, you will surrender yourself to Him.

Until your devotion for God and awareness of Him become complete, don't rest; don't give in to sleep when you should be meditating. Never give anything preference before God! His love is the greatest love there is. So long as you let other things come first, He will wait. But your delay may be too long, and your suffering may be great. Don't procrastinate. Be certain in the sincerity of your conscience that you have made the effort to commune with Him. Don't rest, don't give up until you can see Him with your own eyes, or feel Him in your heart. Birth, play, marriage, children, old age — life is finished. That is not living! Life is much deeper and more wonderful than that, I have found. When you know God, there is no more sorrow. All those you loved and lost in death are with you again in the Eternal Life. You don't know whom to consider your "own" anymore, because everyone is yours.

The beauty of God is vast. To enjoy flowers for their loveliness is good, but far greater is to see behind their purity and beauty the face of God. To be carried away by music for its own sake cannot compare with hearing God's creative Voice in it. Though God is immanent in the finite beauties of creation, it is wisdom to realize one's eternal Self beyond form and finitude. You know how fond I am of our grounds at the Mount Washington and Encinitas ashrams. I never tire of their beauty. But the Lord gave me an awakening experience recently. I inwardly saw people sitting about and talking. One of them proposed some activity, but another said, "No,

^{*}*Kriya Yōga* means union (*yōga*) with the Infinite through a certain action or rite (*kriya*). Specifically, it is a meditation technique through which the divine union can be realized. (See *Autobiography of a Yōgi*, p. 243.)

Paramahansaji taught that we must not do that." I suddenly realized that this was a vision of years to come, after I was no longer here in this body. For a moment I was shaken; then I came back to ordinary consciousness.

There is no use in becoming attached to anything in this world. So many things come and go in the Lord's cosmic drama. I see airfields destroyed, and the sea filled with dead, and many other things to come. In my heart I see a world without me. That freedom God gives ultimately to every soul.

One great saint said, "I care not where I may be, O Lord, but punish me not with obliviousness of Thee." There is no greater punishment. That is why Jesus said: "It is better for thee to enter into life maimed."* All suffering can be taken away by the contact of God.

Awake from the Nightmare of Suffering

In a dream you may see yourself running down a street, pursued by an enemy. Suddenly you are shot, and you think, "Oh, how terrible! I am dying! I am sad to leave this world." Then you see yourself dead. The undertaker cremates your body, and your friends come to mourn when the ashes are laid away. But suddenly you wake up and see that it was only a dream. You are alive! This is similar to what happens at death.

God showed me in a vision that those who are dying in the fighting in Spain are only dreaming a terrible dream of death. As soon as their consciousness is lifted from the body, they awake as from a nightmare, and are glad to be free of it. Our life experiences are all part of a dream. Man himself has created the nightmare of war. But after its victims have been thrown from their bodies, they realize it was only a nightmare from which they have awakened. They know they are not dead. This is a great metaphysical truth.

If you know you are dreaming, you don't suffer from your bad experiences in the dream. But if you are identified with the dream, and in it someone strikes your head and kills you, that dream death

* *Mark 9:43.*

seems a true and terrible experience until you wake up and understand it was not real. It is the same after death. Once you are out of this body, you realize you are not dead; you are free of a nightmare. So death is not the end; it is a freeing of the consciousness from imprisonment in the physical-dream body. That release brings a sense of great freedom. We should never seek death. Rather, we should prepare our consciousness by meditation and God communion, so that when death comes, in its own time, we are able to look upon it as a dream, nothing more. I can see the dream nature of life and death anytime I wish. Hence I attach little importance to this body.

In Oneness with God Know That Life Is a Dream

Live in the consciousness of Spirit, in that oneness with God wherein you know that life is a dream. It is very easy to do when you make the effort. When suffering comes it is more difficult to detach your consciousness from identification with the body; so be wise and make the effort now, while you have strength and health.

Material desires take away the desire for the Infinite. Every day or so someone tells me I need this or that. It seems ridiculous, because I know that thousands do not have what I am told I "need." If they don't need it, why should I? Your only real need is God; there is no other necessity. Be not attached to possessions, music, books, food, or any other sense pleasures. In God you have eternal life. Become aware of this great truth; otherwise your appointments in life will take over, and you will die still bound by them. If you are one with Him, you are not compelled to return to this dream earth again. You are free to come and go as you like, to serve God in His children on earth.

If you live in the joy of God, you will not know what death is. You do not get to that state when you pray mechanically. Become completely absorbed in your prayer, with faith that God is listening. If you thus fervently, lovingly pray to God, He will come to you at any time.

Understanding One Another

BY SRI DAYA MATA

Based on extracts from a talk on December 14, 1965

We should behave always according to our true nature as divine children of God. No matter what others do to hurt us, we ought to return forgiveness and compassion. We have the power to change others' feelings toward us if we practice that. With heartfelt sincerity the hand of love and friendship should be offered to all. If the hand is slapped, or as often as it is slapped, it should be proffered again.

Receive praise or blame without becoming excited about either. Though at times it may be difficult to cope with persons who are critical of us, we should not ignore what they say, if it is constructive. Sometimes it is all right to try to explain ourselves; on other occasions it is a waste of time to go into long explanations, which may sound only like justifications. In such instances we are wiser merely to accept silently. In other instances, every effort should be made to come to an understanding.

The best attitude is that divine humility referred to by St. Francis of Assisi when he said, "Accept blame, criticism, and accusation silently and without retaliation, even though untrue and unjustified." Even if what is said about us is untrue, even if we feel it is unjustified, we are spiritually ennobled when we accept it without argument and without retaliation. Leave the decision to God. One who would know God must strive first to please Him, not man.

The time to explain, the time to remain silent, depends upon the circumstances. But there is never a time to retaliate, under any circumstances. Always let God be the judge. His laws are just, so in the highest sense we need never defend ourselves.

There will be those who praise and understand us; there will be those who blame and misunderstand. We should take both in our stride. Our part is to strive always to the best of our ability to live by truth. When we realize we have made a mistake, we should instantly ask the Divine to forgive us; and then correct ourselves.

It is no use trying to hide our errors from God; He knows them anyway. We can trustingly tell Him all our mistakes and seek His help in righting them. God's immanence makes Him a constant, divine companion with whom we can freely share our feelings. He sees us as we are. How can we feel egotistical about ourselves when we know we are nothing without Him? Once we realize this, there begins within us a persistent struggle to reach perfection in His eyes. He who is satisfied with himself ceases to grow spiritually. Egoistic self-satisfaction is a grave sin against the higher Self. Whosoever ceases to strive for improvement shrinks in spiritual stature.

Anytime we are wrong, let's admit it. Let us not always think we have to be right. This is not being honest with ourselves. The fact that we believe a certain way does not necessarily make it right. If someone shows us we are wrong, we should be willing and ready to change. This is the way we grow and acquire understanding. Long explanations of why we erred are unnecessary. We need simply say, "I am very sorry. I didn't understand it that way."

If There Is No Communication, Misunderstanding Grows

When a person misunderstands us, and is angry, nothing we can say will in any way enlighten him while he is under the influence of emotion. It is best to wait until our would-be antagonist is calm, and then endeavor to communicate. When people cease to communicate with one another, misunderstanding grows. So long as there is communication — not argumentation, but openminded discussion — there is hope for cultivating understanding and harmony.

It is important never to have a closed mind. This Gurudeva (Paramahansa Yogananda) would not tolerate in those who sought his training. Whoever wished to be around him had to keep openminded, to be a reasonable human being.

In trying to communicate with others, we should always watch our motives. If under the guise of seeking understanding our real

intent is to thrust our own ideas down their throats, our motive is impure, and hence wrong. We should always sincerely attempt to understand others, setting aside momentarily our own viewpoint to identify with the other person's thinking. We have to do this if we are to communicate successfully with others. If we are seeking truth, not mere justification of our own convictions, we must be able to let go, for the moment, of what we feel is right, and see the matter through the other person's eyes. Let him express himself. Then, having heard his side, and having impartially analyzed it from his viewpoint, we may present our side. In other words, there must be a fair exchange of ideas. Both parties may then see that they have erred in their thinking, and that truth lies somewhere between their opposite stands.

It Is Our Duty to Defend Divine Principles

One trouble with most of us is that we are so busy putting across our own point and trying to convince the other party of it, we don't give him a chance to air his view. When you have difficulties with someone, always give him sufficient respect by allowing him to "get it off his chest." No matter how vicious he is, no matter how emotional, don't interrupt. Let him have his say. Then respond quietly and kindly. Even though he might be saying the most unkind things about you, listen respectfully while inwardly saying to God, "Is this so? I am interested in the truth. If I am this way, You must help me, Lord, to overcome my fault and change myself." But should the person be abusive to the point of forgetting himself, and offend spiritual principles, not mere personal pride and ego, it is our duty to resist, to become like steel. To offend divine principles is to offend God, and we must never be a party to that. Jesus never defended himself, but he was strong in word and deed when righteousness was abused.

Our duty as children of God in this world, then, is to seek understanding: understanding of self, of others, of life, and, above all, of God. This world can be a better place only when understanding reigns in the heart and mind of man. Individuals must learn to get along with one another before nations can ever hope to.



Mirabai, a medieval Rajputani princess, abandoned her court life to seek the company of saints. She composed many ecstatic songs that are still treasured in India. In one of her songs she wrote: "Mirabai knows that to find the Divine
One the only indispensable is love."

THE BREAD OF MY SOUL ART THOU!

The Bread of my soul art Thou!
The Strength of my heart art Thou!
The Treasure of my life art Thou!
Methinks I hear Thy Voice,
I hear the sound of Thy Flute.

Sometimes I see Thee
Coming quick from a grove,
Beautiful and bright!
And over Thee I see
A touch of Fire,
A Flame of Beauty!
And from the Flame doth come
A Voice: but I understand it not.
And I sob and cry:
"O meet me, Master!"
No more separation!

Sometimes I see
When all is dark,
That in the Heart within
Doth shine a Light, Thy Light!
And then I cry:
"I have seen
What I have seen!"

And again I cry:
"Holy! Holy! Holy!
The Holy One have I seen!"
And a Voice I hear again:
It speaketh to my heart:
"Open to Me,
For I come quickly!"
I open! But Thou art gone!

— by *Mirabai*

A SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION OF THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

(India's greatest scripture, a part of the "Mahabharata" epic)

BY PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

Chapter XVIII, Stanza 40

There is no being in the world, or again among the deities in (astral) heaven, who is free from these three qualities, born of Prakriti (Cosmic Nature, created by God).

Superior astral beings and ordinary men are equally subject to the triple influence of the good, activating, and evil qualities. Even though both man and deity have the power of free choice, and are therefore responsible for their actions, they cannot escape the influence of the threefold qualities existing in Cosmic Nature, the Holy Ghost or vibratory manifestation of God. However, being made in the image of God, man and deity can exercise their God-given free choice and refuse to succumb to the degrading tamasic quality. Instead, by pursuing proper rajasic activity and divine sattvic activity they may transcend all three qualities and re-enter the kingdom of God.

It is the hobby of God to return souls to His kingdom after they have passed the test of conquering evil temptations by recognizing the true charm of goodness.

God is indeed responsible for creating temptation and subjecting man to it, but man is responsible if he does not use his divinely given free choice to seek the Giver of all gifts in preference to the paltry toys of impermanent pleasures. God purposely made sense pleasures charming so that man would have to use his discrimination to distinguish between the poisoned honey of evil and the

beneficial honey of virtue. He made evil sense pleasures poisonous so that His erring children who persist in tasting them may at last discover the harmful effects, and use their discrimination to go back to God's divine kingdom where they can enjoy the ambrosial manna of eternal blessedness.

Chapter XVIII, Stanza 41

O scorcher of (sense) enemies, Arjuna! The duties of Brahmins, of Kshatriyas, of Vaisyas, as also of Sudras, are allocated according to the gunas (qualities) springing from their own nature.

God reveals to Arjuna through his intuitional perception a most interesting truth about the real meaning of the four natural classifications of mankind: *Brahmins* or God-knowers, *Kshatriyas* or sense-fighters, *Vaisyas* or wisdom-cultivators,* *Sudras* or body-identified individuals. These four "castes" are present in all nations as the spiritual intelligentsia, the soldiers, rulers, and leaders, the businessmen, and the laborers.

The existence in the world of four classes of human beings is the result of the sattvic, rajasic, and tamasic (good, activating, and bad) qualities, and their mixtures, present in *Prakriti* or Cosmic Nature. The differentiation of individuals into these four classes is also the result of their own free choice of good and evil actions in the past.

Swabhava, "nature," as used in this stanza, signifies the nature of God when manifesting as *Prakriti* with Her cosmic delusion of three qualities, as well as the nature of man, which results from the influence of these qualities and from his own past good or evil actions.

Even though man's nature is ordained by *Prakriti* and his own past *karma*, still it is only an acquired second nature, born of the use of his free choice. Though buried beneath this acquired second nature, man's real soul-nature, which is a true image of

*So called because in contrast to the *Sudra*, whose sense-bound activities serve chiefly his body, and thereby limit his service to humanity to bodily labor, the *Vaisya*, by control of desires for the sake of higher gain, sows within himself the first seeds of wisdom and serves humanity by mental labor.

God, remains eternally in his possession. If this were not so, the four classes of individuals could not change their natures: the body-identified person could not become, through spiritual development, a God-knowing *Brahmin*; and a *Brahmin* could not degrade himself by sense-tempted actions into a body-bound *Sudra*. By misuse of free choice, man can be bound temporarily in the limitations of any of these four castes; but by meditation, unceasing desire to regain his lost paradise, and divine grace, he can be liberated.

Thus a body-bound *Sudra* laborer, by deep meditation and yoga culture, can become a sower of wisdom, or *Vaisya*, carrying on a business. By further fighting the bodily propensities, he can become a *Kshatriya*, a soldier, or ruler or leader, if he so desires; and by ecstasy with God that *Sudra* becomes a God-knowing *Brahmin*.

No Individual Is Permanently Bound to His Classification

As these four classes of beings, either by self-development or by wrong living, can raise or lower their status, there can be no permanent classification of any individual. A man born in a God-knowing *Brahmin* family cannot be a true *Brahmin* unless by self-effort he communes with God, any more than a doctor's son could be a doctor without acquiring the necessary qualifications. It is as ridiculous for a *Brahmin's* wicked son to pose as a *Brahmin* as it is for a poverty-stricken man to claim he is rich because his father is wealthy.

The pernicious caste system of the East sprang from the error of establishing caste according to heredity rather than quality. Similarly, the evils of the class system in the West sprang from the "false pride of family" consciousness. Without his money, many a millionaire would be unable to brag about his high heredity.

Prakriti or Cosmic Nature influences everything in nature and every human being with the three qualities, producing various mixtures of them. When a person manifests predominantly the good *sattva* quality, keeping the activating and evil qualities and his past bad karma under his control, he is spoken of as a *Brahmin*. When one keeps predominant in himself the activating *rajas* quality,

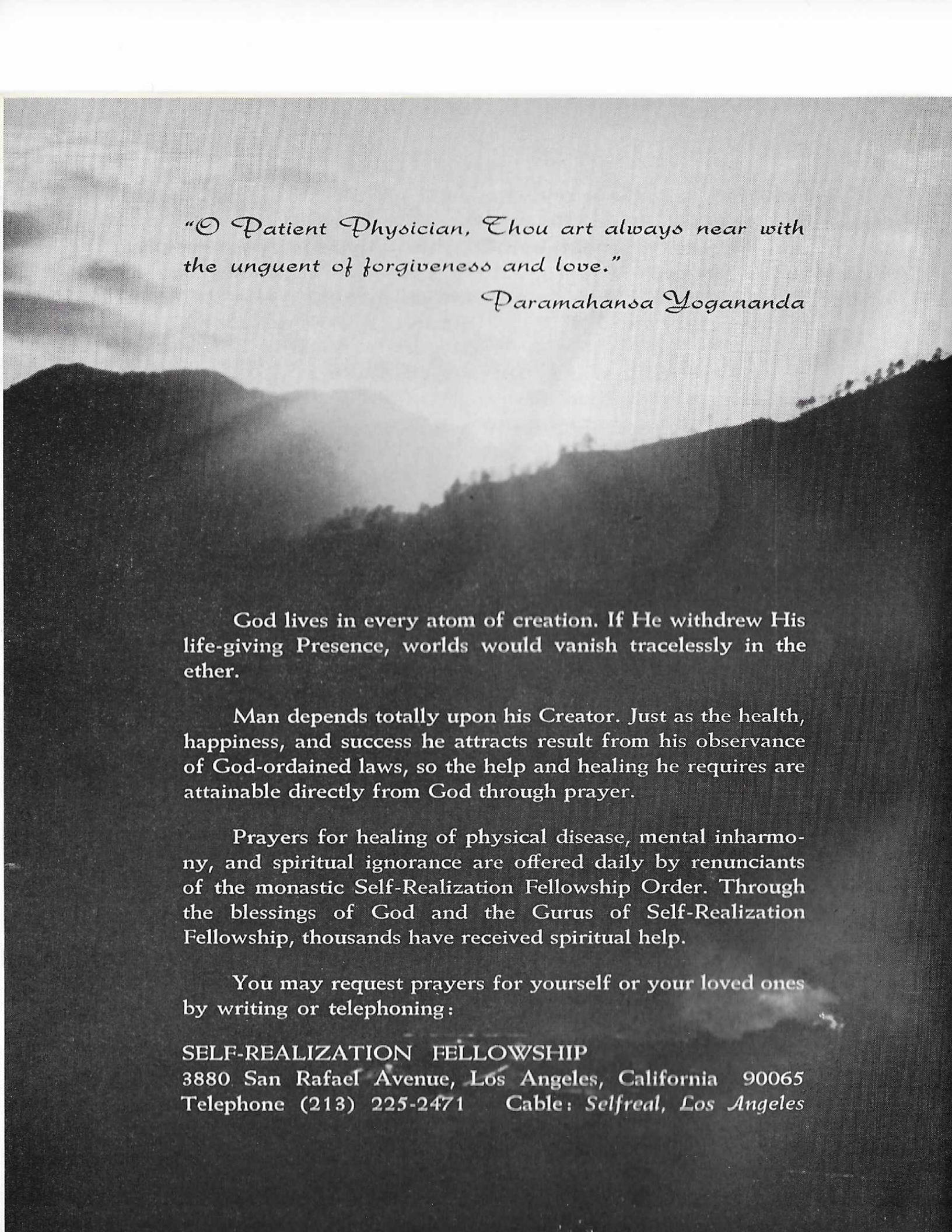
mixed with slight goodness, with the evil quality and the bad karma of the past eclipsed, he is said to be a *Kshatriya*, or sense-fighter. When one manifests predominantly the activating *rajas* quality, slightly mixed with the evil quality, and with the good quality hidden, he is called a *Vaisya*, or wisdom-cultivator. When one manifests predominantly the evil *tamas* quality, slightly mixed with the activating quality, and is strongly influenced by his own bad karma, the good quality being wholly suppressed, he is said to belong to the lowest class, a body-identified *Kayastha* or *Sudra*.

The word *Brahmin* signifies he who knows *Brahman*, or God. He usually follows a spiritual profession. The *Kshatriya* is one who fights to control the senses and may be a leader in any vocation, or a soldier. The *Vaisya*, the cultivator of wisdom, may follow any vocation, particularly that of a businessman.

Kayastha signifies one who is identified with *kaya*, the body, and all its evils. *Sudra* signifies one who doubts everything except material existence. Such a body-identified person may be born in any of the three higher castes, or be following any higher vocation, but he does not manifest the quality of that caste or the qualifications for that work. Similarly, a God-knowing *Brahmin* may be a laborer, or a farmer, or a businessman, or a soldier. He may perform material duties according to his choice, without being internally affected by them, remaining as a God-knower, or true *Brahmin*.

During the period when God withdraws His physical nature, the cosmic *Prakriti*, within Himself by equilibrating the triune qualities, He becomes solely Spirit, the Absolute; God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (*Prakriti*) dissolve in Spirit and exist no more. It is by differentiation of the three qualities that Cosmic Nature comes into being; and it is by man's response to the triune qualities that the aforesaid four types of individuals are born.

Man and Cosmic Nature cannot manifest their activities without the mixture of the three qualities. As God can tranquilize Nature's three qualities and absorb Her and all Her activities into Himself, so man, made in God's image, can by ecstasy dissolve the influence of the three qualities, and the effects of past good, activating, and evil actions, and become liberated.



*"O Patient Physician, Thou art always near with
the unguent of forgiveness and love."*

Paramahansa Yogananda

God lives in every atom of creation. If He withdrew His life-giving Presence, worlds would vanish tracelessly in the ether.

Man depends totally upon his Creator. Just as the health, happiness, and success he attracts result from his observance of God-ordained laws, so the help and healing he requires are attainable directly from God through prayer.

Prayers for healing of physical disease, mental inharmonny, and spiritual ignorance are offered daily by renunciants of the monastic Self-Realization Fellowship Order. Through the blessings of God and the Gurus of Self-Realization Fellowship, thousands have received spiritual help.

You may request prayers for yourself or your loved ones by writing or telephoning:

SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP

3880 San Rafael Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90065
Telephone (213) 225-2471 Cable: *Selfreal, Los Angeles*

A Forerunner of the New Race

BY TARA MATA

Tara Mata, a faithful disciple of Paramahansa Yogananda for forty-seven years, was editor-in-chief of Self-Realization Fellowship/Yogoda Satsanga Society of India publications, and a member of the SRF/YSS Board of Directors. Not long after she had met Paramahansa Yogananda in 1924, she wrote the following article about a "man" who was blessed with the experience of cosmic consciousness. Though she humbly avoided identification with the person mentioned, the experiences Tara Mata describes were her own.

Those who have read Dr. R. M. Bucke's *Cosmic Consciousness* and Edward Carpenter's *Towards Democracy** know that these authors believe that cosmic consciousness is a natural faculty of man, and that a future race of men on this earth will be born with this faculty well developed, and not merely latent as it is now. Bucke's theory is that, just as man advanced from the state of simple consciousness, which he shared with the animal kingdom, into a state of self-consciousness, peculiar to man alone, and marked by the development of language, so he must inevitably come into a higher state of consciousness, distinguished by a cosmic or universal understanding.

* Richard Maurice Bucke, a physician, attended Walt Whitman during the latter part of his life, after the great poet had been stricken (in 1873) with paralysis. Dr. Bucke later wrote a biography of Whitman, the first of importance to describe him as a mystical superman; and edited several volumes of Whitman's letters and notes.

The English author Edward Carpenter, after graduation from Cambridge, took holy orders and served as curate in a Cambridge church. He was greatly disturbed by the existing social and religious order, and with the reading in 1868 or 1869 of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* and *Democratic Vistas*, his view of life completely changed. He found his sympathies "flowing... westward across the Atlantic." In 1874 he left Cambridge to seek a life more in conformity with nature, but had to pass a number of years in uncongenial surroundings. His first

Bucke maintains that the increasing number of people who have attained some degree of cosmic consciousness in the past few centuries is proof that these persons constitute the vanguard or forerunners of the new race. Among those whom Bucke believes to have had the cosmic sense more or less well developed (in recent centuries) are St. John of the Cross, Francis Bacon, Jakob Boehme, Blaise Pascal, Spinoza, Swedenborg, William Blake, William Wordsworth, Alexander Pushkin, Honore de Balzac, Emerson, Tennyson, Thoreau, Walt Whitman, Edward Carpenter, and Ramakrishna.

Besides these famous men, it is doubtless true that many hundreds of men and women in each century, unknown to fame, have been exalted to some degree of cosmic consciousness. There is no doubt in my mind that the message of Self-Realization Fellowship (founded by Paramahansa Yogananda) in this century has been the means by which hundreds and perhaps thousands of students throughout the world have achieved, through the meditation practices taught them, a glimpse of divine consciousness. Some few students have gone farther and attained very high illumination. Here we have an example of how the cosmic sense is being developed in larger and larger numbers, paving the way for the great race of the future.

One selection from Bucke's book is well worth quoting here:

"In contact with the flux of cosmic consciousness all religions known and named today will be melted down. The human soul will be revolutionized. Religion will absolutely dominate the race. It will not be believed and disbelieved.

"It will not be a part of life, belonging to certain hours, times, occasions. It will not be in sacred books nor in the mouths of priests. It will not dwell in churches and meetings and forms and days. Its life will not be in prayers, hymns nor discourses. It will not depend on special revelations, on the words of gods who came down to

successful literary work was *Towards Democracy*, which attracted the attention of many advanced thinkers. In 1884, the year following its publication, he went to the United States, where he spent some time with Whitman and met Lowell, Emerson, and others. After his return to England he became something of a recluse, but continued until his death to be sought out by persons of kindred spirit.

teach, nor on any Bible or Bibles. It will have no mission to save men from their sins or to secure them entrance to heaven. It will not teach a future immortality nor future glories, for immortality and all glory will exist in the here and now. The evidence of immortality will live in every heart as sight in every eye. Doubt of God and of eternal life will be as impossible as is now doubt of existence; the evidence of each will be the same. Religion will govern every minute of every day of all life. Churches, priests, forms, creeds, prayers, all agents, all intermediaries between the individual man and God will be permanently replaced by direct unmistakable intercourse. Sin will no longer exist nor will salvation be desired. Men will not worry about death or a future, about the kingdom of heaven, about what may come with and after the cessation of the life of the present body. Each soul will feel and know itself to be immortal, will feel and know that the entire universe with all its good and with all its beauty is for it and belongs to it forever. The world peopled by men possessing cosmic consciousness will be as far removed from the world of today as this is from the world as it was before the advent of self-consciousness. . . . This new race is in the act of being born from us, and in the near future it will occupy and possess the earth."

A Definite Way to Contact God

The fact that there is a technique, such as Self-Realization Fellowship teaches, whereby cosmic consciousness can be attained, is in itself proof that this higher sense is indeed an inherent faculty of all men, needing but the necessary training to call it forth. Most people believe that divine knowledge comes to only a few chosen ones, and that the average man can approach no nearer to God than his "faith" will take him. Realization that there is a definite *way* to contact God, a technique usable by all men in all circumstances, has come as such a liberating shock to a number of Self-Realization students that they feel they have undergone a new birth.

I have one such case in mind — a man who, as soon as he had heard the Self-Realization message, was swept up into cosmic consciousness. He is the only such person, aside from Paramahansa

Yogananda, whom I myself have known, though I have heard or read of a number of other Self-Realization students who have had a more or less similar experience.

This man was possessed of intense religious faith and aspiration. Though well read in the sacred scriptures of the world, especially those of the Hindus, he knew that this intellectual knowledge was barren and stony; it did not feed the soul-hunger within him. He did not wish merely to read about spiritual food, but to taste it. Under the even tenor of his days there yawned a black abyss of despair — despair that he was worthy of any direct contact with God, since no such experience was given to him. He finally came to doubt, not God, but the possibility that he would ever be able to have more than an intellectual comprehension of Him. This conviction struck at the roots of his life, and made it seem a worthless and meaningless thing.

Into this dark night of his soul came the light of Self-Realization. After attending a few of the public lectures by Paramahansa Yogananda, and before taking the class lessons, this man felt the heavy weight of despair lifting from his heart. Returning to his home one night from the last of the public lectures, he was conscious of a great peace within himself. He felt that in some deep fundamental way, he had become a different person. An impulse urged him to look into a mirror in his room, that he might see the new man. There he saw, not his own face, but the face of Paramahansa Yogananda, whose lecture he had attended that evening. The floodgates of joy broke in his soul; he was inundated with waves of indescribable ecstasy. Words that had been merely words to him before — bliss, immortality, eternity, truth, divine love — became, in the twinkling of an eye, the core of his being, the essence of his life, the only possible reality. Realization that these deep, everlasting fountains of joy existed in every heart, that this immortal life underlay all the mortality of humanity, that this eternal, all-inclusive love enveloped and supported and guided every particle, every atom of creation, burst upon him with a surety, a divine certainty that caused his whole being to pour forth in a flood of praise and gratitude.

He *knew*, not with his mind alone, but with his heart and soul, with every cell and molecule of his body. The sublime splendor and joy of this discovery were so vast that he felt that centuries, millenniums, countless eons of suffering were as nothing, as less than nothing, if by such means this bliss could be obtained. Sin, sorrow, death — these were but words now, words without meaning, words swallowed up by joy as minnows by the seven seas.

Physiological Changes

He was aware, during this first period of illumination and during the weeks which followed, of a number of physiological changes within himself. The most striking was what seemed a rearrangement of molecular structure in his brain, or the opening up of new cell-territory there. Ceaselessly, day and night, he was conscious of this work going on. It seemed as though a kind of electrical drill was boring out new cellular thought-channels. This phenomenon is strong proof of Bucke's theory that cosmic consciousness is a natural faculty of man, for it gives evidence that the brain cells which are connected with this faculty are already present in man, although inactive or non-functioning in the majority of human beings at the present time.

Another important change was felt in his spinal column. The whole spine seemed turned into iron for several weeks, so that, when he sat to meditate on God, he felt anchored forever, able to sit in one place eternally without motion or consciousness of any bodily function. At times an influx of superhuman strength invaded him, and he felt that he was carrying the whole universe on his shoulders. The elixir of life, the nectar of immortality, he felt flowing in his veins as an actual, tangible force. It seemed like a quicksilver, or a sort of electrical, fluid light throughout his body.

During the weeks of his illumination, he felt no need of food or sleep. But he conformed his outward life to the pattern of his household, and ate and slept when his family did. All food seemed pure spirit to him, and in sleep he was pillowed on the "everlasting arms," awakening to a joy past all words, past all powers of description.

He had previously suffered from chronic catarrh; now his body was purged of all sickness. His family and friends were aware of a great change in his appearance and manner; his face shone with a radiant light; his eyes were pools of joy. Strangers spoke to him, irresistibly drawn by a strange sympathy; on the streetcar, children would come over to sit on his lap, asking him to visit them.

The whole universe was to him bathed in a sea of love; he said to himself many times, "Now at last I know what *love* is! This is God's love, shaming the noblest human affection. Eternal love, unconquerable love, all-satisfying love!" He knew beyond all possibility or thought of doubt that Love creates and sustains the universe, and that all created things, human or sub-human, were destined to discover this Love, this immortal bliss that was the very essence of life. He felt his mind expand, his understanding reach out, endlessly widening, growing, touching everything in the universe, binding all things, all thoughts to himself. He was "center everywhere, circumference nowhere."

The Atom-Dance of Nature

The air that he breathed was friendly, intimate, conscious of life. He felt that all the world was "home" to him, that he could never feel strange or alien to any place again; that the mountains, the sea, the distant lands which he had never seen, would be as much his own as the home of his boyhood. Everywhere he looked, he saw the "atom-dance" of nature; the air was filled with myriad moving pinpricks of light.

During these weeks, he went about his daily duties as usual, but with a hitherto unknown efficiency and speed. Typed papers flew off his machine, completed without error in a fourth of his customary time. Fatigue was unknown to him; his work seemed like child's play, happy and carefree. Conversing in person or over the telephone with his clients, his inward joy covered every action and circumstance with a cosmic significance, for to him these men, this telephone, this table, this voice was God, God manifesting Himself in another of His fascinating disguises.

In the midst of his work, he would suddenly be freshly over-

whelmed by the goodness of God who had given him this incredible, unspeakable happiness. His breath would stop completely at such times; the awe which he felt would be accompanied by an absolute stillness within and without. Underlying all his consciousness was a sense of immeasurable and unutterable gratitude; a longing for others to know the joy which lay within them; but most of all, a divine knowledge, past all human comprehension, that all was well with the world, that everything was leading to the goal of cosmic consciousness, immortal bliss.

This state of illumination was present with the man for about two months and then gradually wore away. It has never returned with all its pristine force, though certain features, especially the sense of divine peace and joy, return whenever he practices the Self-Realization meditation techniques.

We can well imagine, with Doctor Bucke, that a race of men, possessing as a normal and permanent faculty this sense of cosmic consciousness, would soon turn the earth into a paradise, a planet fit for Christs and Buddhas, a polestar for the wheeling universe.

1972 Summer Classes

The 1972 Self-Realization Fellowship Summer Class Series will be held at The Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles, beginning on July 29th. The classes will cover the fundamental teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda — Energization Exercises, *Hong-Sau* Concentration Technique, *Om* Meditation Technique — and related subjects: *Bhakti Yoga* (path of devotion), Self-Realization Way of Life, Guru-Disciple Relationship. There will also be question and answer sessions, *satsangas* (informal spiritual discussions), meditations, tours to ashram centers, and other spiritual activities. An announcement with detailed registration information will be sent to all persons on our mailing list as soon as all arrangements have been completed.

A Christmas Acrostic

Nine Wishes For Christmas

BY SISTER SHILA

*C*onfidence that the same divine Christ Consciousness
manifested in the infant Jesus can be reborn
in the cradle of each human heart.

*H*appiness that comes with sharing love and goodwill
with no thought of reward or return, but
in the true spirit of selfless giving.

*R*ealization that God directs the music of all spheres,
that true harmony can emerge only by following
the lead of the Divine Conductor.

*I*nspiration that grows ever deeper as I wait
with a receptive mind, an expectant heart. . .
wait. . . until God speaks.

*S*erenity that will not allow my determination
to waver as I walk steadfastly
toward my Divine Goal.

*T*rust, an unshakable faith that knows
I am lovingly borne by the same Divine Hand
that holds universes in the sky.

*M*editation that alone can satisfy
the spiritual hunger
of my soul.

*A*mbition to succeed, not by worldly standards,
but according to God's will. . . to cheerfully persevere
in my performance of each day's necessary activities.

*S*implicity to be free
of all that does not really matter
in my pursuit of Truth.

Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam

Rendered into English by Edward Fitz-Gerald

SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION BY PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

The "Rubaiyat" as interpreted by Paramahansa Yogananda appeared serially in this magazine thirty-odd years ago. Some time after, Paramahansaji reviewed the manuscript, making refinements and enlarging on various points. "Self-Realization Magazine" is pleased to publish his revised manuscript in this and future issues.

Introduction

Long ago in India I met a hoary Persian poet who told me that the poetry of Persia often has two meanings, one inner and one outer. I remember the great satisfaction I derived from his explanations of the twofold significance of several Persian poems.

One day as I was deeply concentrated on the pages of Omar Khayyam's *Rubaiyat*, I suddenly beheld the walls of its outer meanings crumble away, and the vast inner fortress of golden spiritual treasures stood open to my gaze.

Profound spiritual treatises by some mysterious divine law do not disappear from the earth even after centuries of misunderstanding, as in the case of the *Rubaiyat*. Not even in Persia is all of Omar Khayyam's deep philosophy understood in its entirety, as I have tried to present it.

Because of the hidden spiritual foundation of the *Rubaiyat* it has withstood the ravages of time and the misinterpretations of many translators, remaining a perpetual mansion of wisdom for truth loving and solace-seeking souls.

In Persia Omar Khayyam has always been considered a highly advanced mystical teacher, and his *Rubaiyat* revered as an inspired Sufi scripture. "The first great Sufi writer was Omar Khayyam," writes Professor Charles F. Horne in the *Introduction to the Rubaiyat*, which appears in Vol. VIII of "The Sacred Books and Early Literature of the East" series (Parke, Austin & Lipscomb, London, 1917). "Unfortunately, Omar, by a very large number of Western readers, has come to be regarded as a rather erotic pagan poet, a drunkard interested only in wine and earthly pleasure. This is typical of the confusion that exists on the entire subject of Sufism. The West has insisted on judging Omar from its own viewpoint. But if we are to understand the East at all, we must try to see how its own people look upon its writings. It comes as a surprise to many Westerners when they are told that in Persia itself there is no dispute whatever about Omar's verses and their meaning. He is accepted quite simply as a great religious poet.

"What then becomes of all his passionate praise of wine and love? These are merely the thoroughly established metaphors of Sufism; the wine is the joy of the spirit, and the love is the rapturous devotion to God. . . .

"Omar rather veiled than displayed his knowledge. That such a man would be regarded by the Western world as an idle reveler is absurd. Such wisdom united to such shallowness is self-contradictory."

Omar and other Sufi poets used popular similes and pictured the ordinary joys of life so that the worldly man could compare those ordinary joys of mundane life with the superior joys of the spiritual life. To the man who habitually drinks wine to temporarily forget the sorrows and unbearable trials of his life, Omar offers a more delightful nectar of enlightenment and divine ecstasy which has the power, when used by man, to obliterate his woes for all time. Surely Omar did not go through the labor of writing so many exquisite verses merely to tell people to escape sorrow by drugging their senses with wine!

J. B. Nicolas, whose French translation of 464 *rubaiyat* (quatrains) appeared in 1867, a few years after Edward Fitz-Gerald's

first edition, opposed Fitz-Gerald's views that Omar was a materialist. Fitz-Gerald refers to this fact in the introduction to his own second edition, as follows:

"M. Nicolas, whose edition has reminded me of several things, and instructed me in others, does not consider Omar to be the material epicurean that I have literally taken him for, but a mystic, shadowing the Deity under the figure of wine, wine-bearer, etc., as Hafiz is supposed to do; in short, a Sufi poet like Hafiz and the rest. . . . As there is some traditional presumption, and certainly the opinion of some learned men, in favor of Omar's being a Sufi — even something of a saint — those who please may so interpret his wine and cup-bearer."

Omar distinctly states that wine symbolizes the intoxication of divine love and joy. Many of his stanzas are so purely spiritual that hardly any material meanings can be drawn from them, as for instance in quatrains XLIV, LX, and LXVI.

With the help of a Persian scholar, I translated the original *Rubaiyat* into English. But I found that, though literally translated, they lacked the fiery spirit of Khayyam's original. After I compared that translation with Fitz-Gerald's, I realized that Fitz-Gerald had been divinely inspired to catch exactly in gloriously musical English words the soul of Omar's writings.

Therefore I decided to interpret the inner hidden meaning of Omar's verses from Fitz-Gerald's translation rather than from my own or any other that I had read.

Fitz-Gerald prepared five different editions of the *Rubaiyat*. For my interpretation I have chosen the first, as one's first inspiration — being spontaneous, natural, and sincere — is most often the deepest and purest expression.

As I worked on the spiritual interpretation of the *Rubaiyat*, it took me into an endless labyrinth of truth, until I was rapturously lost in wonderment. The veiling of Khayyam's metaphysical and practical philosophy in these verses reminds me of "The Revelation of St. John the Divine." The *Rubaiyat* may rightly be called "The Revelation of Omar Khayyam."

*Awake! for Morning in the Bowl of Night
Has flung the Stone that puts the Stars to Flight:
And Lo, the Hunter of the East has caught
The Sultan's Turret in a Noose of Light.*

Spiritual Interpretation

The inner Silence sings:

“Awake! Forsake the sleep of ignorance, for the dawn of wisdom has come. Hurl the hard stone of spiritual discipline that breaks the bowl of dark unknowing, putting to flight the pale stars of mock-lustered material desires.

“Behold, the Eastern Wisdom, the Hunter and Destroyer of delusion, has caught the proud minaret of the kingly soul in a noose of Light, dispelling its darkness.”

I have been inspired further to interpret this introductory quatrain as Omar's personal clarion call to the spiritually sleeping:

“O inhabitants of the City of Delusion, sleep no more! The sunlight of my awakening message of mystic wisdom has arrived. Learn how to use the hard stone of spiritual discipline to break the bowl of your dark ignorance, dashing from its hold the desire for momentarily attractive material pleasures.

“Behold with envy how the Hunter of Wisdom has been searching out and gathering the lofty, kingly, spiritually advanced devotees of Truth, encompassing their souls with a halo of the everlasting Light of Freedom.”

Practical Application

Most people, though apparently awake, are really asleep in delusion. Pursued by the compelling commands of their hounding habits, they have not yet been awakened by wisdom to walk its pleasant pathways. Where life is in danger for lack of watchfulness, it is not safe to sleep. So it is unwise to slumber in the dark doorways

of evil habits, which invite the danger of possible death to wisdom and true happiness.

The ordinary man earns a living, eats three times a day, amuses himself with trivial entertainments, remaining engrossed in the mechanical performance of material duties without ever awakening to the importance of understanding the purpose of life: attaining true happiness and sharing it with others. The wise man gives up false pride in self-perfection, the thought that "I am all right as I am." Using the net of introspection, he catches delusion and destroys it. Forsake the slumber of ignorant habits and awaken wisdom by performing those good habits which alone can free life from danger and crown it with lasting happiness.

To be drunk with the daily round of haunting useless habits, to be negatively the same every day for years, is a wasted existence. Destroy false pride. Awaken the soul and remain ever wakeful, striving each day to be different and better in all ways. Your soul was not meant to be a prisoner of passion, sleeping behind bars of ignorance. Jerk yourself from the stupor of sloth; race forward with progressive activities, and catch success in the net of soul creativity.

Forsake spiritual lethargy and melancholia. Bask in the light of meditative peace and Self-realization, which destroys false pride of material existence and banishes inner soul gloom.



That I want Thee, only Thee — let my heart repeat without end. All desires that distract me, day and night, are false and empty to the core.

As the night keeps hidden in its gloom the petition for light, even thus in the depth of my unconsciousness rings the cry — I want Thee, only Thee.

As the storm still seeks its end in peace when it strikes against peace with all its might, even thus my rebellion strikes against Thy love and still its cry is — I want Thee, only Thee. — *Rabindranath Tagore.*

The Way to Peace

BY BROTHER ANANDAMOY

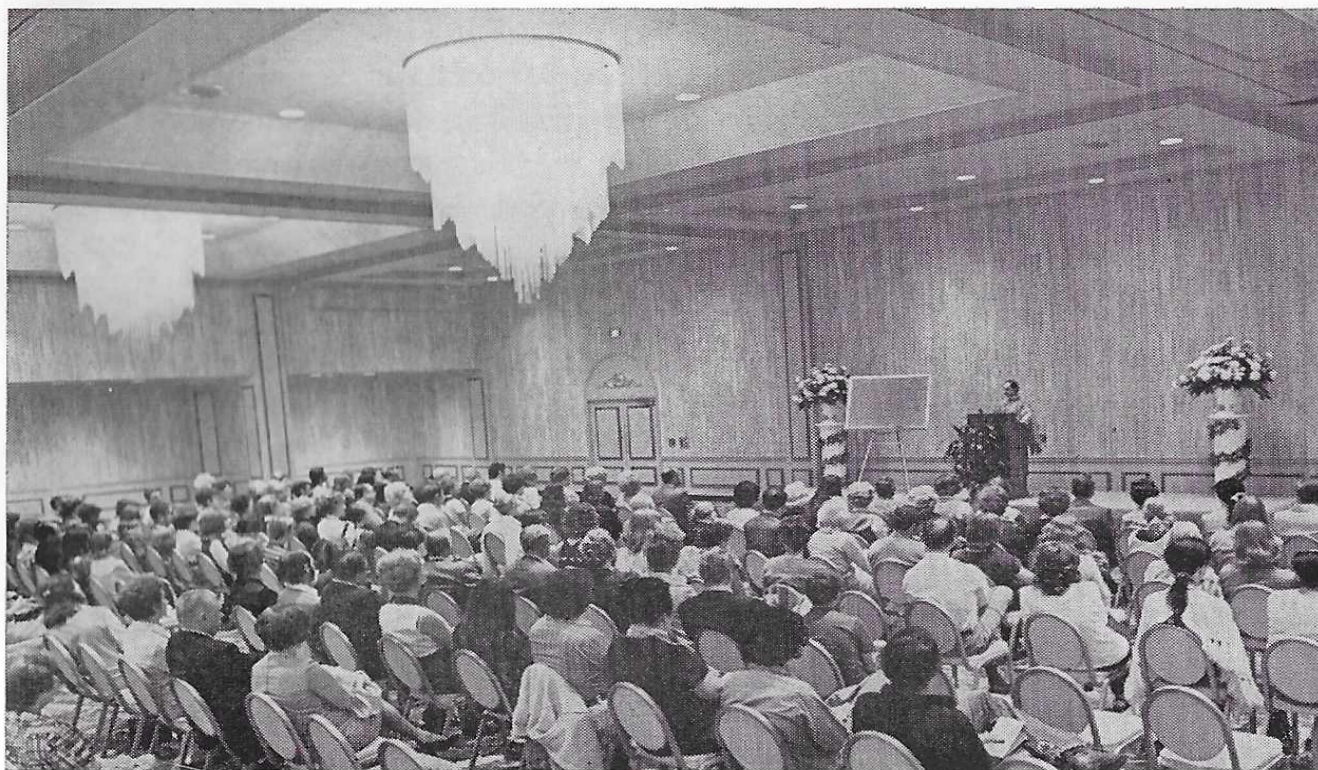
Through the centuries men and nations have tried many ways to peace: force, neutrality, conferences, treaties, international alliances, arms limitations. None has worked effectively. When the crossbow was invented, it was opposed for use because it was conducive to mass killing. Then came the invention of gunpowder and its use in cannons; then machine guns were conceived. Men rose up to protest their use, but the development of weapons could not be stopped. And now we have nuclear bombs. Will treaties prevent their use? Not unless we understand and eliminate the real causes of war.

Why do schoolboys fight? Because self-interest comes before a common interest. Why do nations fight? Because national interest is put above the common interest. So long as selfishness and hatred exist in man's heart, wars will rage over the face of the earth. There is but one sure way to peace: the cultivation by each human being of his innate spiritual qualities. Whoever strives to establish contact with God changes from within; his true divine nature begins to manifest.

Unity Through God Consciousness

In Paramahansa Yogananda's *Autobiography of a Yogi* a wise *sadhu* (holy man) remarks: "God is simple. Everything else is complex." God Consciousness is unity of consciousness; creation is differentiation, change, complexity. Man in his ordinary state of consciousness perceives only the differentiation.

But when he lifts his consciousness into the superconsciousness of the soul, he perceives the essential unity of divine consciousness and, thereby, the oneness of all people, all nations, all creation. He realizes then that the seeming differences and contradictions are



Bro. Anandamoy lecturing in the Fairmont Hotel, Dallas, Texas. (See page 49.)

superficial. He sees that unity underlies diversity, and that this unity is the Real because it is unchanging.

Study of the scriptures of the world's great religions reveals a basic theme: God *is*, and He is *One*. They also teach that man is made in God's image: that he is not a corruptible body, but the deathless divine Essence underlying body-consciousness and its identification with the material world. The purpose of religion is to show man how to lift his consciousness above the constant influx of superficial sensory perceptions and inwardly perceive the universal reality: God's consciousness everywhere. The goal of life is to realize the Self, the divine consciousness within; and to unite the individual Self with the universal Self, or God. That is the way to realize your oneness with all that exists. St. Francis of Assisi called not only all human beings his brothers and sisters; he claimed also the birds, animals, flowers, sun, moon, and stars — even the elements of fire and water — as his own. Every saint who has realized unity with God has felt this oneness with all.

Nevertheless, religious teachings and practices do not always reflect the basic truth that all is One. Quarreling exists among various religions and among their denominations, each contending its doctrine and interpretation of scripture to be the only path that leads to heaven. What is more, many apparently are not content to believe that they alone are going to heaven. All others are going to hell!

A Moslem Demonstration of Christian Virtue

During the Crusades thousands of devout Christians invaded the Holy Land to fight the Saracens. Saladin, the leader of the Saracens, was portrayed as the personification of evil. In England, his picture was used to frighten naughty children. They were told, "If you are bad, Saladin, the Devil, will take you away." When King Richard I of England led the Christian army to Palestine, he was stricken with a serious illness not far from Saladin's camp. His physician was helpless. Saladin heard of King Richard's illness and, disguising himself, stole into the Christian camp at night. He went to Richard and ministered to him, for he was not only a great warrior, but was also skilled in the art and science of healing. When Richard recovered, he reflected: "This Saladin, who is supposed to be the incarnation of evil and whose picture is used to frighten wayward children in my country, risked his life entering an enemy camp to save an enemy leader. He is truly living the teachings of Christ."

Later, a great conflict arose between Catholics and Protestants. Each thought that, in loyalty to their Lord, they had to fight and even destroy the other. And what did they fight about? Issues such as transubstantiation: matters of doctrine not even understood by most of those who did the fighting. In our "enlightened" twentieth century the same kinds of dissensions still exist.

As you know, there is a strong ecumenical movement in churches today. They are seeking to unite. Yet discussion usually centers on differences. And what are those differences? Dogma, doctrines, and rituals.

If such differences of opinion and understanding prevail in religious practice and in the interpretation of scripture, how much

greater the possibility of differences in secular matters! Consider the variety of interpretations of law in our courts. Look at the contrasting personal tastes in art and music. A masterpiece to one seems utter rubbish to another. Johann Sebastian Bach is regarded by many as the greatest composer of all time, yet, after his death in 1650, the engraved plates for his "The Art of the Fugue" were sold as junk. His son, Wilhelm Friedemann Bach, peddled some of his works for ten cents a copy. Leipzig butchers wrapped sausages in his manuscripts, and many of his works were forever lost.

We even view our own personal experiences differently at different times. Someone said, "The size of your troubles usually depends on whether they are coming or going!" No two people are created from the same mold. We must allow for countless dissimilarities of expression because people vary in personality, temperament, intellect, and in many more ways. Yet, despite this variety, a harmony and essential unity of understanding can prevail.

"Out of Many, One"

In the Hindu scriptures we find this comparison: In the same tree exist varying parts — the trunk, branches, leaves, blossoms, and so on. They all differ in size, location, shape, color, and function. Yet, underlying their outward diversity of appearance and function, they have a unity of purpose: all work together harmoniously to maintain life in the tree. Similarly, the human body possesses many different parts: the flesh, organs, skeletal structure — each is individual in its location, size, shape, color, and function. These parts do not fight each other because they are different; they form one beautiful, harmonious whole. And so, underlying the manifold expressions of human life is unity of purpose: to live together in harmony for the creation of a peaceful world. Nations, races, and religions must work together as one. *For where there is unity, there is peace.*

No nation is perfect or complete in itself. God has endowed each race with some special aptitude, some unique genius with which to make a distinctive contribution to world civilization. Each race should encourage among its members the perfection of its

native virtues and the emulation of the best attributes of other races, creating a constructive exchange among the nations. Unity in diversity can come only by realizing that it is the one Infinite Consciousness, transcendental and all-pervading in creation, expressing in the magnificent diversity of all forms of life. When we understand what God is, we see that no inherent conflict exists between one religion and another, one nation and another; nor is there a conflict between religion and science, East and West — even between matter and Spirit. We see that matter is Spirit condensed: though different in manifestation, in essence, *one*.

Scriptural Reference to Delusive Nature of Matter

Only by God-realization, knowing through actual experience the Noumenon that underlies all phenomena, can we perceive unity in all things. Paramahansa Yogananda said in *Autobiography of a Yogi*: “Western science already has discovered that a ‘magic’ of unreality pervades atomic ‘matter.’ However, it is not only Nature, but man also (in his mortal aspect) who is subject to *maya*, the principle of relativity, contrast, duality, inversion, oppositional states. It should not be imagined that the truth about *maya* was understood only by the *rishis* (sages of ancient India). The Old Testament prophets called *maya* by the name of Satan (lit., in Hebrew, ‘the adversary’). The Greek Testament, as an equivalent for Satan, uses *diabolus* or devil. . . . The sole function of Satan or *Maya* is to attempt to divert man from Spirit to matter, from Reality to unreality.”

Consequently, the whole purpose of religion and the implicit goal of life is to find the One Verity, the One Reality underlying His countless individualized forms and manifestations. Paramahansaji wrote: “Christ describes *maya* picturesquely as a devil, a murderer, and a liar. ‘He [the devil] was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth; because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it’ (*John 8:44*). ‘For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil’ (*I John 3:8*).” This means that the experience of the Christ Con-

consciousness within us effortlessly destroys the illusion of *maya*. The task of religion is to show us how to go within and find this universal consciousness which is the sole fiber of all creation.

Yoga ("union") is a universal science of religion that shows the direct way to switch the consciousness from outer phenomena to the Noumenon, or God, within. Perfection in Yoga confirms that the various religions are essentially one because the ultimate experience of God is essentially one. The greatest commandment is: "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment" (*Mark 12:30*). The Bhagavad-Gita (8:9,10) says: "He who thinketh upon the . . . Omniscient, the All-Ruler . . . with unshaken mind, fixed in devotion, by the power of yoga drawing together his life-breath (*prana*) in the center of the two eyebrows, he goeth to this Spirit, supreme, divine."

Yoga: the Way to Self-realization

Yoga prescribes the practical methods for actually realizing scriptural truths. It explains *how* to love God with "all thy strength" by rechanneling *prana*, or life energy, away from outer perceptions and concentrating it at the seat of the soul's superconsciousness, in the center of the forehead. Jesus referred to this center when he said: "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light" (*Matthew 6:22*). The phrase, "thy whole body shall be full of light" refers to the inner perception of the universal Light that pervades not only our bodies, but all creation. Paramahansaji called it "the Light behind the atoms."

How many people have read these passages in the Bible, yet did not fathom their meaning for lack of direct perception of their truth? Paramahansaji gave not only the explanation, but the scientific yogic methods by which, in meditation, one can interiorize his attention, perceive that Light, and, ultimately, become one with it. That light is an aspect, a manifestation, of God. The Bible says: "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all" (*I John 1:5*). This declares the universality of His consciousness, in which no duality,

no "darkness," exists. When we are attuned to God, we realize the universal harmony; we are in tune with the whole world. This is what Job meant when he said: "For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field: and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee" (*Job 5:23*).

Peace Must Begin in the Heart of Each Man

Do we want peace so that we can sit back and live a comfortable, easy, and selfish life? Or do we want peace in order to fully devote our powers to attainment of the highest spiritual achievements and to the service of others? It is important that we clarify our objective, for if we are not aiming for spiritual perfection and service to others, we are blindly sowing the seeds of war. For war evolves from selfishness and ignorance of universal spiritual laws. This world is a school in which we are placed to work out our salvation from ignorance and suffering and to strive toward perfection. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (*Matthew 5:48*). Perfection lies only in union with God.

Therefore, if we want peace in the world we must start with ourselves; for what we feel within we will inevitably express to others. The situation is comparable to that of the body. When the individual cells are healthy, the organs are healthy. If the organs are healthy, the whole body is well. Similarly, if the people are filled with peace and harmony, communities are harmonious, countries seek to serve each other, and the world is at peace. Though we may think that we, as individuals, can contribute little to world peace, let us remember the words of Swami Sri Yukteswar in *Autobiography of a Yogi*: "The deeper the Self-realization of a man, the more he influences the whole universe by his subtle spiritual vibrations." Let us not wait, believing that only world leaders have the responsibility of creating peace among nations. Let us follow in the footsteps of Christ, Krishna, and the Great Ones who have shown the way to Self-realization and true, lasting peace.

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" (*Matthew 5:9*).

Book Review



HYMNS FROM THE VEDAS: By Abinash Chandra Bose. Cloth, 387 pp., 1966. Order from Asia Publishing House, 118 E. 59th St., New York, N.Y. 10022.

Abinash Chandra Bose, a scholar from Bengal specializing in mysticism, has presented us with a new translation of part of the *Vedas*, ancient India's sacred scriptures dating back to at least 2000 B.C.* In contrast to most scholars in the East as well as in the West, who have concentrated on Vedic grammar and syntax, Abinash Chandra Bose has been primarily concerned with the spiritual and poetic significance of the *Vedas*. Undoubtedly, the author himself is of a deeply spiritual nature. He has selected the most representative hymns from the *Rigveda*, the *Yajurveda*, the *Samaveda*, and the *Atharvaveda*, placing the original Sanskrit text alongside the English translation. The various hymns have been grouped in accordance with their contents under the headings of *Jnana Yoga* (The Path of Knowledge), *Karma Yoga* (The Path of Action), *Bhakti Yoga* (The Path of Devotion), *Vibhuti Yoga* (The Path of Splendor), and *Raja Yoga* (The Path of Mysticism). A special chapter is devoted to Vedic hymns dealing with death. The last section of the book contains the "Hymn to the Earth" from the *Artharvaveda*.

*Scholars can only conjecture the date of the "hoary *Vedas*." In *Autobiography of a Yogi*, Paramahansa Yogananda has written: "The *rishis*, literally 'seers,' were the authors of the *Vedas* in an indeterminable antiquity." (*Editor's Note*)

In an introductory essay Abinash Chandra Bose discusses the way of life during the Vedic age. He emphasizes the fact that *satya* (truth) and *rita* (moral law) were the guiding principles of Vedic man. *Satya* and *rita* in turn were dependent upon the practice of *tapas* (spiritual fire, spiritual discipline, austerities), for through *tapas* alone could one attain an understanding of ultimate reality. Therefore the *rishis* (seers, sages), who were responsible for the composition of the *Vedas*,* engaged in *tapas*. Since Vedic man valued discipline, he insisted upon *brahmacharya* (self-restraint) as the basis for the education of all young men. In the ashram (monastery) of their *acharya* (teacher) they were prepared for a life of high thinking and simple living to draw out their spiritual qualities. After they had been firmly grounded in spirituality they were ready for the next phase of life, *Garhapatya* (householder),† during which they devoted themselves to rearing a family and serving their society. For the proper functioning of society, men were divided into four groups: *Brahmins* (spiritual guides), *Kshatriyas* (protectors and secular rulers), *Vaisyas* (traders and farmers),

*“In the immense literature of India, the *Vedas* (root *vid*, to know) are the only texts to which no author is ascribed. The *Rig Veda* (X,90,9) assigns a divine origin to the hymns and tells us (III,39,2) they have come down from “ancient times,” re clothed in new language. Divinely revealed from age to age to the *rishis*, ‘seers,’ the *Vedas* are said to possess *nityatva*, ‘timeless finality.’

“The *Vedas* were a revelation by sound, ‘directly heard’ (*shruti*) by the *rishis*. It is essentially a literature of chant and recitation. For millenniums, therefore, the 100,000 couplets of the *Vedas* were not written down, but were orally transmitted by *Brahmin* priests. Paper and stone alike are subject to the obliterating effects of time. The *Vedas* have persisted down the ages because the *rishis* understood the superiority of mind over matter as the proper means of transmittal. What can excel the ‘tablets of the heart’?

“By observing the particular order (*anupurvi*) in which the Vedic words occur, and with the aid of phonological rules for combinations of sounds (*sandhi*) and for the relation of letters (*sanatana*), and by proving in certain mathematical ways the accuracy of the memorized texts, the *Brahmins* have uniquely preserved, from a dim antiquity, the original purity of the *Vedas*. Each syllable (*akshara*) of a Vedic word is endowed with significance and efficacy.” — “*Autobiography of a Yogi*, p. 77n.

† Following the householder stage, some embarked upon the path of renunciation. The four stages of life, i.e., *brahmacharya*, *garhastha* (or *garhapatya*), *vana-prastha* (forest hermit), and *sannyasin* (wandering religious renunciant) came about in the post-Vedic era.

and *Sudras* (laborers). The state was run by the cooperative efforts of *Brahmins* and *Kshatriyas*. While the *Brahmins* interpreted *rita* and conducted religious rituals, the *Kshatriyas* defended the state against hostile neighbors, enforced *rita* and attended to the administration. Although *Brahmins* and *Kshatriyas* occupied leadership positions, all four social groups were considered sacred. Personal qualifications determined to which social group one belonged. Obviously, the rigid discriminatory caste regulations usually associated with Hinduism had not yet come into being and upward mobility was possible. Similarly, women were held in high regard at that time, in contrast to conditions prevailing in post-Vedic India. Jointly with their husbands they ruled the household. Shortly after marriage they were expected to address the *Vidatha* (religious assembly). In general, mutual consideration and harmony were ideals of family life:

Let son be loyal to father
and of one mind with his mother;
let wife speak to husband words
that are honey-sweet and gentle.
Let not a brother hate a brother,
nor a sister hate a sister;
unanimous, united in aims,
speak your word with friendliness.

Joint worship centering around the domestic fire cemented family unity:

With sons and daughters by their side,
they enjoy the full span of life,
both decked with ornaments of gold.
Inviting them to joys, offering wealth,
they worship together for immortality,
and united through mutual love,
do honor to the *devas* [gods].
Common be your water store, common your share of food;
I bind you together to a common yoke.
United, gather round the sacrificial fire
like spokes around the nave of a wheel.

It is evident from a study of the Vedic hymns that the average

person enjoyed earthly life and material possessions. He considered this earth to be "the most beloved of all," and he aspired to a long life: "Let not the thread of my life, as I am weaving my song, be torn, nor the measure (*matra*) of my work cut short before the season." To live "a hundred autumns" was his ideal. At the same time, Vedic man was aware of a greater Reality concealed behind the visible universe. And the truly wise were not interested in continued bodily existence but yearned for re-union with the One.

The quest for the One and the praise of the One constitute the *leitmotif* of the *Vedas*. Abinash Chandra Bose convincingly shows that western orientalist were in error when they labeled Vedic religion polytheistic. He also rightfully rejects the hypothesis that the *Vedas* progressed from polytheism to monotheism. The *rishis* over and over again stressed the fact that only One existed:

The One Being sages call by many names
as they speak of Indra, Yama, Matarisvan.
The wise poets with their words shape
One Being in many ways.

The *devas* (gods, shining manifestations) are various aspects of the One and identifiable with each other: "Great is the single godhood of the *devas*." The broad, tolerant attitude, so typical of Hinduism at all times, can already be found in the *Vedas*: "All your names, *devas*! are worthy of homage, worthy of our praise, and worthy of our worship." In presenting hymns devoted to the various *devas*, such as Agni (fire), Vayu (wind), and Ushas (dawn), Bose makes it clear that the Vedic deities were not anthropomorphized gods as were those of the ancient Greeks. The *devas* were immanent as well as transcendent. For example, Varuna (god of *rita*) is thus described:

Both the oceans are the loins of Varuna
and he is merged within the small water-drop . . .
Varuna is of our land, he is of foreign land;
Varuna is divine, he is human.

No images of deities existed in Vedic times. Through the practice of *Vibhuti Yoga*, worshipers were expected to go beyond outward manifestation and to discover the divine glory hidden

behind the glory of nature. The *rishis* seemingly had experiences similar to those of the Christian mystic, Brother Lawrence, who received divine realization while contemplating a tree.

While the *rishis* ecstatically sang the praises of the manifest universe, they emphasized the fact that the physical creation constituted only a fragment of reality, just as only a small portion of an iceberg protrudes above the sea:

Such is His magnificence, but
Purusha (Supreme Being) is greater than this;
all beings are a fourth of Him,
three-fourths — His immortality — lies in heaven.

It is through *Raja Yoga* that one is able to transcend sense experience and to attain a vision of the hidden "three-fourths." And that *rishi* spoke with authority who exclaimed: "I have known this mighty *Purusha*." But the ultimate vision cannot be put into words. Therefore the *Veda* states: "For the finite, the eloquent man; for the infinite, the mute." Where words fail, symbolism attempts to hint at the inexpressible: "Vena (an ancient Indian king) beholds That Being in the cave, in whom all find one single home." Undoubtedly the *rishi* responsible for this cryptic line had that cave in mind to which Paramahansa Yogananda referred when he sang, "Come out of my cave of silence."* Gaining direct knowledge of the ineffable leads to eventual identification with the One: "That (*Purusha*) I am, the Supreme Being, the Eternal *Brahman*." At that stage all fear of death has vanished:

I have known this mighty *Purusha*, who is
refulgent as His sun beyond darkness;
by knowing Him alone one transcends death,
there is no other way to God.

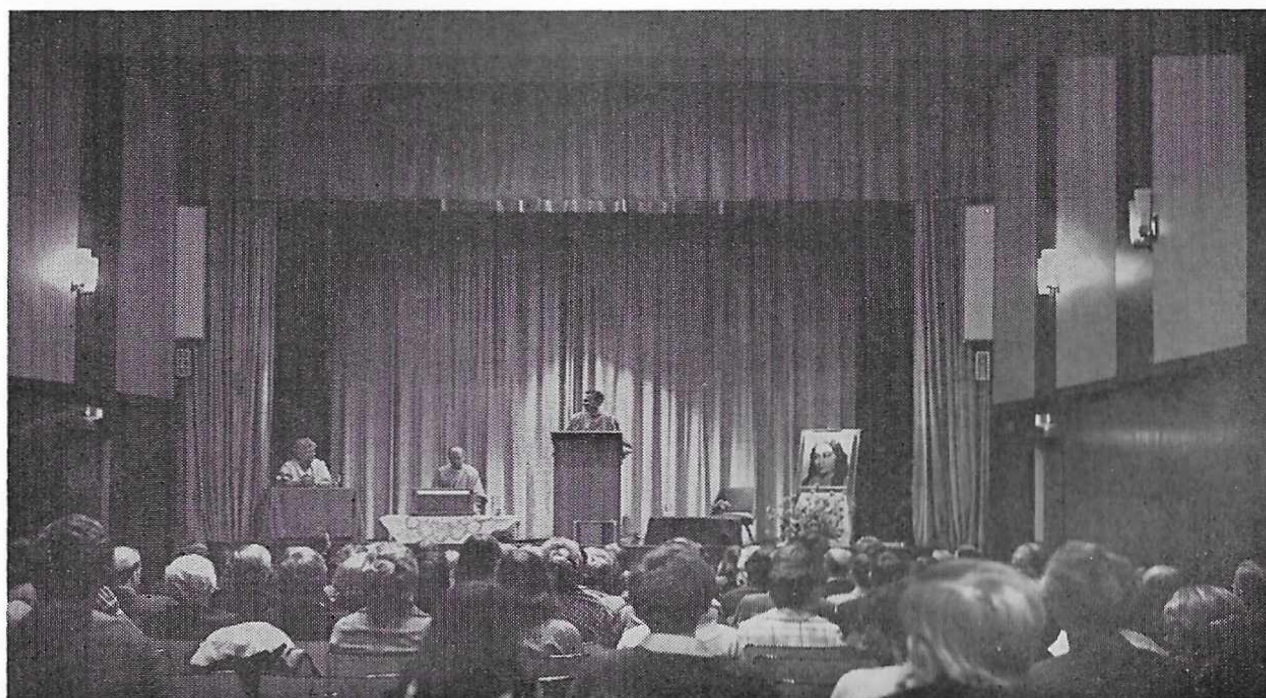
*From "I Give You My Soul Call," in *Cosmic Chants* by Paramahansa Yogananda, p. 43.

Self-Realization News

Tour of European Centers

Brothers Bhaktananda and Abhedananda completed in November a two-month tour of Self-Realization Centers in Birmingham and London, England; The Hague, Netherlands; Berlin, Nuremburg, and Munich, Germany; Geneva, Switzerland; Milan, Palermo, and Rome, Italy; Madrid, Spain; and Paris, France. The two ministers had departed in August via Canadian Pacific Airlines to Amsterdam. Self-Realization Fellowship members received them enthusiastically wherever they went. Although the tour could not include all cities in Europe where Self-Realization Centers are located, many members traveled long distances to attend meetings in the city nearest their home. Classes in the Self-Realization techniques, and *Kriya Yoga* initiations were given in all cities visited; and in most of these there were lectures also, to which members could invite interested friends.

Brothers Bhaktananda (seated) and Abhedananda, Self-Realization Fellowship Center meeting, The Hague, Netherlands, September 9, 1971



"The Science of Yoga" Taught in Southern States

On a speaking tour of the Southland this fall, Brother Anandamoy of international headquarters presented a series of lectures on "The Science of Yoga." Receptive audiences in Dallas, Atlanta, and Miami were taught the basic principles of yoga and right living, and the scientific Self-Realization Fellowship techniques of meditation. In an inspiring ceremony conducted by Brother Anandamoy in each city, qualified Self-Realization students received initiation as *Kriya Yoga* members.

Visitor from Morocco

Dr. Thami Wakili of Morocco visited the Mother Center on October 19th. He was in the United States as a guest of the State Department, in connection with his work with the World Affairs Council. A student of the Self-Realization Fellowship Lessons (in French), Dr. Wakili said that reading the Arabic edition of *Autobiography of a Yogi* had awakened his keen interest in the scientific principles of yoga meditation taught by Paramahansa Yogananda.

Report from India on Memorial Services Conducted for Swami Shyamananda Giri

Devotees of Yogoda Satsanga Society of India gathered at Yogoda Sakha Math, Ranchi, for ten days of religious activities honoring the memory of Swami Shyamananda Giri. The revered disciple of Paramahansa Yogananda died on August 28, 1971. (A tribute to Swami Shyamananda's life and work appeared in the Fall issue of *Self-Realization*.)

Immediately upon receiving news of Swamiji's passing, teachers and members of the Yogoda schools in Ranchi met together to chant sacred verses from the scriptures. In subsequent public meetings, for a period of ten days the *Bhagavad-Gita* was chanted in Sanskrit, with Paramahansa Yogananda's interpretation in English being read after each *sloka* (verse). On August 31st, coincident with the memorial service conducted at international headquarters in Los Angeles, devotees assembled in the *Dhyan Mandir* (medita-

tion temple) for prayer and meditation. In keeping with Indian custom, a *Yajna* (*homa*, sacred fire) ceremony was conducted on September 8th with traditional offerings of *ghee* (clarified butter), grain, water, flowers, and incense; a *bhandara* (commemorative feast) was given for *sadhus* (holy men, seekers of God); and food was distributed to the poor.

Thoughts are universally and not individually rooted; a truth cannot be created, but only perceived. Any erroneous thought of man is a result of an imperfection, large or small, in his discernment. The goal of yoga science is to calm the mind, that without distortion it may hear the infallible counsel of the Inner Voice.

— *Paramahansa Yogananda* in "*Autobiography of a Yogi*"



A view of the Pacific Ocean from Self-Realization Fellowship Ashram Center and Retreat grounds, Encinitas, California. The Retreat, open throughout the year, offers a unique opportunity for rest and spiritual inspiration in a beautiful setting.

Plan a Spiritual Retreat in 1972

Weekend Retreats simulating ashram life are offered to members and friends of Self-Realization Fellowship. These retreats, led by Self-Realization Fellowship ministers, feature a program of devotional services, classes in the teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda, review of meditation techniques, and group meditations. Find inner peace and strength, and lasting spiritual inspiration in the beautiful gardenlike environment of Self-Realization Fellowship Retreat overlooking the Pacific Ocean. From Friday evening through Sunday afternoon put aside the cares and burdens of a busy, demanding schedule and regain the soul awareness that gives meaning to life. The Retreat is open throughout the year. Write for descriptive leaflet. Make reservations in advance by writing or telephoning:

SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP RETREAT

P.O. Box 758, Encinitas, California - Telephone (714) 753-1811

Weekend Retreat Dates for 1972:

MEN	WOMEN	MARRIED COUPLES
Dec 31-Jan 2	Jan 14-16	Jan 28-30
Feb 4-6	Feb 18-20	
Mar 3-5	Mar 17-19	Mar 24-26
	Apr 14-16	Apr 28-30
May 5-7	May 19-21	
Jun 2-4	Jun 9-11	
Jul 14-16		
	Aug 18-20	
Sep 1-3	Sep 15-17	Sep 22-24
Sep 29-Oct 1	Oct 6-8	Oct 27-29
	Oct 13-15	
Nov 3-5	Nov 17-19	
Dec 1-3		

Letters to Self-Realization Fellowship

"I have been a student of the Self-Realization teachings just one year, and my life has completely changed. My health has improved one hundred percent. Mentally I am calm and undisturbed. Spiritually I am becoming more and more aware of myself as a perfect manifestation of God, and have the blessed assurance that I am one with God and lack nothing needed.

"My friends are noticing this change which is taking place, and of course wonder what is bringing it about. When the time is ripe I will tell them." — *C.W., Pasadena, California.*

"Just a few words to let you know how very much I am learning and profiting from the Lessons. I am more and more amazed as time goes by, at the way my questions are being answered. It seems as if the Lessons were written specially for me." — *F.R., New York, New York.*

"I wish I could find words to tell you what my association with Self-Realization Fellowship means to me. When I think of the difference it has made in my life, I am speechless with the wonder of it. My heart — my entire being — is filled with love and deepest gratitude to the Guru. I pray that I can be worthy of the great privilege that has been given me." — *R.C., Los Angeles, California.*

"Through right thinking, and applying the wisdom of the Lessons, my mind and emotions are improved. This has corrected my general health. The amazing thing to me is that I am able to apply the knowledge — my financial worries are greatly relieved, and although I have the same amount of money as before, it seems to go two times farther than before I joined Self-Realization Fellowship. My social life and my homelife are so much happier. Where total failure seemed looming, success has taken a fast hold.

"I had lived so long in a state of unanswered questions to life. Now, out of the air comes the answer to that which I may be pondering at the moment. It always comes in a ray of joy, warmth and peace. I am learning each day how to have as my most devoted friends, God and all the masters.

"The experiences which have been mine, I always believed possible if one had a way of discovering the wisdom which Master has given to us. I am not measuring my progress; I want only to tell you of my growth. I've a very, very long way to go, but I know I shall get there. It is like taking a beautiful, long journey, enjoying the beauty of the scenery while getting to the destination." — *B.D., North Hollywood, California.*

"To me the value of the Self-Realization teaching is priceless in that it meets my longing for an all-comprehensive school of thought and life. I am so happy when I realize the fact that God, through an unexpected channel, introduced me to your organization." — *H.K., Tosu, Saga Ken, Japan.*

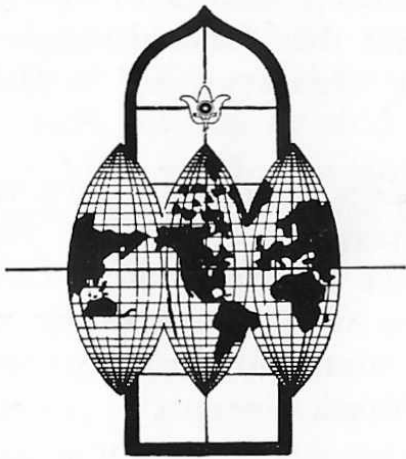
"I receive a wonderful feeling of relaxation. . . joy and love well up in me. I think there has been a steady progress for me in these practices. In looking back at the past year, I see a tremendous change, and I have a feeling of perfect confidence in what I am doing and accomplishing. At first I lacked faith and wondered if the effort were worthwhile. Now I know it is." — *M.S., Portland, Oregon.*

"Anytime I feel the stress of routine making me weary or discouraged, I stop and recharge my body by doing some of the energization exercises. I am then as good as new." — *A.A., Brookfield, Massachusetts.*

"Today I first heard your album of spiritual music, *When Thy Song Flows Through Me*. Your music has an innocent quality that cannot be described in words. It lifts one to realms of loving awareness of Life, and consequently makes one feel very close to all of you." — *S.G., London, England.*

"The Lessons are of vital help to me in all difficulties of life. Am I sad or tired or nervous? — the Lessons give me strength to overcome those feelings through right understanding. How can one be sad about trifles — for are not most things trifles that make people sad — when one realizes that Love is almighty?" — *B.R., Koeduinweg, Netherlands.*

We Thank You



Self-Realization Fellowship

Self-Realization Fellowship gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance received from members and friends. This help is vital to the continuing expansion of activities and services in America, India, and other parts of the world. The work founded by Paramahansa Yogananda in India in 1917 and in America in 1920 is constantly developing and must apply its resources to new projects as well as to long-established activities.

Donors who desire to do so may indicate to which Funds they wish to contribute: Voluntary League (General Fund, India Fund, or Building Fund) or Paramahansa Yogananda Memorial Fund (for the building of a shrine at Mother Center). In response to the extreme need of millions of impoverished refugees in India, Self-Realization Fellowship has provided substantial financial aid — made possible by contributions to the Voluntary League General Fund. Unspecified gifts are used for spreading the Self-Realization Fellowship teachings throughout the world.

Gifts and bequests to Self-Realization Fellowship (a nonprofit religious institution) are deeply appreciated.

Gifts are deductible on U.S.A. income tax returns; bequests are exempt from estate taxes.

3880 San Rafael Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90065

Comments on "Autobiography of a Yogi"

"Like many others before me, I feel that Paramahansa Yogananda's *Autobiography* has revolutionized something deep within me. The pictures and even the printed words give off a holy aura. What a beautiful soul! He has already brought me much closer to God." — *F.S., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.*

"I felt Paramahansa Yogananda to be a very sincere and inspiring person. His goodness shone throughout his writing." — *M.D., Detroit, Michigan.*

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Founded in India by Paramahansa Yogananda in 1917

The Reverend Mother Daya Mata, *President*

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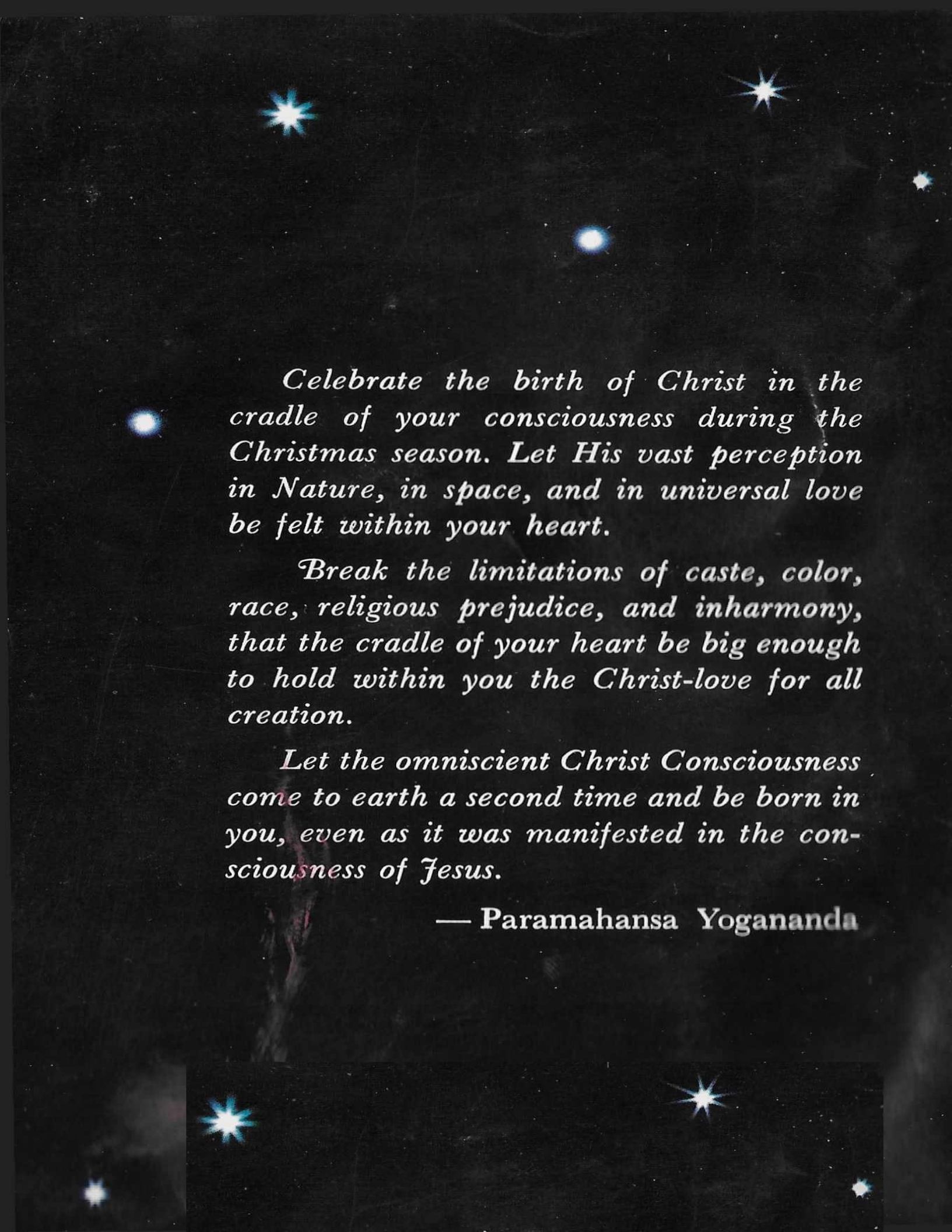
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Cover Photo: The Reverend Mother Daya Mata opens gift during annual Christmas gathering with ashram residents, international headquarters, Los Angeles, California.





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