

## H.H. Śrī Swāmī Krishnānandajī Maharāj

Earlier this week (April 25, 2005) the Āśram observed the 83<sup>rd</sup> birth anniversary of our late revered General Secretary, Pūjya Swāmī Krishnānandajī. As part of the celebrations they released an outstanding new 500-page book by Pūjya Swāmījī called *In the Light of Wisdom*. It consists of a series of 34 lectures given in 1970 to a group of students from the West. They had travelled to India just to be taught the psychology, philosophy, and practice of yoga by Swāmījī.

Swāmī Krishnānandajī was a genius of a rare sort. His grasp of Indian and Vedic scriptures was unique, as was his knowledge of Western philosophy. But he had another quality, equally unique, that was also in the genius category. That was his uncanny intuitive grasp of human nature and psychology, especially from a spiritual point of view. He had the ability to put his finger on exactly where a devotee was blocking themselves from moving forward.

Sometimes he would say to a devotee: “Bring your mind up against the truths of the scriptures. Otherwise you will just keep running around in your own head.” What is the truth of the scriptures? Fundamentally, it is that God alone is and That we are. “But,” the person he was speaking to might protest, “that’s all I have being trying to do. What do you mean I am just running around in my own head?”

What is in our own head is our experience. Perhaps the experience is extremely profound. It may even be the experience of the oneness of all things. Perhaps everything has disappeared and Something alone is, undefinable. But still, no matter how much we may protest, it is in our own head. What is not in our own head? A profound experience that we are That—not the knowledge of it, but the experience that sears itself into our consciousness, so that it can never be forgotten—where the mind becomes no mind and we’re in the world but not of it.

On the other hand, Pūjya Swāmījī would also to say to those of us who are running around in our head: “You owe a duty to whatever seems real to you.” In other words, we can get so interested in the higher realms that we feel that we no longer owe a duty to our body and the world. But that was not Pūjya Swāmījī’s view. As long as you think you have a body, as long as the world has a reality to you, you owe a duty to it. And, therefore,

he also expected devotees to do their duty, not to be lost in their heads and feeling that they were above the normal duties of a human being.

Swāmījī, therefore, was not only a genius in his penetrating understanding of the scriptures and philosophy, but he was a genius of life. He knew how far we had to go; he knew the experience we needed to have; and he was also a genius on how we should live our lives.