

A short review of:

The Gospel of Ramakrishna

ed. by Swami Abhedananda

The realm the Divine Energy

They also say that when these are properly analyzed, they appear as dreams, that the Absolute Brahman alone is the Reality, and all else is unreal. Even eternal Energy (Sakti) is like a dream, unreal; but you may analyze and discriminate of thousands of times, you cannot transcend the realm of Divine Energy (Sakti) unless you have reached the highest state of Samadhi, super consciousness. The very thoughts like: "I am meditating," "I am thinking on the Absolute," are within the realm of Sakti. They are the manifested powers of that Eternal Energy. Therefore the Absolute Brahman and the Eternal Energy are inseparable and one. The existence of one implies that of the other; as fire and its burning power.

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PREFACE

This is the authorized English edition of "*The Gospel of Ramakrishna*". For the first time in the history of the world's Great Saviours, the exact words of the Master were recorded verbatim by one of His devoted disciples. These words were originally spoken in the Bengali language of India. They were taken down in the form of diary notes by a householder disciple, "M." At the request of Sri Ramakrishna's Sannyasin disciples, however, these notes were published at Calcutta during 1902-1903 A.D., in Bengali, in two volumes, entitled "Ramakrishna Kathamrita."

At that time "M" wrote to me letters authorizing me to edit and publish the English translation of his notes, and sent me the manuscript in English which he himself translated, together with a true copy of a personal letter¹ which Swami Vivekananda wrote to him.

At the request of "M" I have edited and remodeled the larger portion of his English manuscript; while the remaining portions I have translated directly from the Bengali edition of his notes. The marginal headings, foot-notes, and index, as well as the division of the Gospel into fourteen chapters, were added by me. I have endeavored to make every word of this edition as literal, simple, and colloquial as possible.

Some repetitions are purposely kept to show how the Master used the same illustrations on different occasions during the course of His eloquent conversations.

The completed work is now offered to the Western World with the sincere hope that the sublime teachings of Sri Ramakrishna may open the spiritual sight of seekers after Truth, and bring peace and freedom to all souls struggling for realization.

Swami Abhedananda

New York,
December 15, 1907.

Footnotes:

No.1: Swami Vivekananda's letter to "M."

(True Copy)

DEHRA DOON, 24th Nov., 1897.

My dear Master Mahasaya:

Many thanks for your second leaflet. It is indeed wonderful. The move is quite original, and never the life of a great teacher was brought before the public untarnished by the writer's mind as you are doing. The language also is beyond all praise. So fresh, so pointed, and withal so plain and easy.

I cannot express in adequate terms how I have enjoyed them. I am really in a transport when I read them. Strange, isn't it? Our teacher and Lord was so original and each one of us will have to be original or nothing. I now understand why none of us attempted his life before. It has been reserved for you, this great work. He is with you evidently. With all love and namaskar.

(Sd.) Vivekananda

P.S. - Socratic dialogues are Plato all over. You are entirely hidden. Moreover, the dramatic part is infinitely beautiful. Everybody likes it - here or in the West.

(Sd.) V.

This letter of Swami Vivekananda shows that the words of the Master were accurately recorded by "M."

INTRODUCTION

The Lord declares:

"Whenever true religion declines and irreligion prevails, I manifest myself and in every age I incarnate to establish spiritual law and to destroy evil." (Bhagavad Gita)

Saviours

India has produced many great spiritual leaders who are recognized and worshipped as Saviours of mankind. The life and character of each of these were as wonderful, superhuman, and divine as were those of the illustrious Son of Man. Each has been like the embodiment of all Divine attributes; each has been the giver of new life to the old spiritual truths, and the generator of that tidal wave of spirituality which has again and again inundated the religious world, surmounting the barriers of superstition and prejudice and carrying the stream of individual souls toward the ocean of Divinity.

The present upheaval of the spiritual tide, the waves of which, traversing nearly half the world, have touched the shores of America, was produced by the Christlike character and Divine personality of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna - revered and worshipped in India to-day as an ideal manifestation of the Divine glory. His life was so extraordinary and unparalleled that within ten years after His departure from earth it aroused the admiration, wonder and reverence not only of all classes of people in His own country, but of many distinguished English and German scholars of the nineteenth century.

Life of Sri Ramakrishna by European Scholars

A short account of the life of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna appeared for the first time in the January number of the "Imperial and Quarterly Review" of 1896 under the title of "A Modern Hindu Saint." It was an able article penned by Prof. C. H. Tawney, who was for many years the professor of Sanskrit in Calcutta University and the distinguished Librarian of India House in London. This article excited the interest of many European scholars, among whom Professor Max Muller showed his appreciation by publishing in the August number of the "Nineteenth Century" of 1896 a short sketch of this Hindu Saint's life entitled "A Real Mahatman." In this celebrated article, which was for some time the subject of most severe criticism both in England and India among many of the Christian missionaries and the Theosophists, the noted Professor showed the difference between the imaginary Mahatmas of the Theosophists and the Real Mahatman or the Great Soul of India who had reached God-consciousness and had manifested Divinity in all the actions of His daily life. He gave a brief account of the extraordinary life of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, paying Him the highest tribute of honor and respect that a Christian scholar could give to a Divine manifestation in the so-called heathen land. Later, in 1898, he compiled and published "Ramakrishna, His Life and Sayings," collecting more facts of His life and the sayings of this exemplary character perfumed with Divine personality.

Ramakrishna a real Mahatman

Professor Max Muller was deeply impressed by the originality of this great Saint and real Mahatman, who was not brought up within the precincts of any university and who drew the water of His wisdom neither from any book nor Scripture nor from any ancient prophet but directly from the eternal Fountainhead of all Knowledge and Wisdom. He was also struck by the broad, liberal and absolutely unsectarian spirit which pervades the utterings of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna. Indeed the life and sayings of the Bhagavan have given a death-blow to the sectarian bigotry and fanaticism of the so-called religious world. Whosoever has read His Sayings is impressed with the universality of His spiritual ideals which embraced the ideals of all mankind.

From His childhood Sri Ramakrishna fought against all sectarian doctrines and dogmas, but yet at the same time He showed that all sects and creeds were but the paths which lead sincere and earnest souls to the one universal goal of all religions. Having realized the highest ideal of every religion by following the methods and practices of the various sects and creeds of the world, Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna gave to humanity whatever spiritual experience and realization He had acquired. Every idea which He gave was fresh from above and unadulterated by the product of human intellect, culture or scholastic education. Each step of His life from

babyhood to the last moment was extraordinary. Every stage was like the unfoldment of a chapter of a new scripture especially written out by the Unseen Hand to fit the minds of the East and the West and to fulfil the spiritual needs of the twentieth century.

Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna is not only the greatest saint of modern India but He is the "Real Mahatman." A real Mahatman as described in the Bhagavad Gita (Chapter VII, verse 19) is one who, having realized the Absolute, perceives the Divine Being in all animate and inanimate objects of the universe. His heart and soul never turn away from God. He lives in God-consciousness, and Divine qualities constantly flow through his soul. He cares neither for fame nor power nor worldly prosperity. A true Mahatman has no attachment to His body or to sense-pleasures; He is a living God; He is absolutely free and His inner nature is illumined by the self-effulgent light of Divine wisdom and His heart is overflowing with Divine Love. His soul becomes the playground of the Almighty, His body and mind become the instrument of the Divine will. And Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was such a real Mahatman.

Even in this age when the vast majority of educated people do not believe in the existence of God and of the human soul, when scientific knowledge has turned the minds of students away from the path of spirituality, when sense pleasures and the luxuries of life have become the ideals of earthly existence and human beings have degenerated into money-making machines, we have witnessed with our eyes a Great Soul who is recognized as a Real Mahatman by hundreds and thousands of thoughtful men and women of India, Europe and America. This Great Soul manifested His Divine qualities and lived in God-consciousness at every moment of His earthly career, and to-day thousands of people prostrate before His picture and, worship Him as the latest manifestation of Divinity. Whosoever has heard of His most wonderful life has felt in his soul that Ramakrishna was the perfect Ideal of mankind.

Ramakrishna's influence upon the mind of Scholars

He made His appearance in an obscure part of Bengal where He passed His early boyhood, but His youth and maturity were spent near Calcutta, the capital of British India, as cosmopolitan a city as London, New York, or any other large city of the civilized world and the seat of education, refinement and scientific knowledge. He allowed the sceptical minds of the students and professors of colleges and universities as well as of educated men and women of the world to come in direct touch with the self-effulgent light of Divine wisdom which was shining in its full glory through His childlike, soft, and tender form. Scholars and intelligent people of all classes poured from every quarter to that spot which was sanctified by the presence of the Bhagavan. He was the living example of the spiritual greatness and Divinity which had been manifested by the great Incarnations like Christ, Buddha, Krishna, Rama, Chaitanya² and other Saviours of the world.

We know a number of sceptics and agnostics who had never believed in Christ or Buddha or Krishna as Divine Incarnations, who had never accepted the authority of the Scriptures, but on the contrary had maintained that the lives of Christ and of other Saviours were but exaggerated accounts based upon the imagination of their disciples, anxious to deify their human masters--such sceptics and unbelievers when they met Ramakrishna and watched His superhuman life, were convinced that the lives of Christ, Buddha, Krishna, and other Avatars must have been true and real. The same sceptics, when they beheld His Divine powers, were so deeply impressed with His personality that they prostrated before Him, kissed the dust of His holy feet and realized that He was the Personification of the Sermon on the Mount, the Incarnation of Divinity on earth, and the remanifestation of Christ, Buddha, Krishna, and Chaitanya in one form. All the special qualities and Divine powers that had adorned the wonderful character of each of these great personages were witnessed by them in this uncommon Divine manifestation of the nineteenth century.

Ramakrishna as the Divine Ideal of all Sects

Have we not watched with admiration when the followers of all the great religions of the world recognized in Sri Ramakrishna their Divine Ideals? Have we not seen how Quakers and orthodox Christians knelt and prayed before Him and worshipped Him as the Christ when the Bhagavan went into superconscious communion with the Heavenly Father after hearing the holy name of Jesus of Nazareth? The Mahometan saints who came to see Him, prostrated at His holy feet and recognized in Him the highest Ideal of Islam. The Buddhists regarded Him as Sambuddha, the Enlightened. The followers of Chaitanya, like Vaishnava Charan³ and others, worshipped Him as the second Prophet of Nuddea when Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna occupied

the altar which was reverentially dedicated to Sri Chaitanya by hundreds of devoted Vaishnavas, who always prostrated before that altar and prayed to their Lord Guaranga. The worshippers of Krishna called Him the Incarnation of Krishna. The devotees of the Divine Mother realized that the Mother of the universe was playing through Him; the followers of Shiva declared that Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was their living Deity; while the Sikhs, the faithful votaries of Guru Nanaka⁴ regarded Him as their Holy Master. His followers, seeing all these powers, marvelled at His greatness and believed that His many-sided personality was the living example and the consummation of all the previous Avatars and Divine manifestations. And the truth of this was again and again verified and confirmed by His acts as well as by His own words: "He who was Krishna, Rama, Christ, Buddha, Chaitanya has now become Ramakrishna." Bhagavan was always conscious of this truth and spoke of it before the world as well as before His dearest disciples.

His mission

As His Divine personality was many-sided yet one, so was His great mission. It was to show the underlying unity in the variety of religions and to establish that universal religion of which sectarian religions are each but partial expressions. Like all other Saviours the life of the Bhagavan exemplified His mission. He spent the best part of His life in practising in full the different methods of Yoga. He went through every minute detail of the devotional exercises and different forms of worship ordained by the Scriptures of different nations and practised by the followers of the various sects and creeds of the world. His object in devoting so much time to these practices was to find out whether they had any real value in the path which leads to perfection.

Ramakrishna's mind was always open to Truth. He would not accept anything on second-hand authority. He would not believe in anything because it was written in a book or because it was declared by some great personage. He must know the Truth first hand. Before accepting any statement, He must realize it in His own life and then He would speak of His personal experience to others in order that they might gain benefit from it. For nearly twelve years before He appeared in public or made any disciples Sri Ramakrishna, like a scientific investigator, inquired into the beliefs of the various sects of every religion, followed their methods and performed their rituals and ceremonies with perfect faith and earnest devotion that He might realize the goal which could be reached by each of them. To His great surprise, however, He discovered that He arrived at God-consciousness through each sectarian method. Whenever, furthermore, He desired to follow any particular path, there came to Him a perfected soul of each sect who had realized the Ideal, to direct Him in that path. Everyone of these great saints recognized in Sri Ramakrishna the manifestation of Divine powers, when in a short time He attained to that which they had not been able to acquire during years of austerity, worship and extreme devotion.

Having finished His investigations, He was ready to proclaim His message and give to the world the fruits of His own experience and realization. But unlike other spiritual teachers, He did not go out in search after His disciples and followers. As a fragrant flower does not hunt for bees but waits patiently for the bees to come, so the full-blown flower of spirituality in the form of Sri Ramakrishna waited for His disciples to come to Him in the Temple garden at Dakshineswara on the bank of the Ganges.

When Ramakrishna had attained to the highest ideal of each Yoga and had realized the spiritual oneness with the Absolute Brahman and the Mother of the universe, rumor spread from mouth to mouth that Ramakrishna had reached perfection in this life. People from all quarters began to crowd around Him. Pandits and scholars of every nationality as well as hundreds of devout men and women of all sects came to see Him and listen to His original and wonderful teachings. This was the beginning of His public life as spiritual leader and guide, which continued for nearly sixteen years. During this period He did nothing but help mankind by freely distributing the priceless jewels of spiritual truths which he had earned through such struggle, hardship and austerities.

His spiritual insight

Ramakrishna had a marvellous intellect and keen insight into the true nature of things and events, and using the commonest occurrences of every-day life as illustrations, He succeeded in making the dull minds of worldly people grasp the spiritual depth, beauty and grandeur of His sublime ideals. He poured new life into every word that He uttered so as to touch the soul of His

hearers. People listened with wonder and admiration to His original discourses on the most difficult problems concerning life and death, the nature and origin of the soul, the origin of the universe and our relation to God.

Realization of God

In this age of scientific rationalism Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna has shown to the world how the Lord of the universe can be realized and attained in this life, and no one except Him has ventured to go through all the tests of sceptics and agnostics to prove that He had attained to God-consciousness. Those who have seen Him, lived with Him for years and watched Him by day and by night, have proclaimed before the world that He was the embodiment of the highest spiritual ideals of all nations, and that whoever worships Him with faith and reverence worships the latest manifestation of Divinity.

The Bhagavan proved by His example that wherever there is extreme longing to see God, there is the nearness of the realization of the absolute Truth. His life has given to the world a grand demonstration that even in this age Divinity can be reached and Divine perfection can be acquired by one who is pure, chaste, simple and whose devotion is whole-hearted and whole-souled. We have neither seen nor heard of a character purer, simpler, more chaste, more truthful and more godly than that of this ideal Mahatman. He was like the personification of purity and chastity and the embodiment of truthfulness.

His life was the life of absolute renunciation. Earthly pleasures and comforts meant nothing to Him. The only pleasure, comfort or happiness which He cared for was the blissful state of Samadhi or God-consciousness, when His soul, liberated from the bondage of body and mind, soared high in the infinite space of the Absolute. This Samadhi was a natural state with Ramakrishna. He never had to make a special effort to attain it. We often heard Him say that when He was four years old He went into Samadhi at the sight of the beautiful coloring of a tropical cloud. This realization He always remembered and often described in His conversation. And as He grew older His Samadhi or ecstasy became stronger and deeper.

His Samadhi

In His Samadhi His body would become absolutely motionless, His pulse and heart-beat imperceptible, His eyes would be half open and if anyone pressed His eyeball with the finger, His body would not move or show the least sign of sensation. He would remain in this state sometimes for a few minutes, sometimes for half an hour or an hour, and on one occasion He continued in it for three days and nights. Then He would come down on the plane of sense-consciousness and relate His experiences. He had the power to separate Himself from the cage of the physical organism and to go into this state of Divine communion at His will and stay there as long as He wished. Frequently He told us that He reached such a height in Samadhi that if He had been like an ordinary mortal He could never have returned to His body; that no mortal had ever come back from that kind of Samadhi; and that the Divine Mother gave Him this power to return to this plane simply to help mankind and to establish His mission.

His renunciation

To Him God was father, mother, brother, sister, and everything. He recognized no earthly relations. He never coveted wealth, nor had He any earthly possession. He realized that gold had no more value than earth and became absolutely unattached to riches, understanding the transitoriness of the objects which can be acquired by wealth. He often said that immortality could not be purchased by money, and emphasized by His example the true meaning of the Vedic passage: "Neither by meritorious deed, nor by progeny, nor by wealth, but by renunciation alone the Immortal Truth can be acquired." Renunciation of the attachment to worldly things is the gate to God-consciousness. Christ, Buddha, Chaitanya, Sankaracharya and all other Saviours and spiritual leaders of the world exemplified this by living the life of absolute renunciation. It is very rare to find in this age a perfect ideal of the renunciation of lust and of worldly attachment. Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna practised the ideal of the renunciation of riches to such an extent that He was able to make His body respond involuntarily to the touch of coin by shrinking from it even in sound sleep. We have often seen Him suffer pain when he was obliged to touch a coin of any metal. Who could be a more perfect ideal of renunciation in this age of materialism!

He uplifted womanhood

Sri Ramakrishna taught that every woman, old or young, was the representative of the Divine Mother. He worshipped God as the Mother of the universe and frequently declared that His Divine Mother had shown Him that all women represent Divine Motherhood on earth. For the first time in the religious history of the world was this ideal preached by any Divine Incarnation. And upon this depends the salvation of men and especially of women of all countries from immorality, corruption and such other vices as prevail in a civilized community.

By His living example the Bhagavan established the truth of spiritual marriage on the soul plane even in this age of sensuality. He had a wife whom He always treated with reverence and whom He regarded as the manifestation of His Divine Mother. He never had any sex relation with her or with any woman on the physical plane. His wife, the Blessed Virgin Sarada Devi, is still living like an embodiment of Holy Motherhood with innumerable spiritual children around Her. She in turn has always regarded the Bhagavan as Her Blessed Mother Divine in a human form. Up to the last moment of His earthly career the Bhagavan was absolutely pure, chaste, and a perfect child of His Divine Mother of the universe. Furthermore, Ramakrishna uplifted the ideal of womanhood on the spiritual plane by accepting His first Guru or spiritual instructor in a woman form. No other Saviour or spiritual leader has ever given such an honor to womanhood in the annals of religious history.

His mission

The mission of Bhagavan Sri was to show by His living example how a truly spiritual man, being dead to the world of senses, can live on the spiritual plane of God-consciousness; it was to prove that each individual soul is immortal and potentially Divine. His mission was to establish harmony between religious sects and creeds. For the first time it was absolutely demonstrated by Ramakrishna that all religions are like so many paths leading to the same Goal, that the realization of the same Almighty Being is the highest Ideal of Christianity, Mahometanism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, as well as of all other smaller religions of the world. Sri Ramakrishna's mission was to proclaim the eternal Truth that God is one but has many aspects, and that the same one is worshipped by different nations under various names and forms; that He is personal, impersonal and beyond both; that He is with name and form and yet nameless and formless. His mission was to establish the worship of the Divine Mother and thus to elevate the ideal of womanhood into Divine Motherhood. His mission was to show by His own example that true spirituality can be transmitted and that salvation can be obtained through the grace of a Divine Incarnation. His mission was to declare before the world that psychic powers and the power of healing are obstacles in the path of the attainment of God-consciousness.

His Divine powers

Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna possessed all the Yoga powers but He seldom exercised those powers, especially the power of healing diseases. Moreover, He always prevented His disciples from either seeking or exercising those powers. But one power which we have seen Him frequently exercise was the Divine power to transform the character of a sinner and to lift a worldly soul to the plane of superconsciousness by a single touch. He would take the sins of others upon His own shoulders and would purify them by transmitting His own spirituality and opening the spiritual eyes of His trite followers.

The days of prophecy have passed before our eyes. The manifestations of the Divine powers of One who is worshipped to-day by thousands as the latest Incarnation of Divinity, we have witnessed with our eyes. Blessed are they who have seen Him and touched His holy feet. May the glory of Sri Ramakrishna be felt by all nations of the earth; may His Divine power be manifested in the earnest and sincere souls of His devotees of all countries in all ages to come, is the prayer of His child and servant,

Abhedananda

Footnotes:

No.2: Chaitanya, the Founder of a sect of the Vaishnavas, is regarded in India as the Incarnation of Krishna. He is also known as the "Prophet of Nuddea," for Nuddea (or Navadvipa) in Bengal was his birthplace. His other name is Lord . He was born in 1485 A.D., and was a contemporary of Luther.

No.3:Vaishnava Charan was a great Hindu saint and a true follower of Chaitanya, whom he worshipped as the Ideal Incarnation of Divine Love.

No.4: Guru Nanaka was the founder of the sect known as the [p. 10] Sikhs, or disciples. He was born near Lahore in the Punjab (India) in the year 1469 A.D. and died in 1538 A.D. He was the first of the ten Gurus or spiritual masters among the Sikh people. He is regarded by His followers as a manifestation of Divinity.

From last page

His oneness with all

When He could scarcely speak or swallow any food, the Bhagavan said: I am now speaking and eating through so many mouths. I am the Soul of all individual souls. I have infinite mouths, infinite heads, infinite hands and feet. My pure form is spiritual. It is absolute Existence, Intelligence and Bliss condensed, as it were. It has neither birth nor death, neither sorrow, disease nor suffering. It is immortal and perfect. I see the indivisible Absolute Brahman (Sat-chit-ananda) within me as well as all around me. You are all like my own parts. The Infinite Brahman is manifesting Itself through so many human forms. Human bodies are like pillow-cases of different shapes and various colors, but the cotton wool of the internal Spirit is one. When Jiva (ego) enters into that Spirit and becomes one with it, there is neither pain nor suffering. I am the Infinite Spirit covered by a human skin which has a wound somewhere near the throat. Mind affects the body and is in turn affected by the body. When the body is ill, that illness reacts upon the mind. When one is burned by hot water one says: "This water has burned me," but the truth is that heat burns and not the water. All pain is in the body, all disease is in the body, but the Spirit is above pain and beyond the reach of disease.

Purpose of His illness

My illness is to teach mankind how to think of the Spirit and how to live in God-consciousness even when there is extreme pain in the body; when the body is suffering from the agony of pain and starvation, when there is no remedy within human power, even then the Mother shows that Spirit is the master of the body. My illness is to set an example of absolute mastery of the Spirit over matter in this age of materialism and scepticism. My Divine Mother has brought this illness upon this body to convince the sceptics of the present age that Atman is Divine, that God-consciousness is as true and practical today as it was in the Vedic period, that when one reaches perfection, freedom from all bondage is attained. My Divine Mother has shown through Her child what is meant by the various kinds of Yoga and how people of this age can attain to it. She has also shown that all Scriptures are true, that all religions are like paths which lead to the same common goal of the one Infinite Divinity. All of my religious practices, Yoga practices, devotional exercises have been for the good of others and not for my own good. My Mother has set through this form a living example in this age.

"Whosoever will practise one-sixteenth part of what I have said and done will surely attain to God-consciousness in this life."

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About Swami Abhedananda

He was born on 2 October 1866 as Kaliprasad Chandra in North Calcutta. His father was Rasiklal Chandra and his mother was Nayanantara Devi. In 1884, at the age of 18, while studying for the school final examination, he went to Dakshineswar and met Sri Ramakrishna. Thereafter in April 1885, he left home to be with him, during his final illness, first at Shyampukur and then at Cossipur Garden-house near Calcutta.

After his Master's death in 1886, he plunged into intense sadhana (meditations), by shutting himself up in a room at the Baranagar Math, this gave him the name "Kali Tapaswi" amongst his fellow disciples. After the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna, he formally became a Sanyasi along with Swami Vivekananda and others, and came to be known as "Swami Abhedananda".

For the next ten years, of his life as a monk he travelled extensively throughout India, depending entirely on alms. During this time he met several famous sages like Pavhari Baba, Trailanga Swami and Swami Bhaskaranand. He went to the sources of the Ganga and the Yamuna, and meditated in the Himalayas. He was a forceful orator, prolific writer, yogi and intellectual with devotional fervor.

In 1896, Vivekananda was in London, when he asked Abhedananda to join him, and propagate the message of Vedanta in the West, which he did with great success. He went to USA in 1897, when Vivekananda asked him to take charge of the Vedanta Society in New York, here he preached messages of Vedanta and teachings of his Guru for about 25 years, travelling far and wide to United States, Canada, Mexico, Japan and Hong Kong. Finally, he returned to India in 1921, after attending the Pan-Pacific Education Conference at Honolulu.

In 1922, he crossed the Himalayas on foot and reached Tibet, where he studied Buddhist philosophy and Lamaism. In Hemis Monastery, he discovered a manuscript on the Lost years of Jesus, which has been incorporated in the book *Swami Abhedananda's Journey Into Kashmir & Tibet* published by the 'Ramakrishna Vedanta Math', Kolkata.

He formed the 'Ramakrishna Vedanta Society' in Kolkata in 1923, which is now known as Ramakrishna Vedanta Math. In 1924, he established Ramakrishna Vedanta Math in Darjeeling in West Bengal. In 1927, he started publishing Visvavani, the monthly magazine from 'Ramakrishna Vedanta Society', which he edited from 1927 to 1938, the magazine is published today as well. In 1936, he presided over the Parliament of Religions at the Town Hall, Kolkata, as a part of the Birth Centenary celebrations of Sri Ramakrishna.

He died on 8 September 1939 at Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, he had established at Darjeeling. At the time of his death he was last surviving direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna.

Source: Wikipedia (at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swami_Abhedananda)