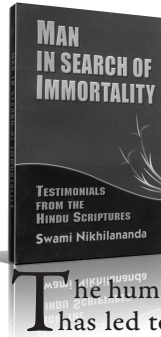


‘When were we separate? We are always together.’ When the great saint Ramana Maharshi says this about Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Swamikal, one gets an idea of the latter’s greatness. One of the great Hindu religious leaders of the last century, the swami’s pure life and depth of scholarship was his greatest message to humankind. The 68th pontiff of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, Kanchipuram, the swami lived a century dedicated to the preservation and propagation of Hindu ideals and practices. The present book is a painstaking labour of love displaying a selection of the swami’s discourses in Tamil, which have been translated into English, edited, and topically arranged. The editor deserves special commendation for this marvellous work which has been culled from a transcript of more than 6,500 pages.

The basic precepts and practices of Hinduism are outlined in the book. Beginning with the concept of religion in general, the swami takes us through the principles of the Vedas. He explains the system of *varnashrama*, caste, and its place in modern society. He also explains the basics of *nyaya*, logic, and elaborates on the importance of the Puranas. Rituals form an integral part of Hinduism, but many modern Hindus are sceptical about their relevance. The swami explains the rationale behind these rituals and classifies them according to the different ashramas, stages of life. Karma as a means to attain peaceful meditation is insightfully described. The swami beautifully relates common ideas of goodness to the concept of dharma. Besides, he dilates on the role of the state in upholding religion. Many miscellaneous utterances of the swami have been given at the end of the book, enhancing the presentation. Elaborate notes, a glossary, and an index make for a comfortable reading.

An Indian edition of the original American book, this volume has an elegant layout design. It is also a pictorial biography, as different phases of the swami’s life have been captured in high quality photographs. There is a scholarly introduction by Arvind Sharma of McGill University. This book is a treasure for students of Hinduism and admirers of the swami.

Swami Narasimhananda
Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata



**Man in Search of Immortality:
Testimonials from
the Hindu Scriptures**

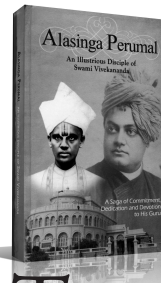
Swami Nikhilananda

Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Chennai 600 004. Website: www.chennaiamath.org. 2009. viii + 152 pp. ₹ 35.

The human quest, in order to conquer death, has led to the development of religion, philosophy, humanities, and also science. Death humbles humanity and mocks at all its illusions of power. Everything crumbles before this inevitability. This quest taken up by great sages and saints finally led to the discovery of the true human nature as being beyond the body and the mind. The renowned author traces the concept of immortality in various religions and gives numerous testimonials from the Hindu scriptures. In five articles Swami Nikhilananda shows the eternal nature of the soul, its three states, and the real nature of Being.

Lucidly written, the book brings modern motifs to elucidate traditional beliefs. An appendix of quotations from the Bhagavadgita and Upanishads and an index adds to its value. The book helps one assert that death is but a phase in the jiva’s path and that one becomes immortal by ultimately knowing the Atman. An Indian imprint of the original American edition, this slim volume is helpful to all spiritual seekers and students of Indian philosophy.

Swami Narasimhananda
Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata



**Alasinga Perumal:
An Illustrious Disciple
of Swami Vivekananda**

Swami Sunirmalananda

Ramakrishna Math. 2012. 342 pp. ₹ 75.

There are many types of perfections, but Swami Vivekananda is a rare form of an all-round perfection. Swamiji is also a prototype of a perfect human. A self-effacing and dedicated servitor who identifies with such a spiritual colossus is also rare. This was Alasinga Perumal, the brightest star among the super disciples and devotees of