

# Satsang

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## Fire Temple at New Freedom, Pennsylvania

On Sunday, March 31, a fire temple was inaugurated at the residence of Danny and Ravanna Farwell of New Freedom, Pa. A large-sized pot, made of copper, forms the altar. The copper pot was the handiwork of Ron Gochrach. Ravanna and Danny, along with John Brown and Jimmy Hackley, set up the altar. The fire was prepared from sandalwood brought by Vasant from Parama Dham (House of Almighty Father), Madison, Virginia. John Brown kindled the fire and performed the purification by Vyahruti Mantras. A meditation session followed.

At sunset group Agnihotra, led by Danny, was performed. It was followed by a short meditation session. A Satsang meeting was later held in their living room.

Excerpts from Vasant's discourse at New Freedom:

"Purification of the atmosphere is the patent need of the hour. Useful atmosphere surrounding the earth is a thin layer. Pollution has contaminated this layer. Atmospheric pollution leads to a disturbance in the energy cycle and thus affects the mind. We have to reverse the process to undo the effect on the mind. Agnihotra is the smallest process of purification of the atmosphere which could be practised by any householder.

"Practice of Agnihotra is an antidote to the effect of pollution on the mind. This is the negative aspect. Agnihotra reduces the grip of desires which encrust the mind. This is the positive aspect. This is the primary step to establish ourselves in everlasting Love which manifests as "Not my will but Thy Will be done."

"In the fire temple, the altar consists of the fire pot which represents the material aid to purification. You do not worship the fire pot nor the fire in it. Fire is the agency of fumigation to undo the effect of pathogenic bacteria; it is the agency of purification of the mind. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." (Matthew 5:8)

"In the temple we should always observe silence. No spoken word should be uttered. Before anyone enters the place let him cast out his anger if any.

"Before we part let us make one resolution. When you go to bed, see that you are not angry with anyone. If you think someone has alienated you, give him all your love. Let not anger seep through your sleep. Alienation and anger harm the nervous system and the mind. If you practice this you will notice that slowly you emerge as a changed person.

"Let this fire temple be a place of refuge for anyone who cares to know. Let the Christian or the Jew become a more righteous Christian or Jew by the process of purification that the temple symbolizes."

\* \* \* \* \*

### Boys and Girls Together

by  
Sally

The battle of the sexes does not exist for men and women on the spiritual path. To be on the spiritual path is to seek the truth about our nature, what we are, why we are born in human bodies and how we can go beyond all dualities---pleasure-pain, happy-sad, positive-negative, and so forth. Any person, man or woman, who seeks to attain this understanding and realization of his true nature, soon realizes that all human beings, regardless of color, race, nationality and sex are born of the same spirit and are similarly motivated either consciously or unconsciously, toward the goal of Self realization... the ultimate in peace and bliss. Thus, it should be the aim of all human relationships, and especially those between men and women, to achieve understanding and harmony. The first concern of any relationship should be to see each other as children of God or manifestations of one Spirit and to encourage in each other a spirit of common striving rather than a competitive or discriminating spirit. Jesus said, "Unless ye be like little children, ye shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven." Little children love and accept others in a spirit of total innocence. Like brothers and sisters, they share and grow together with no thought of differences in color, race or sex.

When little children grow up, they experience the desire, both biological and social, to interact with the opposite sex. At this point, the personal values instilled by their family upbringing, as well as the values and beliefs of the society in which they live, become very important. If their lives are properly orientated towards Self-realization through self discipline and right living, this aspect of their lives -- that of relating to the opposite sex--will naturally be directed as are all other aspects, toward this goal. For some, complete celibacy is the answer--choosing to sublimate all desire and personal love into love of mankind as a whole and finding complete fulfillment in the love of the Master or Almighty. For the celibate, all are seen variously

as mothers and sisters, fathers and brothers. This path of celibacy, though its rewards are great, is a very difficult one which is not generally suited for the people. It should be undertaken only after careful consideration and preferably under the guidance of a spiritual teacher. For most, then, the answer lies in taking up the life of a householder. In this way, the desire for a lifelong companion, a sexual partner and a family can be fulfilled, and if perceived in its proper perspective, can contribute to the attainment of Self realization or the "Kingdom of Heaven within." The same happiness and understanding can be achieved in either the celibate or the householder's life.

The way of the householder, though in many ways easier than that of the celibate, is harder because it requires a deep understanding of the relative importance of roles and desires in marriage. First of all, the selection of a mate must be made. Of course, the nature and means of this selection vary widely from one culture to another. So let us just say that ideally the mate is chosen for a compatible and fulfilling relationship on all levels and most important on the spiritual level. Those whose common bond is to seek truth and light are most apt to have harmony in all aspects of their marriage. As Jesus said, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

There is an idea that for any given person a perfect "soul mate" of the opposite sex can be found. There is only one "Soul mate" and that One is the same for all of us, male or female. It may be that certain persons call themselves soul mates because of their harmonious striving toward this goal and in that sense we are all soul mates to a greater or lesser degree. What is important, though, is the realization of the Divine within one's own mate, however great or small the manifestation of this divinity. Regardless of one's feelings toward his mate, his constant effort should be to strengthen his understanding of his higher or Divine nature. As Vivekananda said in his poem, Song of the Sannyasin, "No man who thinks of woman as his wife can ever perfect be."

Regardless of whether one believes in God or not, an attitude of detachment and objectivity towards one's partner and family is desirable. As with all desires, one's desire for the love of a spouse and family must be viewed in the proper perspective and channelled towards achieving bliss. Since bliss does not reside in anything temporal, one should realize that his happiness at any given moment is not dependent on the actions of those near and dear to him. As with all elements of manifestation, human relationships are subject to changes beyond our control. These changes, whether they are the physical loss of the loved one or the loved one's refusal to maintain the relationship as we want it, should not be the cause of our unhappiness. By maintaining an attitude of love with detachment we not only ensure our own happiness, but we are able to love and give in the true spirit of love. True love is not binding or conditional. It allows those we love complete freedom to act and to be as they wish, to manifest their potential as they see fit. Loving acceptance of others, especially those closest to us, does far more to encourage their striving for Self realization than does our rejection of them.

Today in all societies throughout the world, there exists confusion about the roles that men and women should play in regard to each other. Both sexes are rejecting the stereotyped notions about men and women and their respective roles. Though the close examination of this question has brought about some greater understanding between men and women of their inherent roles, yet it has left many people uncertain and confused about what is right for them. As in love and marriage, in all relationships between men and women, the same guiding rule applies. Social and economic roles should be determined in a spirit of cooperation and realization of our common goals. Most important is that we respect and appreciate one another in our various capacities and capabilities as human beings.

In a society that has long existed on the basis of male superiority, it is especially difficult for men and women to accept the great common ground that exists between them. The greater participation of women in professional areas and the growing concept of a "unisex" culture, have left both men and women feeling insecure and confused. Thus, many cling to old and inaccurate concepts of the roles of men and women because of their inability to understand and accept the unifying traits that exist between the sexes. For those on the spiritual path, however, these social and economic changes in thinking concerning roles are perfectly natural. Like a child, the spiritual aspirant realizes the common abilities, feelings, ideas, etc., that exist between men and women and seeks only the fulfillment of his own life and the well-being of others by utilizing this understanding

Certainly, there are differences between men and women. But these differences serve only to complement the basic nature which they have in common. The different roles which emerge in a householder's life such as "housewife" and "breadwinner" should be understood and appreciated as necessary and complementary. Most important, they are chosen freely by a man and a woman as the most efficient and fulfilling means of satisfying their physical and emotional needs. There is no reason why a man and a woman shouldn't adopt any type of role they choose in relation to one another. Certainly men are capable of taking care of children and women are capable of working at a job. The choice of roles is dependent only on a couple's desire to achieve the fulfillment of their own needs so that while existing on a mundane level with respect, cooperation and appreciation, they may attain together the highest goal of true happiness and Self realization.

\* \* \* \* \*

ONLY YOU, MASTER  
by Elwood

All I want is You, Master.  
Take me. Make me Thy humble servant.  
Let Thy Will be my will;  
Let Thy knowledge, wisdom and understanding  
be my knowledge, wisdom and understanding.

Take me, oh Master, and be the moving force  
in everything I undertake to do.  
Let it be Thy Will.  
Let Thy Presence be the sole motivation for  
every action I perform.  
Let me become so engrossed, so immersed in  
You, that I become Your very identity.

Accept my life, oh Master, and make it an  
instrument in Your hands, to use as You see fit.  
Let Thy Will be done.  
Let me not have any thought which does not  
flow from Thee;  
Let me not be kept from reaching You by the  
weight of my desires;  
But make Love, total Divine Love, the forerunner of  
every service that I render.

For blessed is the man whom the Lord does test.  
Test me, oh Master,  
Test me until Thou art satisfied,  
Put me to task.

Let Thy Will be my will, oh Master.  
Let Thy Love be my love.  
Let Thy overwhelming Presence dominate  
every action I take.  
Let every fibre of my being vibrate with  
the current of Thy Grace.

For Thou art around me, everywhere  
around me;  
Nowhere can I look where Thou art not.  
So let me travel no longer in this world of shadows,  
But snatch me from its darkness and the  
death it brings,  
To take me by Thy Hand  
And lead me to Life Eternal.

SAPTA SHLOKI

(Seven Verses)

Verse 3

अस्पष्टं च कदा स्पष्टम्  
तत्त्वज्ञानविशेषतम् ।  
अन्यत्र लभ्यते किन्तु  
प्रामाण्यं परमं श्रुतिः ॥

Aspashtam cha kada spashtam  
Tatwa jnyana wiwechanum  
Anyatra labhyate kintu  
Pramanam paramam shrutih

Purport: THAT (Almighty Power) is described, sometimes clearly, sometimes not so clearly, at various places. However, Vedas is the standard reference.

COMMENTARY ON VERSE 3 by Vasant: ..... (Continued - 4)

Despite material plenty, man is not happy. This is the question faced by mankind at the crossroads of destiny. In the previous issues, we noted the viewpoints of materialism and humanism. We saw how neither was capable of taking us out of the impasse.

Let us now consider the viewpoint of pragmatism. Pragmatism has one foot firmly entrenched in materialism while the other tries to make a detour. In materialism the intellect is the supreme guide. When the materialist realizes the limitations of human reason he is up against a blank wall. The materialist realizes that it is not possible to acquire total knowledge about the infinite universe and its functioning through the means of human intellect. Then he is left with only one option. "That which is beyond the intellect is not true." Here the pragmatist comes to his aid.

Man needs faith to live by. Intellect may not generate faith. Therefore faith is the outcome of our actions. Faith and action act and react. Almighty God may not exist. However, if faith in the concept of the Almighty results in peace and bliss for humankind, let us have that faith. Let us not get wrapped up in the cluster of dry philosophies spun from an ivory tower. Let us also not get enamoured of the so-called Reality that lies beyond the senses. Let us be practical and try to make the world around us happy. This is pragmatism.

We judge pragmatism by its results. A pragmatic society transforms itself readily into a pleasure hunting society. The things that bring about pleasurable sensations are deemed good, irrespective of the damage done to the mind, environment and the evolutionary cycle. Every aspect of social behaviour is judged by this criterion. This leads to rivalry, greed, violence and prejudice. All these tend to take us away from Love which is the highest of human values

Pragmatism is action oriented. A pragmatic society acquires its own tempo and all sense of values are drowned in this clamour. The tempo of life becomes too fast and shortcircuits deep thinking.

There is no common set of values in a pragmatic society. If a junta of people succeed in forcing their opinions upon others at the point of a bayonet, pragmatism has no answer to their plight. Might is right if it succeeds, although temporarily. This leads to anarchy in all fields of human behaviour, political, social and religious. This mounts up tension and people are further thrown away from Love which is the highest of human values.

In a pragmatic society, every event is judged in terms of dollars. Erudition, position, status can be purchased only by dollars. There is no end to the methods you may adopt to acquire your dollars. What matters most is you get them.

It is easy enough to understand that theft, parasitism, and exploitation can thrive in a society only when the persons who operate the trade are few. A pragmatic society buttresses wrong notions of values by stressing pleasurism and dollarism. Thus, pragmatism results in the same impasse into which materialism has pushed us.

Man needs both faith and intellect to steer clear of misery. A philosophy that negates the soul can never land us into happiness. We have to turn the searchlight towards the science of the soul. Vedas (knowledge) is the standard reference for the science of the soul.

It is sometimes stated that if you evolve a political system wherein a man dare not commit a wrong, it will lead to the establishment of peace on earth. It is sometimes stated that "that government is the best which governs the least." Various systems of government have been evolved to suit geopolitical compulsions. Enough evidence is at hand to surmise that neither the spread of education nor the alternate systems of government can usher in peace and bliss although they may help to clear the obstacles to a limited extent. In any utopia, socialism or democracy, the equal opportunity has proved to be a mirage. The reason is clear enough. You may perhaps grant equality of opportunity to all but the capacity to benefit from that opportunity varies with each individual. Hence, in a society of equals, some are more equal than others. Even when all the comforts of the body have been granted, the macabre dance of the mind does not disappear. More often than not it accentuates. Contentment is not the logical by-product of an egalitarian society when the spiritual dimension is missing.

The evolution of man can be telescoped only through the proper execution of his free will. Education with limited notions may lead us to a downward path. No system of political economy can truly cater to the deepfelt urge in man to seek harmony and communion with the Reality that pervades all manifestation. When the physicist says that "The universe appears more like a big thought than a big machine," the

basis of materialism has collapsed. If there is Divine intelligence that guides creation, and if saints and prophets throughout milleniums have experienced communion with it, then it may well be to our advantage to know more about it. If human reason is found to be insufficient to grasp the Divine content, how can man ever get to it? These are some of the queries that arise when we are confronted with the fundamental task of finding a solution to our problem. The problem is despite material plenty, man is not happy. Vedas, the fund of knowledge revealed at creation, is the standard reference to explore the avenues of search in the missing dimension, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and all other things shall be added unto you."

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Excerpts from Satsang Correspondence:

"I have been doing Agnihotra and following the Fivefold Path for over a month now. There is a lot of very pure energy there and it has helped me so much. I would love to learn more. I know a few of your people, but there is only so much they can teach me. If I could be sent Satsang, I would appreciate it.

"Is there any chance I could receive information on my obtaining lessons or maybe meeting Vasant? I hope I am not asking too much."

B. , Baltimore

"I have had the joy and privelege of introducing Agnihotra to the following persons and would deeply appreciate it if you would include them on your mailing list." (List enclosed)

D.G. , Jackson, Mississippi

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