

SATSANG

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Biweekly

Satsang Meeting in Philadelphia:

Philadelphia is a Greek word meaning "brotherly love". In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the first Satsang meeting was held on November 10th at Yvonne's residence. Elwood introduced Vasant to a group of sincere listeners. He said, "What you are going to hear from Vasant today is far superior to what you have read in books or heard anywhere. In fact, today you are being introduced to total Kriya Yoga: the yoga of saints. The yoga of saints is much higher than the yoga you have heard of before. Kriya Yoga begins with Agnihotra, the purification process through the agency of fire. At sunset, you will be shown how to perform Agnihotra, the practice of which brings about purification of Prana, the Life energy, and the mind. This is the first aspect of the Fivefold Path which Vasant has brought to us at the Divine command of the highest of all Gurus." Vasant explained the message of the Fivefold Path of the Vedas and its contemporary relevance.

Exerpts from Vasant's discourse at Satsang meeting

"Let us not waste our time over philosophical discussion or metaphysical speculations. Let us confine ourselves to what happens here and now. The law of Karma, the law of "reap as you sow", is inviolable. This leads to cycles of birth and rebirth. But one may ask, what do I know about rebirth? Well, the law of "reap as you sow" is going to function in spite of our opinions about it. We might, however, restrict ourselves to what we experience here and now. We all know that we pass through the cycles of happiness and unhappiness. The illusory pleasure which we term as happiness is followed by unhappiness. An ounce of pleasure is followed by a pound of unhappiness, if not more. Can we not rid ourselves of this cycle? Everyone is trying to do that. Where do things go wrong then? The answer is simple. We attempt to seek happiness through the avenues of the senses. We try to deepen and widen the avenues. We try to proliferate them. Happiness, however, eludes us all the time. We become exhausted in the process. To recuperate, people take to alcohol, drugs, and sex. We are then further dragged down in the process. We pile up tension and anxiety in the process while our sense organs get enfeebled. So long as we seek happiness through the senses, we are bound to despair. On the day we are born as humans, we have been granted the wherewithal to be happy. "Thou art perfect, as my Father in Heaven is perfect." Search for happiness within you and the search will end."

"All movements at reformation of man will fail so long as the inner man is not touched. Any structure of reforms that is superimposed without effecting changes in the inner man is bound to collapse like a house built on sand. If you wish to do away with misery, go to the root cause. Misery is merely the symptom of disease. The disease is bondage to the body and sense objects. Learn to take a detached view of events that take place. Be non-attached to the fruit of your actions. Then you will notice that all tension and anxiety disappears. The fruit of your action depends upon various factors that you are not able to cognize. By non-attachment to the fruit of action, you only lessen your burden."

All around us, we find people crazy after the dollar, liquor and sex. They feel the more they have of these things, the happier they will become. The moments of pleasure they derive from this indulgence exact a heavy toll of the mind and are paid for in terms of heavy doses of psychiatry. Every indulgence comes with a price tag attached to it. Pay now or pay a little later, but pay you must.

A. a start, try to live moderately. Do not go to extremes. You enjoy more by renunciation. This is difficult to grasp by intellect, but easier to comprehend by experience. The spiritual path is a journey in the Kingdom of Bliss. To appreciate subtle things, you have to become subtle. To become subtle, you have to rid yourselves of the cobwebs of desires that are wrapped around the intellect. The Fivefold Path grants you the material and mental aids to enter into the Kingdom of Bliss. Learn to lead a happy and contented life on this planet. Do not indulge in the luxury of daydreaming about a post-dated heaven. "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you"; you have only to cognize it.

Try to live in harmony with the energy cycle of creation. Agnihotra does that for you. You will find that anxiety, tension and worry will become things of the past. Examine your daily conduct against the parameter of TAPA (self discipline, austerity, purification). It is difficult to put ourselves into a strait jacket. Hence, seek the company of holy persons, people who do not seek any material benefit from you; people who would like to share their happiness with you. Happiness is contagious. Let us start an epidemic".

First Fire Temple Consecrated.

September 22nd is the day of the autumnal equinox, when the sun crosses the equator. On that day, this year, the first Fire Temple was consecrated at Param Dham, Madison, Virginia, heralding a new era. The fire was prepared from sandalwood specially blessed for the occasion by AVATAR Param Sadguru (Highest among the Perfect Masters) Shri Gajanan Maharaj of Akkalkot, India. In his revelation, he was referred to as the Son of Man. His message is, "Follow the Fivefold Path. Let the Christian, Jew, Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim become a more righteous Christian, Jew, Hindu, Buddhist or Muslim."

Purification of the atmosphere leads to purification of PRANA (Life energy). This, in turn, aids purification of the mind. All our happiness depends upon changing the reactions of the mind to the conditions of the phenomenal world. Change the attitudes of the mind, and you become happy. The process of purification of mind through the agency of fire is the material aid given to mankind through the first revelation, Vedas. The word 'Vedas', in Sanskrit, means 'knowledge', and there is no label attached to it. The science of bioenergy is still in the kindergarten stage. The future scientist will be able to delve deeper into the modus operandi of Pranic energy affecting the attitudes of the mind. The scientist of today assumes that the electromagnetic wave is the subtlest manifestation of energy cycle that he can cognize within the limitations of experimental method. Vedic wisdom describes subtler tiers of energy manifestation and gives methods to harness that energy for our happy living. Yajnya (purification through the agency of fire) is the first aspect of the Fivefold Path. Agnihotra is the smallest form of Yajnya, which any householder can commence with great benefit to the whole family. The Vedas state that the effect of pathogenic bacteria on the human system is eliminated by practice of Yajnya. Plant life receives nourishment by the substance which is formed in Yajnya atmosphere. The absorption of solar is facilitated and the water resources are cleansed by Yajnya atmosphere. The change in the atmospheric content induces change in the Pranic content, and since Prana and mind are like abverse and reverse of the same coin, the beneficial change is transposed to the realm of the mind. Anxiety, tension and worry are reduced, and the intellect acquires freedom, as the clouding is reduced. This sets in motion a virtuous cycle that leads to joy. Some of these things shall find a place in the textbooks of future science. The scientist is on the threshold of a breakthrough which holds in it's womb fantastic discoveries based on ancient wisdom. Science fiction of today will look pale as the facts are made known.

The knowledge about the purification through the agency of fire was universal in ancient days. Later on, this came to be called 'fire worship'. It is the scientific material aid towards the purification of mind. In fact, in ancient times, this was the only mode of worship known to man. In the polluted atmosphere in which we live, this mode of worship needs to be revived. Spiritual practice begins with reducing the carnal aspect of the mind. The Bible states that 'Carnal mind is enmity against God'. Agnihotra is the material aid to eliminate the carnality of the mind.

Worship through fire was given the highest place in ancient traditions. Fire was held in high esteem. Especially in the Bible, all the appearances of Divinities take place only through the medium of fire. Fire was the medium of communication with the Celestial Beings.

"And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. And he looked and, behold, the bush burnt with fire and the bush was not consumed.

(Exodus 3-2)

"Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice and the wood ... and when all the people say it, they fell on their faces and they said, the Lord, He is God, the Lord, He is God".

(I Kings 18-38,39)

"And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush."

(Acts 7-30)

"Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offerings and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house."

(II Chronicles 7-1)

"And David built there an altar unto the Lord and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings and called upon the Lord; and he answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt offerings."

(I Chronicles 21-26)

"And ye said, Behold, the Lord our God hath showed us his glory and his greatness and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire, we have seen this day that God doth talk with man and he liveth."

(Deuteronomy 5-24)

Yajnya, in later days, was corrupted by offerings of flesh and blood into fire. Such offerings deteriorated the atmospheric content and brought misery to the people. The time is now ripe to go back to the scientific techniques of purification given through the Bedas to bring into alignment the disturbed energy cycle of our planet. Resuscitation of Yajnya atmosphere is the patent need of the hour. All places of worship should practice fire purification to bring about changes in the atmospheric content, since it leads to beneficial results in the realm of the mind. Setting up of Fire Temples is one way of this resuscitation.

PARAM DHAM (The House of Almighty Father) at Madison, Virginia, witnessed the setting up of the first Fire Temple. The altar is a special pot made of copper, which was blessed by the Son of Man and personally handed over to Vasant during his short sojourn to India this year. The Son of Man blessed FIVE sandalwood pieces by touching them, and the same were handed over to Vasant. At the inauguration, these pieces were offered to fire which was prepared from sandalwood shavings, also blessed by the touch of the Son of Man, the offerings were accompanied by MANTRAS. The Fire Temple recognizes no sects and makes no distinction between any of the Divine messengers that graced our planet by their manifestations. All the messengers carry the same message. Almighty is One.

and his message is one. In the days of scientific inquiry, nothing less will be tolerated.

"To those who believe in God and His Apostles
And make no distinction between any of the Apostles
We shall soon give their due rewards.
For God is oft Forgiving and most Merciful"

(Quran IV-152)

The First Fire Temple sets a new pattern for purification. The message was given at the time of creation. We have to make use of the revealed knowledge to amplify this material aid towards purification. This can become the universal mode of worship. Let fire purificatory rite precede every service that is offered in temples, churches, mosques and synagogues. Atmospheric purification clears the way for better absorption of the message of the Bible, Quran, Dhammapada or the Bhagavat Geeta.

The Fivefold Path will bring peoples of the world together in their supreme endeavor to enter "The Kingdom of Heaven which is within you." The Divine has willed it, and His Will be done. The Fire Temple is merely an occasion, an instrument.

Siddhartha Goutama, the Buddha, on YAJNYA (Purification through the agency of fire)

"The righteous never attend Yajnyas wherein the goat, sheep, cow or other animals are slaughtered as offerings to fire. The righteous attend Yajnyas which are approved; wherein no goat, sheep, cow or any other animal is slaughtered as offering to fire. The wise should perform such Yajnyas, as it is highly rewarding; it blesseth the Yajamaria (performer) and brings no evil to him. Such a Yajnya adds to prosperity and the DE DEVATAS are pleased."

(Samyutta Nikaya 1-76)

Note: DEVATA connotes the presiding entity which forms part of the Hierarchy that governs various tiers of energy manifestation.

The following is a quotation from a famous Indian epic.

"Agni (Fire) is the Lord of the universe and it is not facile to express in words the prowess of Fire. Its motion embraces all and is all pervading. Agni abides in the hearts of all creatures and is more potent than Shankara. Now you trace this lustrous consumer of offerings. Then God will grant all your boons."

(Mahabharat - Anu 85-17, 18)

May the message of YAJNYA (Purification of mind through the agency of fire) spread to all corners of the globe.

YOGA ASANAS (Physical Postures)

When Hatha Yoga was first introduced, the preceptor remarked 'Rajayogaya Hatha Vidya Upadis' yate'' (for the sake of Raja Yoga, you are introduced to Hatha Yoga). Thus, Raja Yoga was the aim, Hatha Yoga the means.

Raja Yoga aims at eliminating or reducing the factors that cause disturbance to the mind. Inhibiting the outgoing tendencies of the mind is Yoga. The capering frolic of the mind has to be curbed. Psychology recognizes the intimate connection between the body and the mind. Raja Yoga is based on controlling the mind by strengthening the will. When this direct practice became difficult, Hatha Yoga was introduced. Hatha Yoga postures are, thus, aimed at bringing about the elimination of bodily factors that disturb the mind. If we cultivate the habit of fixing the physical body in a particular position for a long duration, the disturbance to the mind is reduced.

In ancient days, before any Yoga posture could be taught, the student had to practice YAMA and NIYAMA. Abstinence from violence, falsehood, incontinence, acquisitive tendencies, wrongful exploitation for material benefits constitute YAMA. Contentment, purity, self discipline, self study and surrender to Divine Will constitute NIYAMA. After this basic preparation, the student was introduced to Yoga postures.

ASANA, in Sanskrit, means seat or posture. YOGA ASANAS are techniques for vitalization of certain muscular groups and strengthening them. This is a step to escalate evolution. The chief aim is to prevent the flow of mind energy which is drained off in numerous haphazard bracing efforts we make to correct the faulty spinal position. With minimal energy expenditure, efficient level of physical performance is thus maintained. Yoga postures bring relaxation in predetermined areas. The energy thus conserved needs to be utilized for focussing inwardly the outgoing tendencies of the mind. This is the point of rendezvous between Hatha Yoga and Raja Yoga. On the physical level, one is enabled to feel the flow of nerve energy through the contracted muscular areas. To make the body tranquil in straight spinal position is the modus operandi of most Asanas. This has a beneficial effect on the nervous system. The tendency of the muscles to atrophy due to poor movements is arrested, resulting in vigorous health. Our way of sitting, standing or walking becomes agile and graceful. The ability of the body to maintain relaxed equipoise is transposed automatically to the realm of the mind. Environmental discomforts then no more disturb the adept in Asanas.

Many of the Yoga physical postures affect the endocrine system beneficially and thus promote health, if practiced with proper discipline. They also contribute to the harmonious flow of nerve energy. Hatha Yoga states that changes in consciousness come about by rekindling certain dormant force that lies within each human frame. This is termed KUNDALINI. In Hatha Yoga, the emphasis is laid on cultivating a strong and agile body that facilitates the flow of KUNDALINI through the spine. In Raja Yoga, the same is achieved by strengthening the Will.

YOGA SUTRAS, (Aphorisms) of Patanjali state that Asana should be steady and comfortable. Sitting in any Asana becomes uncomfortable for the beginner, and his mind is distracted. With sufficient practice, however, one achieves this steadiness and the discomfort disappears. If the discomfort persists, then we can surmise that we are not doing the Asana correctly, and the matter should be referred to an expert.

When the conscious effort is slackened in maintaining an Asana, we may say that steadiness is achieved. With sufficient practice, the relaxation in effort is achieved, and the conscious mind is relieved of the burden.

After mastering the basic PADMASANA, the Lotus pose or the Half Lotus pose, we learn to concentrate the mind on the flow of PRANA (Life force) within the physical organism. When we do this, we experience an influx of dormant energy.

Patanjali states that, as a result of practicing steady and comfortable Asana for sufficient duration, we acquire freedom from the 'pairs of opposites'. The pairs of opposites manifest on the physical, as well as the mental level. Heat and cold, humidity and dryness, joy and sorrow are some of the pairs of opposites. These dualities constantly keep the mind outwardly orientated as conditions change. It is the nature of circumstances to change, and we are constantly at their mercy. Practice of Asanas relieves us from the sway of these dualities and makes the mind tranquil. Control over the constant modifications of the mind enables us to pinpoint mind energy and divert it toward the higher endeavor of self realization.

Mastery over the Lotus Pose leads to harmonious movements of breath. This is the preparation for the next important task of PRANAYAMA. Pranayama is control over PRANA, the manifestation of Life energy within the physical organism. Control over the physical body and Prana brings about the regeneration of the latent forces and makes them potent. This is expressed in the form of strong will power. The rekindled power needs to be utilized for fruitful purposes and should not be frittered away in trivialities. This is the reason why the student has to undergo a severe discipline of YAMA and NIYAMA, as mentioned above, before he is declared fit to proceed on the path of Hatha Yoga.

Kriya Yoga is a way of life. It grants all the benefits of Hatha Yoga and can achieve the same result and even better, by taking material aids handed down to us through Vedic wisdom. Kriya Yoga starts with AGNIHOTRA, the smallest form of purification through the agency of fire. The aim is to curb the outgoing tendencies of the mind. The Fivefold Path covers Kriya Yoga.

We shall elaborate on a few important Asanas that one need practice, health permitting. Asanas are, after all, only the means to an end and the aim is mind. The subject of Asanas should always be viewed in the context of the overall aim. In the next issue, we shall deal with PADMASANA, the Lotus Pose.

Practice AGNIHOTRA for purification of the atmosphere.

Practice DAAN (Sharing of assets in a spirit of humility) for generating non-attachment.

Perform TAPA (Self discipline, austerities, purification) for fruition of thy affirmations.

Perform KARMA (meritorious deeds) for self purification.

Perform SWADHYAYA (Self study) for liberation.

This is the Fivefold Path. Start the spiritual discipline today. The span of life will not be extended. What is given unto you is to utilize wisely every moment of your existence. Let us engage ourselves in meritorious deeds without expectation of reward in the form of name and fame. We live only in the present moment. The past is no more. The future is yet to be. You work only in the present. Do not waste the precious moment over trivia.

A link will be given to you by the Divine Will when you start practicing the above. You will be a more righteous Christian, Jew, Buddhist, Muslim, Hindu; whatever be your religious label. Christ consciousness, which is the unfoldment of the Divine within you, will be experienced. Even a little effort in this direction will bring a trainload of benefits. Do not lose a single day of your precious life. Do not postpone happiness. Be happy here and now.

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