

SATSANG

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Twice Monthly

SATSANG MEETING IN NEW JERSEY

Satsang meeting was held at Cyril's residence at Riverton, N. J. The discourse was followed by a question and answer session.

Excerpts from Vasant's discourses in November:

"Examine carefully what has been told to you today. Examine it by all possible means available to you. Thereafter you come to your own conclusions whether you wish to follow the spiritual discipline. Unless you feel the necessity to take the step, it will not benefit you. It might turn into mere intellectualization. Even in worldly matters, you do not exert unless you feel the need for it. More so in this high endeavour of Self realisation.

The yearning for the search is called the second birth. Three things are indeed rare. Human birth, yearning for Self realisation, and meeting the proper teacher. This is the age-old path of spiritual progress.

Once you decide to follow the path, you must do so in all earnest. You must take the steps involved with proper discipline. You must tread the steps with total faith. In spiritual discipline faith becomes an aspect of intellect.

If someone gives you a genuine million dollar note and you think it is counterfeit, you are not going to use it. We are not used to getting things free. The highest things in life are always free. They are yours for the asking if you know how to ask. 'Knock and it shall open. Ask and it shall be given'. Wherever there is a true seeker, the teacher appears.

The human mind has been conditioned by subtle ramifications. You go to a public park and would like to sit on a bench. There you see a signboard, 'Wet Paint'. You are tempted to verify with your fingertips whether the paint is really wet. If someone tells you that an astronaut has been to Mars and returned after a week's vacation, you do not feel the necessity of verification. You immediately believe. If you take a few gold pieces on a platter and try to sell them on the streets at a dollar apiece, nobody is going to buy them from you. 'There must be some snag,' people will say. Such is the human mind.

The Fivefold Path has been unrolled before you as a package deal. It takes care of you as and where you are. It is difficult to imagine that the path of Self-realisation is so simple. Things are simple. We make them difficult by our way of thinking. We have to unlearn many things that we may have learned. 'Unless ye be like a little child, ye shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven'. By dropping the vestures of vanity, we imbibe childlike simplicity.

The Fivefold Path is simple enough to understand. The word "understand" implies standing under. This means humility. True understanding can come only to the humble. The opaque screen of ego has to be rent asunder for the light of true knowledge to simmer through.

"For higher knowledge you have to meet a teacher, a Guru with offerings to the fire in hand." (Mundakopanishad 1-2-12)

Offerings to fire indicate purification of mind and PRANA, (life force) through the agency of fire. This implies surrender to His will.

"Destiny is going to exact its toll from you in any case. Destiny is the resultant of accumulated Karma (action) which has been performed by execution of your free will in the past. If you now execute your free will properly and start treading the Fivefold Path, immediately you acquire the strength to bear the pangs of destiny. Any action done with intensity brings forth immediate fruit. For such an action you need not wait very long for reaping what you have sown. Therefore, perform good Karma with devotion to the Almighty Father. The intensity of your devotion will wipe out the effects of past Karma. This is the meaning when we say, 'The Lord is merciful.' You then transcend the effect of destiny."

Someday, you have to start the journey in earnest. Then why not today? Every setting sun bites off a chunk from the span of life. 'Even if you have to walk a thousand miles, you have to take the first step.' The Royal Highway of the Fivefold Path is laid bare before you. You have to take the first step and keep walking. You will be surprised how Grace manifests within you, and you get the strength to continue the journey. Remember the aim of the Fivefold Path is to make you a better Christian, Jew, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu or whatever be the religious label you carry."

"The mother utters the word 'table' and points to a table. The child then looks at the thing and understands that it is a table. When things get a little abstract, the child is confused. When it comes to the adverbs of time, the child is not able to grasp quickly. He does not grasp the meaning of 'yesterday' and 'tomorrow' as easily as 'table'. Hence, sometimes you find children uttering funny things like 'Dad will come yesterday'. We are also ignorant as this child when we come to learn about Soul, Spirit, Almighty. But there is a big difference. We do not possess the child-like innocence. We are much infatuated with bloated ego. We have to get back to the child-like qualities if we ever want to know about matters spiritual."

"Higher knowledge cannot come from books. The 'quickenings impulse' has to come from a 'living teacher. The teacher imprints his words with total devotion, total love and the effect is carried."

PADMASANA (LOTUS POSE)

Padmasana is the king of all asanas. Padma in Sanskrit means Lotus. The lotus takes birth in a pond of water, but if you spill water on the lotus leaf it will not stick to it. It will roll down. The lesson is, "Be in the world but not of the world." The lotus pose is the key pose for higher Rajayoga techniques. It is ideal for Pranayama. Pranayama means control over PRANA, the life force. This is achieved through the manipulation of breath. Prana and mind are like obverse and reverse of the same coin. Hence, control over Prana leads to control over mind. Thus, the lotus pose is a material aid to bring harmony. It clarifies the thought process. It promotes psychosomatic equilibrium and aids concentration.



Place your right foot on the left thigh and left foot on the right thigh. The heels touch the lower portion of the stomach. The spine is held erect.

In the Lotus Pose we lock the legs over the hips and knee joints. Thus, larger blood supply is forced into the abdomen and the upper part of the body. Practice of this pose gives the tranquilizing effect.

The Lotus Pose becomes difficult if you are not used to sitting cross-legged. Therefore, try the cross-legged posture first. Sit with ankles crossed and heels drawn in. The wrists rest on the knees. The spine is kept erect. It does not matter if the knees are raised much from the floor level in the beginning.

Then try the Half Lotus Pose. Extend both legs. Fold the left leg and place the heel as far in as you can. Fold the right foot and place it on the left thigh. Keep the spine erect. Bring the right knee as close to the floor as you can. Place wrists on the knees. After holding this position for some time, reverse the legs. Practise the Half Lotus till your knees come close to the ground.

To make the body supple for the practise of the Lotus Pose, the following three limbering exercises will help.

Exercise One: Sit with legs extended. Keep the spine erect. Place palms on the floor near the buttocks with fingers pointing away from the body. Keeping the heels on the ground, lift the right knee up and back down rapidly letting the calf and back of the leg hit against the floor. As the right knee backs down, the left knee goes up, and as you lift the right knee again, the left knee goes down. Increase the speed of this exercise, alternating quickly between the right and the left legs.

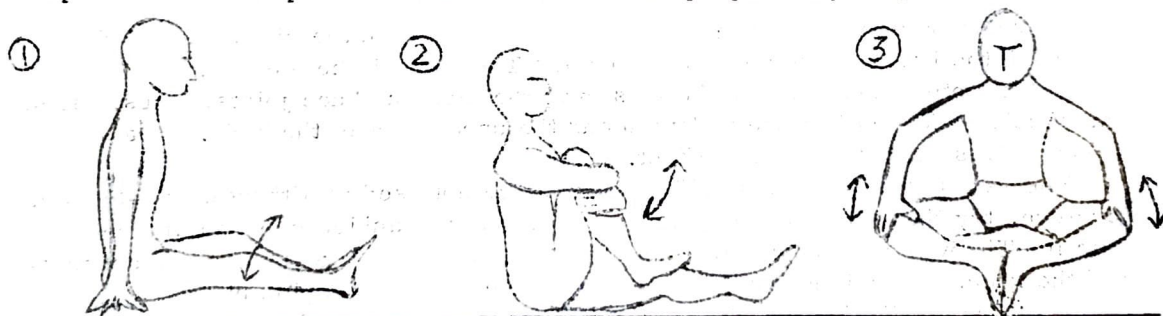
Exercise Two: Sit in the same position as in exercise one. Take the right knee up as close to the chest as possible. Wrap your arms around the folded knee, hugging it tightly to your chest. Rapidly begin to kick the lower part of the leg against the back of the thigh, letting the calf and the heel hit against it. The sole of the foot does not hit the floor. Repeat this kicking about 10 times. The left leg remains extended on the floor, and the back of the left knee touches the floor during the exercise. Practise the same way with the left leg.

Exercise Three: Sit in the same way as in exercise one. Fold both legs so that the soles of both the feet touch one another. Place your hands on the knees and push them down as far as possible, and let them come back up again. Repeat a few times. Keep the spine erect during the exercise.

All three limbering exercises may be discarded when you are able to sit in the Half Lotus. They are meant to make the body supple and ready for the Lotus Pose.

Master the Half Lotus before you go into the Full Lotus.

Sitting in the Lotus or Half Lotus with eyes half closed looking to the lower tip of the nose helps concentration. This is the preparatory stage for meditation.



For information about KRIYA YOGA classes write to the editor at the following address:

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Call Area Code 202 291-5145

SAPTASHLOKI
(THE SEVEN VERSES)

Verse 2.

किं सकर्म किमध्यात्मं यदि विज्ञातुमर्हति।
सर्वं शास्त्रेषु ग्रंथेषु प्रमाणं परमं श्रुतिः॥ २॥

Kim Satkarma kim adhyatmam

Yadi vijnyatumarhati

Sarva shastreshu grantheshu

Pramanam paramam shrutih

Purport: What is good Karma? What is the science of the soul? If you really wish to know, Shruti (Vedas) is the standard reference.

COMMENTARY ON THE ABOVE BY VASANT:

The physical sciences are descriptive sciences, and the pure physicist is not expected to be an applied scientist. Interdependence between pure science and applied science is granted, but the two can run their gamut separately. In the science of the soul, this distinction disappears. In fact, it is not possible to make such a distinction. The science of the soul is empirical. It has to be experienced to know it. This experience comes from beyond the intellect. Hence, it is not opinion but intuitive knowledge.

The science of the soul and its experience go together. Any person who derives his knowledge about the soul from books or the written word may be termed ignorant. Religion is realization and not sermon mongering. The science of the soul is the science of bliss. Anyone who has experienced bliss is the scientist in this realm. Whatever he utters becomes science. Ethics, aesthetics, logic stand on a different level from the physical sciences in the sense that they are normative. When the question of norm is involved, other factors come in. However, the attainment of bliss is the highest endeavor for the human species, and this is the highest norm. Hence, it stands far above the rest.

Anyone who cares to think knows that unless he tries to probe the inner depths of the soul, he will not be at peace. One may try to disregard this inner urge by engaging in various pursuits that distract the mind, but one cannot establish himself in the state of happiness until he carries the search inwards. We have to carry our own cross. You cannot ride to the Kingdom of Bliss on someone else's back. You do receive help from the Guru in making this journey into unknown lands. However, you have to take the first step and keep on walking. It is equally true that you cannot take the last step on your own. Only a liberated soul ushers you into it. This is the Divine plan from time immemorial.

Technology has evolved multifarious avenues to engage us in sense pursuits. The pursuits may be grossly sensuous, intellectual or aesthetic. Unless we decide to disengage ourselves from this total immersement of distractions and carry the search inwards, we shall never be happy. In the light of our intellect, we begin the search. By doing meritorious deeds without attachment to the fruit thereof, by following TAPA (austerity, self discipline, purification), our intellect is unclouded. The light of intellect sharpens, and the latent faculty of intuition becomes operative. Then we always do Satkarma. The doubt disappears. This leads to soul vision. This, in a nutshell, is the Science of the Soul.

We are living in a world where dollar, liquor, dope and sex are the things that people hanker after. Why should then ~~one~~ look into the Seven Verses which charter the Fivefold Path? Let us take a closer look.

You run after the dollar because you need material means to live without misery or pain. Money is only the means to avoid misery as you see it. If you succeed in piling up more dollars than you really need, they cease to become means for your progress. You become more and more attached to them. Then it is dollar for dollar's sake. This acts as a hindrance. The second aspect of the Fivefold Path is DAAN (Sharing assets in a spirit of humility). This brings about nonattachment. Your obstacles to happy living are eliminated. Your search for the inward journey to the soul is accelerated.

You run after satisfaction of desires. The mind is tantalized and is constantly seeking gratification. One desire begets another. If the desire is not satisfied, if it is thwarted, you get angry. If it is satisfied, you get a few moments of relief. You think that the happy state has come due to the gratification of the desire. Actually, it is the eradication of the desire that has unburdened the mind, and you feel relieved. The gratified desire begets several others, and it becomes utterly impossible to be happy by merely running after desires. You become exhausted in the process, while the mind and intellect get thickly wrapped up in the coils of desires. Thus, it could be seen that it is just not possible to land into bliss on the wings of desire. Herein lies the inevitability of the Fivefold Path which was given through the first revelation, VEDAS. This is Eternal Religion. All the messengers of God reiterated the same Eternal Religion whenever they manifested on our planet. There is no difference in the message. The language varies to suit the occasion. The message is purification, nonattachment, Tapa, good Karma and Self study. This is the Fivefold Path of the Vedas.

One may agree that sensuous desires burden the mind and make us unhappy. One may then ask, "Why not take to music, arts, literature, sculpture? Why not find bliss through these normative sciences?" Science of the Soul is normative, but, since bliss is the highest norm, it stands in a category far above all the other normative sciences. Other normative sciences may give contentment which is more refined, but they cannot land you in the land of bliss where bliss is not followed by any negative attitudes. The science of the soul grants us total freedom from dualities. All our actions are designed to make us happy, not miserable. Eternal happiness is the aim. The highest norm is subtle, unconditional and universal. Self realization, liberation from the bondage of desires, name and fame, freedom from the dualities of body and mind bring about the state of eternal happiness that is bliss.

Soul vision is the highest achievement of human existence, and, thus, the science of the soul is the highest among all sciences.

What we call value in life needs to be experienced. Soul experience dawns only when one becomes totally attuned to the soul. It is everlasting bliss, indestructible joy. Where joy is, fear ceases to be. Worry is the offspring of fear. Hence, to drive out all worry from your life, turn to the science of the soul.

SHRUTI means that which was heard by the seers. Vedas are called Shruti. They are the first revelation. The science of the soul is treated in all its aspects in the Vedas. It is thus the standard reference. (To be continued)

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 or fame. We live only in the present moment. The past is no more. The future is yet to be. Do not waste the precious moments in trivia.

A link will be given to you by the Divine will when you start practising the above. You will be a more righteous Christian, Jew, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, whatever be your formal religious label.

Kriya Yoga will be taught to all earnest seekers. For further information write to the following:

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Father