

Satsang

Vol. I No. 21

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Twice Monthly

Place: Dundalk Community College, Maryland

Ron Gochrach writes:

At the request of Mrs. Lenore Lynch, I went to Dundalk Community College on March 6 to give a talk on the Fivefold Path with particular reference to diet and vegetarianism. The talk was scheduled to begin at 7:30 p.m., while sunset on that day was at 7:09 p.m. Accompanied by Barry Battista, I reached Dundalk just a few minutes before sunset. On such occasions I carry my Agnihotra pot and materials with me. I parked my car in the parking lot and Barry and myself performed Agnihotra in the car. After meditating for a few minutes, we proceeded to Lenore's classroom. Lenore teaches at Dundalk.

To our surprise, we smelled Agnihotra smoke as we approached the door of the classroom. Lenore had taken advantage of the Agnihotra timing and had performed the same in her class before the students. Lenore is a devoted teacher.

Someone asked the question, "What is an Ashram?" as they had heard the word in one of Lenore's talks on the Fivefold Path. I explained the best I could. Then I emphasized the benefits of Agnihotra and the Fivefold Path to the students. It is necessary to create an atmosphere that is conducive to spiritual growth. It is of the utmost importance that we establish ourselves in a purified environment if we are to make progress on the spiritual path. Agnihotra creates this environment. It overcomes negativity and gives us the strength to utilize our power of discrimination to choose the right action under all circumstances. Agnihotra gives us a foundation; it gives us something we can get our hands on. One may read a book about oranges but until you taste one, you won't know what an orange really is. Similarly, you have to experience Agnihotra to understand it.

Turning to diet, I explained the subject in the context of Tapa and Karma, the third and fourth pathways of the Fivefold Path. Vegetarianism is part of Yoga life. You reap what you sow. If you cause misery, pain and suffering to another creature, your reward is to receive the same. Moses stated "Thou shalt not kill." This has a much broader interpretation that just non-killing of humans. We must not harm or kill any creature.

Flesh is not a part of man's natural diet. Man does not have the protruding canines of the carnivore. His teeth are not designed to tear and rend flesh. His digestive tract is not suited for that purpose. The act of killing is repulsive to the senses and the intellect. How many of you would want a hamburger if you had to take and kill the animal personally? By shining the light of Tapa on your habits and by practising Swadyaya, self-study, you come to realise the true import of the command of Moses.

I talked to two classes on the same day. Many students showed interest in Agnihotra and I was asked to come again some time.

Henry Haney writes:

"Through the Grace of the Avatar, I have found that Agnihotra and the Five-fold Path have brought me the priceless gift of clear vision to attain and live the life beautiful of non-attachment and total surrender to God's Will. In being given this gift of clear vision I have been able to cultivate the understanding of the profound statement "Not my will but Thy Will be done." Within this statement lies the key to total surrender. I have thus come to learn and accept the ups and downs of life. Through the Fivefold Path I have been able to stay awake to the Reality of God Consciousness."

SURVIVAL - EXISTENCE

The heavens are here, so are the seas,
to serve mankind's spiritual and physical needs.

Does he heed the Grace of Master to insure
a peaceful existence?

If not, where does that leave him?

To the doldrums of negativity, disgust and disease,
which pollutes the prana and the mind,

But total surrender to the Divine

Will alleviate the miseries of mankind.

-Doris H. Taylor

SAPTA SHLOKI
(Seven Verses)

Verse 3

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 (Continued -3) by Vasant

What is the basic problem that mankind faces today? Despite material plenty, man is not happy. Philosophers have offered various solutions to this problem. In the last issue, we saw that materialism was unable to solve the problem. In fact, the problem has assumed graver proportions in a society wherein materialism is placed on the highest pedestal.

Humanism is merely a more sublime form of materialism. Humanism insists upon complete freedom of thought in matters of philosophy, morals, religion or science. Humanism does not believe in revealed knowledge. It is opposed to supernaturalism, theism, immortality or the idea of a soul. Man is a product of history and there is no such thing as a supernatural purpose. The humanist says that all such things are opposed to reason. He does not wish to be imprisoned in faith. Free thought alone is to be worshipped. There is no heaven or hell besides happiness or misery in the current life.

A happy person, says the humanist, is one who engages himself in untiring efforts to promote social well-being. Interdependence of humans to establish peaceful society is acknowledged. Man's ultimate aim is happiness, here and now. The so-called religious experience is merely an aesthetic experience of deep moral content and there is no need to postulate a transcendent Divine. Man is a product of circumstances. If you create conditions conducive to peace there will be happiness.

Humanism abides by behaviorism. However, some humanist thinkers have

noted that a totalitarian regime may use behaviouristic concepts to strengthen its hold on the masses.

Humanism has contributed much to uphold human freedom and dignity. Anything that unfetters the mind from dogma and nourished the spirit of scientific inquiry is a step in the right direction. However, humanism falls short of offering a solution to the basic problem faced by society today. Despite material plenty, man is not happy.

Mere change in environment does not lead a man to tranquillity and peace of mind. Poverty, disability and prejudice may be the cause of several sins. However, even where these things do not predominate we find sin, atrocity and violence thriving. It is necessary to probe deeper to find out why men behave in such contradictory patterns. Humanism does not carry its rationalism to deeper levels.

Humanism swears by the service of the people. What is service of the people? Institutionalized religion mistakes charity for love and so does the humanist. To provide more things that bring comfort to the body may be necessary but it is not enough. To tap the fountain of love that is latent in all is true service. Thereby, you help a person to stand on his own. Man has a deepfelt longing to unravel the mystery that lies hidden behind creation. For this, he has to search in a dimension that is beyond the body and the mind. Unless we do this, man will not have contentment in life. Humanism thus barely touches the problem that confronts mankind.

The experience of pain, parting and bereavement is deeply felt. Natural calamities sometimes totally wipe out civilisations built by centuries of human effort. We sometimes find people turning their intelligence towards deceitful purposes. Heinous crimes are committed in broad daylight. When a person becomes a victim of any of the above, his faith in humanism is likely to be shattered. When one sees evil doers apparently thriving in all material prosperity while the righteous are persecuted, the faith in the humanist ideal of service to the people is likely to be shaken.

One has to search in the direction of the law of Karma (reap as you sow), reincarnation and soul to buttress his faith in the noble humanist ideals. Once the search is begun, man orientates towards the science of the Soul. If you divide the quantum of service you render to the people by your ego, you will generally find that only a small fraction remains. This represents selfless love. To get a larger number, ego has to be reduced. The sphere of selfishness has to be reduced. Mere control over sense organs is not sufficient to make us selfless. The fountain of desires nourishes the attitudes of the mind. Unless this nourishment is reduced, ego must play a dominant role. Consequently, you will not be able to unfold love in others or contribute to a truly happy society.

Both science and organized religion in the 19th century carried undiluted certainty about their respective faiths. At the close of the 20th century, both have dropped down to the sphere of uncertainty and probability. The scientist has recognized the limitations of human reason and the religionist has recognized his incapacity to grant the experience of the truths propounded by him. Both have to get rid of the fetters in which they have imprisoned themselves. The scientist and the humanist will get out of it if they recognize the limitations of intellectual reason. Will the religionist do the same? Then all of them will have to go to the true message of the chain of Divine Messengers and saints that have manifested in known history and beyond. Vedas, the first revelation, explain this by combining the methods of philosophy, religion and science. It is eternal religion and is the standard reference for a happy life on earth.

YOGA ASANAS (Physical Postures).....Cont'd.

MAYURASANA (Peacock Pose)

Kneel on the floor.

Distance between the knees is about an arm's length.

Place palms on floor, with fingers pointing towards toes.

Keep forearms close together.

Both elbow joints make a fulcrum at the navel.

Stretch the body horizontally, balancing at the navel.

Hold for some time.

Come to original position.

Relax.



The Peacock Pose

Stimulates digestive apparatus.

Removes chronic constipation.

Note: You may find it difficult to balance the body in the beginning.

A little practice will bring perfect poise.

THE FIVEFOLD PATH (KRIYA YOGA)

What is the basic problem that faces mankind today. Despite material plenty, man is not happy. In the beginning of the century, it was stated that advancements in science would banish misery from our planet. However, the scientist has succeeded in banishing drudgery; misery still persists. Misery is not a disease but merely the symptom of a disease. The disease is bondage. The average person knows that mind is an instrument of bondage. It has to be turned into an instrument of his liberation. Man has free will and by exerting his free will in the right direction, he can avoid misery that is yet to come.

KRIYA YOGA is an ancient science that offers material and mental aids to undo tensions on the mind. Our happiness depends on the reactions of the mind to the various situations and conditions in life. Any intelligent person knows that he should "Love thy neighbour" and be of service to his fellow men. He also knows that he should control lust, greed, temptation, anger, envy and pride. The difficulty comes when we are unable to implement this judgement given by our intellect. Kriya Yoga does not view man in compartments but treats him as a psychosomatic entity and something more. Kriya Yoga starts with the purification of the atmosphere.

The useful atmosphere surrounding our planet is a thin layer and may be compared to the laquering on a wooden globe. When this layer is polluted, it disturbs the energy cycle of the planet. Today, as an inevitable concomitant of industrial growth, pollution is rampant. There is automobile pollution, pollution due to industrial exhausts, noise pollution, water pollution due to industrial effluents and marine pollution due to radiation effect of nuclear waste. Various conferences of scientists on pollution have shed limelight on the complexity of the problem. The effect of pollution on the body is well known. However, ancient wisdom states that pollution has an immense and deleterious impact on the human mind. The science of bioenergy is recent and we do not yet have sufficient parameters to gauge the damage done to the human mind.

Ancient wisdom given through the Vedas offers material aids to undo the effect of pollution on the mind. Vedas is the most ancient codified knowledge known to man. The word comes from the Sanskrit verb VID, meaning "to know." Hence, Vedas literally means "knowledge." There is no label attached to it. It is universal. It is in Sanskrit language. European scholars call Sanskrit the mother of the European group of languages.

Vedas state that all matter is energy. There are numberless solar systems of which ours is a tiny speck. Mind is subtle matter. The objective world is the appearance in form in the time-space-causation continuum. Vibrations affect matter and can bring about changes in consciousness. Changes in consciousness bring into operation hitherto latent faculties in man. Atmospheric

change induces qualitative change in PRANA, the life energy which pulsates throughout creation. PRANA and the mind are like two sides of the same coin and anything which affects PRANA affects the mind. There are undulatory cycles of nature pertaining to the day, week, month and season which affect the rhythm of life. Recent discoveries in science point in the direction of Vedic wisdom.

KRIYA YOGA consists of the following:

(1) AGNIHOTRA (purification of atmosphere through the agency of fire)

Disciplines involved:

- (a) Burning of specific organic substances into fire
- (b) Vibrational effect
- (c) Timings of cosmic radiation based on undulatory cycles of nature, of which sunrise and sunset is one

This is also termed a process of fumigation as it eliminates the effect of pathogenic bacteria.

Modus operandi: Induce changes in the atmosphere.→ This leads to changes in PRANA.→ This affects the mind beneficially.→ This brings about peace and removes tension and anxiety due to emotional impacts→ This leads to intellectual illumination.

(2) ASANAS (bodily postures): to remove the tension on the mind that comes about due to bodily causes.

(3) PRANAYAMA (breathing techniques): to remove the tension on the mind that comes about due to the disharmonious flow of energy through the nervous system.

Nos. (2) and (3) above tone up the somatic and visceral systems and aid inner equilibrium. Thus the result is better health and performing ability.

(4) Meditation and setting up life patterns.

The above is covered by the FIVEFOLD PATH.

The FIVEFOLD PATH is Eternal Religion (Satya Dharma).

We have to discard useless targets of lesser importance and learn efficiency in effort-making. Modern medicine has taken note of this fact and has regrouped all psychosomatic disabilities under a new name, "Dysponesis." The FIVEFOLD PATH of ancient wisdom has done this millenniums ago. By following its discipline, man gains better understanding, awareness and emotional adjustment. Thus the latent faculties in him start operating with an illumined sense of values.

- Practice AGNIHOTRA for purification of the atmosphere
- Practice DAAN (sharing your assets in a spirit of humility) for generating non-attachment.
- Practice TAPA (self-discipline, austerities, purification) for fruition of thy affirmations. Purified thought patterns gain potency.
- Practice KARMA (meritorious deeds) for self-purification.
- Practice SWADHYAYA (self study) for liberation.

The FIVEFOLD PATH, which covers Kriya Yoga, is taught free to anyone who cares to seek in earnest. For further details, please write to:

FIVEFOLD PATH, INC.
Parama Dham (House of Almighty Father)
RFD #1, Box 121-C
Madison, Virginia 22727
USA

Name _____
Street _____
City, Town _____
State _____ Zip Code _____
Country _____

Editor: Vasant V. Paranjpe

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Parama Dham (House of Almighty Father)
RFD #1, Box 121-C
Madison, Virginia 22727
USA

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