

SATSANG

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DESIDERATA

"In whatever religion you have been taught, however you have been brought up, and however you have understood your teachers, on these levels you will understand and grasp this message. It is not enough that this message be believed. It is a message to be lived. The essence of Universal Religion is Peace and Truth, with Love for and Kindness to all the creatures of the earth. Now is the time to express this essence in your own life. A beginning must be made, and the place to begin is with and in yourself. You would reform the world? Begin with yourself, brother! The message of the unreformed reformer seldom inspires reformation. The heart of all Religion is love. And righteousness, which is love in action, is the fulfillment of religion. Love not only family and friends. For love limited is love denied. Seek peace within yourself, and seek, too, within yourself the Divine Breath of Life. Persist in these things. Do not let up for a single moment. Through your faith and through your deeds you shape your life and help shape the lives of others as well. What a responsibility! The Spirit finds in you its agent and also its partner, and to the degree that you are aware of this and act on it, your life is enriched. A revelation will occur to you . . . a revelation higher than your most exalted dreams. The New Age is coming, and in it there will be a realization of the Oneness of all. Differences between the various Religions will disappear. The good which is in each of them will be fused, and will become the common goal of all mankind. Know that you have the power to choose. Choose love, not hate; choose gentleness, not violence; choose holiness, not evil. Dare to believe that the reign of love and peace is coming soon. Ready yourself for it. Ready yourself for it with deeds of righteousness. Righteousness is the door opener, and beyond the door is love. May power divine enter every aspect of your life endowing it with the rewards of material accomplishments, the treasures of purposeful existence, and the eternal light of spiritual achievement. "

Found in St. Paul's Church, Baltimore, Md. Date - 1692

Ten Commandments of

Parama Sadguru Shri Gajanan Maharaj

Commandment Five: Inculcate the habit of sharing your assets.

Uto Rayih prnato nopa dasyati (Rigveda 10-117-1)

Purport: He who cultivates the habit of giving is assured of fulfillment of all his needs.

If we cultivate the habit of giving away part of our material possessions we have learned the secret of a happy life. The sharing of assets should be the consequence of a dutiful response in the heart of the donor. The action is doubly blessed. It blesseth him that gives and him that receiveth. One need not anticipate a demand from someone giving. You give because it is your duty to give. This is DAAN, the second aspect of the Fivefold Path.

By practice of Daan you get used to the discipline of parting with or receiving material possessions without concomitant pride or dejection. The habit begets detachment and grants you the correct perspective to look at things material. It sublimates your emotions regarding worldly possessions or lack of them. Non-attachment reduces the burden on the mind and makes you free. Then you automatically begin to 'Love thy neighbour as thyself'.

If you vaunt your gifts it is not the religious act of Daan, but mere donation. You give because it is your duty to give. The person who receives the gift is in no way obliged to you. In fact, he is instrumental in enabling you to obey a Divine command. Think of him as an instrument of purification of your mind. Consider the act of giving a privilege granted to you to worship the Divine.

Treat all your assets as a trust from the Almighty. The Bible says, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." If you get attached to material possessions you cannot attain the finesse required to reach the subtler realms of consciousness wherein lies the Kingdom of Light.

"And spend something (in charity) out of the sustenance which We have bestowed on you, before Death should come to any of you."

(Holy Koran LXIII-10)

When Death comes you cannot plead for time. The span of life will not be extended. The only thing given to us is to make the best use of the moments granted to us. Let every moment be filled with good deeds. Every act of giving in the spirit of duty sublimates the mind, and we take a further step towards the eternal grandeur which is our inheritance.

We inherit three institutions when we are born: the material world, the society in which we are born and the bodily tabernacle in which we are encased. All the three are liable to be polluted by our existence on the planet. Hence YAJNYA (purification of atmosphere through the agency of fire), DAAN (the act of dividing assets in a spirit of surrender) and TAPA (penance of body, mind and speech) are the first three aspects of the Fivefold Path first revealed through the Vedas and later sanctified and reiterated by all the Divine messengers that graced our planet by their manifestation in different parts of the world.

"A gift made to someone from whom we expect nothing in return, believing that such a gift ought to be made , in a fit place and time and to a worthy person, such a gift is SATVIC (pure).

A gift given in the hope of receiving something in return and reaping any fruit therefrom or that which is given grudgingly is RAJASIC (source of pride).

A gift given to an unworthy person or given disrespectfully is Tamasic (cause of self degradation and misery).

(Bhagavat Geeta 17-20, 21, 22)

Only the first of the above three is religious Daan. Such a gift leads to detachment of attitude and thus reduces the burden on the mind. It is the inexorable law of Karma that you 'reap as you sow'. The operation of Divine Law brings back to you in terms of material perquisites what you have parted with. All your needs are taken care of.

If the gift is made to an unworthy person and he is thereby led further to put a premium on vice, you become a partner in his guilt. Each one of us, rich or poor, has to practice Daan. Inculcating this virtue prepares us for the major battle in the arena of Tapa (penance) which is removal of the carnal aspect of the mind. Your success in this field is going to wrest for you the laurel for which all of us are born in human frame. That is Self realisation.

Gifting in the spirit of duty serves to pull down the barricades which separate man from man. You help only yourself by practising Daan. A little practice of this virtue will totally change your reactions to the conditions in which you are placed and you land into peace and bliss.

"I declare that gifts offered to the perfectly virtuous bring abundant fruit. Not so to the immoral. Perfectly virtuous is he who has abandoned the five--sense desire, hate, sloth, restlessness and all doubts. Perfectly virtuous is he who possesses the five--concentration, wisdom, liberation, perfection in training, and vision of one perfect in training."

(Buddha to Vachhagotta)

SAPTA SHLOKI

(The Seven Verses)

Commentary on Verse 1 (Continued 6)

Yada srushtam jagat sarvam

Tada Lokapitamahah

Chaturveda Samayuktam

Shashwatam Dharma madishat

Purport: Along with creation, the Almighty Father revealed the eternal principles of religion (Law) embodied in four Vedas.

Vedas shed light on all aspects of creation. They describe the various tiers of energy. They also enunciate a path for harmonious functioning of this energy manifestation which results in peace and prosperity. If we wish to seek light regarding Time, Space, Infinity, One Supreme Godhead, the numberless universes of which our solar system is but a tiny speck, and other such matters, we have to refer to the Vedas, as we find therein revealed knowledge embracing the totality of creation. The Vedas are the most authentic source of knowledge, and if the scientist reorients his search in the light of this knowledge he stands to benefit much in his endeavor. Science, as it is commonly understood, means the investigation of laws in the physical world. Applied science means utilizing the knowledge of one law to overcome another. To guide the scientist in his research is the least part of Vedic wisdom. The Vedas show us the path of liberation, Self realization. The aim of Vedic knowledge is to grant you the experience of the words uttered by Jesus, "Thou art perfect as my Father which is in Heaven is perfect." Perfection is the goal set before mankind. What is this perfection so loudly proclaimed by all Messengers of all times? The study of the Vedas enlightens us regarding this state of perfection and the means to be adopted to achieve this state. Vedas point out the Fivefold Path which ushers in the state described by the Bible, "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you." The Vedas assert that you can get this experience in this very life. Did not Jesus say, "There be some standing here who will see the Kingdom of Heaven before they taste of death"?

Almighty is One. In the true sense of the term, religion is also One. All messengers of Almighty, all Divine incarnations reiterate this message to suit the conditions in which they manifest. They modulate the language according to the capacity of the listener.

In the last issue we saw how Yajnya, the atmospheric purificatory process given by Vedas that leads to purgation of the mind through the intermediary of PRANA, was interpolated in later times. We saw how animal offerings to fire vitiated the atmosphere and thus malevolently affected the minds of the populace. The Divine messenger (Avatar) Buddha put a stop to this evil practice where it affected most. The situation before the arrival of the Divine messenger, Jesus, was in pretty bad shape. In Israel the pattern of deterioration was essentially similar to that of India prior to Buddha. However, there was one noticeable difference. Before Buddha there was no idol worship in India; it came in post-Buddha period, although Buddha's message had nothing to do with it. When Buddha stopped Yajnyas involving animal slaughter, a void was created. People took to idols to fill the void. About five and a half centuries after Buddha, Jesus graced our planet by manifestation. By this time idol worship was rampant in the area in which Jesus performed the task allotted by the Almighty Father. Yajnyas with offerings of animal flesh and blood were the order of the day.

"On the eighth day he shall bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And the priest shall offer the one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering and make an atonement for him. . ."

(Numbers 6-10, 11)

"One young bullock, one ram, one lamb, of the first year, for a burnt offering."

(Numbers 7-75)

"And when thou preparest a bullock for a burnt offering or for a sacrifice in performing a vow or peace offerings unto the Lord."

(Numbers 15-8)

"But the firstling of a cow or the firstling of a sheep, or the firstling of a goat, thou shalt not redeem. They are holy. Thou shalt sprinkle their blood upon the altar and shalt burn their fat for an offering made by fire, for a sweet savour unto the Lord."

(Numbers 18-17)

"This is the ordinance of the Law which the Lord hath commanded, saying, speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring thee a red heifer without spot, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke. And you shall give her unto Eleazar, the priest...And Eleazar, the priest shall take of her blood with his finger and sprinkle of her blood directly before the tabernacle of the congregation seven times.

(Numbers 19.2-4)

"And God met Balaam: and he said unto him I have prepared seven altars and I have offered upon every altar a bullock and a ram."

(Numbers 23-4)

"And thou shalt say unto them, this is the offering made by fire which ye shall offer unto the Lord; two lambs of first year without spot day by day for a continual burnt offering. The one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning and the other lamb shalt thou offer at even."

(Numbers 28.3-4)

"And thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood upon the altar of the Lord, thy God: and the blood of thy sacrifices shall be poured out upon the altar of the Lord thy God, and thou shalt eat the flesh."

(Deuteronomy 12-27)

"For when they had slain their children to their idols, then they came the same day into my sanctuary to profane it; and Lo, thus they have done in the midst of my house."

(Ezekial 23-39)

The eternal principles of religion (Law) had been reduced to meaningless formalities by the coterie of the priesthood. It was indeed a difficult task to wean people away from these rituals. People held strong beliefs in these types of rituals and it was for them the only way to please the deities and seek redemption from sin.

Avatar of Moses had reiterated the eternal principles (Law) but again people went astray and it was the allotted task of Jesus to set things right. Purity of mind is essential before going to the altar. Jesus preached the doctrine of purity of heart, faith, hope, love, and charity.

"For I came down from Heaven not to do mine own will but the will of Him that sent me."

(John 6-38)

"I am not come of myself but He that sent me is true whom you know not. I know Him for I am from Him and He hath sent me."

(John 7-28,29)

"Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I am not come to destroy but to fulfill."

(Matthew 5-17)

Following is a quotation from "The Essene Gospel of Peace" based on the texts in Aramaic language which Jesus spoke.

"...And Jesus answered: 'God gave, by Moses, ten commandments to your forefathers. "These commandments are hard," said your forefathers, and could not keep them. When Moses saw this, he had

compassion on his people, and would not that they perish. And then he gave them ten times ten commandments, less hard, that they might follow them. I tell you truly, if your forefathers had been able to keep the ten commandments of God, Moses would never have had need of his ten times ten commandments. For he whose feet are strong as the mountain of Zion, needs no crutches; but he whose limbs do shake, gets further having crutches, than without them. And Moses said to the Lord: "My heart is filled with sorrow, for my people will be lost. For they are without knowledge, and are not able to understand thy commandments. They are as little children who cannot yet understand their father's words. Suffer, Lord, that I give them other laws, that they may not perish. If they may not be with thee, Lord, let them not be against thee; that they may sustain themselves, and when the time has come, and they are ripe for thy words, reveal to them thy laws." For that did Moses break the two tablets of stone whereon were written the ten commandments, and he gave them ten times ten in their stead. And of these ten times ten the Scribes and Pharisees have made a hundred times ten commandments. And they have laid unbearable burdens on your shoulders, that they themselves do not carry.'"

"...And Jesus answered: 'Seek not the law in your scriptures, for the law is life, whereas the scripture is dead. I tell you truly, Moses received not his laws from God in writing, but through the living word. The law is living word of living God to living prophets for living men. In everything that is life is the law written. You find it in the grass, in the tree, in the river, in the mountain, in the birds of Heaven, in the fishes of the sea; but seek it chiefly in yourselves. For I tell you truly, all living things are nearer to God than the scripture which is without life.'"

In the then prevailing circumstances it was necessary to have a new covenant, a NEW TESTAMENT. The presence of a Divine messenger among the people would alone mitigate the resultant effect of bad karma accumulated by obnoxious religious practices. An Avatar was required 'Not to destroy the Law or Prophets but to fulfill,' someone who would exemplify Truth and Grace which the common people could see with their own eyes and hear with their own ears. Jesus appeared on the scene, showed signs, healed the sick and boldly stood against the priests who were steeped in ignorance and malpractices.

Jesus confounded the priests and drove away the vendors from the temple. He laid stress on purity of heart for "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall SEE God." One has to dispossess himself since "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the gates of Heaven." Jesus set perfection as the goal. "Thou art perfect as my Father in Heaven is perfect." Perfection was the goal and purity and humility the way. He set an example of charity by mixing with saints and sinners alike. He said, "If you had known me you should have known my Father also." He awakened the people to the "Spirit that resides within" and in simple language showed the way. To his disciples he taught the ancient wisdom of Raja Yoga whereby "You may do the works that I do."

Jesus strictly reinforced the law of Karma in the minds of people. "Reap as you sow." "Those who swear by the sword shall perish by the sword." He stressed that each one has to carry his own cross. Once we start doing this, Grace manifests within us and we

become "humble as the little child," "not caring for the morrow." God is Love and hence the command, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." The Divine messenger sacrificed his life and set an example of forgiveness: "Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do."

Jesus came to re-establish the eternal principles of religion (SATYA DHARMA) given at the time of creation. But again people slipped into old ways as had happened several times before Jesus. The chain of messengers continues. The Divine messengers have nothing to do with theology. They know no sects and creeds. Their message is eternal and as fresh as ever. They use the language suited to the times in which they incarnate. The message is more poignant today than ever.

How are we going to manifest this purity of mind against the backdrop of the present state of our civilization? The Fivefold Path is the answer. Modern psychiatry defines mind as thought, feeling and volition. The Fivefold Path encompasses all these aspects and shows you the means to transcend the mind. Grace unfolds within you and all your burdens are lightened. In this age of Science nothing is going to be tolerated that is against reason, although the scientist may admit that some things are beyond reason. But all this has to be achieved by means which are reasonable and compatible with the times we live in. The Fivefold Path which culminates in KRIYA YOGA and surrender to His will is the answer.

THE FIVEFOLD PATH

The first two pathways, briefly described below, are largely concerned with material effects and benefits.

(1) AGNIHOTRA is an antipollutionary measure. It purifies the atmosphere and consequently purifies the mind, bringing mental peace and material fulfillment. The effectiveness of agnihotra is due to its three inputs: (a) Timing (it is done at sunrise and sunset to coincide with the bombardment of cosmic rays at these times), (b) the substances used, and (c) a short mantra which is chanted to cause a specific vibrational effect. As a result of agnihotra, the outgoing tendencies of the mind are reduced, thus lessening the pull of desires which disturbs tranquility. Thus, it is an aid to the spiritual aspirant.

(2) DAAN means "dividing assets." It is a heartfelt offering made to another person. It benefits you by helping you to cultivate an attitude of detachment from possessions and also guarantees manyfold material return for the giver. Daan involves giving a needed article such as money, food, clothing, etc. in a spirit of humility.

The next three pathways deal less with material consideration and more with one's own inner spiritual work.

(3) TAPA means penance. Tapa gives you access to the "Kingdom of Heaven within." A Sanskrit word meaning "to heat," tapa is the control of the mind and senses, the practice of which creates friction. Each person knows and decides for himself in what areas he needs the greatest self-control. If his life is one of comfort, he must learn to do with less until slowly he reduces to necessities. He must go at his own pace, however, so that his progress will be steady and permanent. The practice of tapa leads to inner detachment and lessens dependence on external conditions. It results in an influx of energy and increased awareness of the latent powers within us. When dependence on outside

conditions is reduced, true happiness dawns. Performance of agnihotra and daan make the practice of tapa much easier by creating an atmosphere of tranquility for the mind.

(4) KARMA means action. According to the law of karma, you "reap what you sow." There is no action, good or bad, that does not have its consequences. The ideal is to employ our power of discrimination so that right action is always taken. Further, we must not seek the fruit of our actions or have expectations. Our duty is to perform right action regardless of what others do. With the practice of the first three pathways, our duty becomes clear, and we have the strength of will to carry it out. As the chains of karma are loosened, real Knowledge dawns, and we are ushered into a state of peace and happiness.

(5) SWADHYAYA means Self study. As we practice the previous four pathways, we become aware of the true nature of Self. We strive to realize the "Self." The study of higher Knowledge given by the Messengers of Almighty (Jesus, Buddha, Krishna, Muhammad, etc.) sheds light on the Path. It consolidates our faith and yearning to unfold the Divine within. Swadhyaya is the awareness of the necessity of following the Fivefold Path to peace and bliss.

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EDITOR: Vasant V. Paranjpe, PUBLISHER: Sally Hobart, 4810 Drummond Ave., Chevy Chase, Md. 20015, (phone: 301 - 654-8095)
NOTE: For further information about SATSANG or the FIVEFOLD PATH you may contact the publisher at the above address.