

# Satsang

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Twice Monthly

RING OUT THE OLD - RING IN THE NEW

...Vasant

The sun has already risen on the new era. The Kingdom of Heaven is near. The 'Kingdom of Heaven' is not a location in space. 'The Kingdom of Heaven is within you.' We have only to realize this great Divine heritage and we are free.

What do we mean when we say that the sun has risen on a new era? The atoms of creation will be more and more purified. Our endeavor on the spiritual path will be accelerated. It is Grace. There will be a bumper crop of holy men flooding the earth. Agnihotra, the process of purification of the atmosphere leading to the purification of mind will spread. Agnihotra will seep through the latitudes and longitudes of the globe. Ecology will change. Human mind will be more tranquil. Homecoming of man will be eased out.

Every true Christian at heart realizes the importance of December 25th. Jesus came to fulfill the Eternal Religion, the first revelation given through the Vedas along with creation. A few centuries later people forgot his message and the vested interests twisted the meanings of the holy words spoken by Jesus. In the same geographical area Muhammed came to set right the situation.

"And they say: None entereth Paradise unless he be a Jew or a Christian. These are their own desires. Say, 'Bring your proof (of what you state) if you are truthful'." (Holy Koran II-111)

"And the Jews say the Christians follow nothing (true) and the Christians say the Jews follow nothing (true); yet both are readers of the Scripture. Even thus speak those who know not. Allah will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection concerning that wherein they differ." (Holy Koran II-113)

Advance in the physical sciences has ripped open the garb of superstition erected by vested religion around the words of the Holy Messengers. The new era has dawned and nothing that is against reason will be tolerated. The sheaths of ignorance will be pierced and Divine Lightspreads. Let us purify our receptacles so that it may be filled with GRACE.

"For I came down from Heaven not to do mine own will but the will of Him that sent me." (John VI-38)

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love to one another." (John XIII-35)

His Will be done.

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DESTINY AND FREE WILL

...Vasant

(Excerpts from a Kriya Yoga class in Washington, D. C.)

On the day we are born in human frame we inherit the biggest asset. It is the power of discrimination to choose between the right and wrong. Animals go by instinct. Humans go beyond instinct by intelligence. An animal is happy if its immediate needs are fulfilled. Man is never happy until he soars into the mystery of his being. This involves free will.

We cannot remain without action even for a moment. The action may be physical or the action may be mental. The law of cause and effect when transposed to the realm of metaphysics is the Law of Karma. In simple words, it is "reap as you sow".

If man did not have free will, where is the necessity for telling others "love thy neighbor". All the saints have been shouting from housetops asking us to control anger, greed and lust and be devoted to God. Where is the necessity to do this? Where is the necessity of talking about the Fivefold Path? If man were merely a puppet in the hands of destiny, what purpose will it serve to tell him to practice Tapa and Swadhyaya?

It is stated "You choose to become your friend or your foe". Our effort alone will take us out of the misery which is our lot. The effort has to be made in the right direction. The effort has to be made with intensity.

Some say there is no such thing as fate or destiny. Everything depends upon your efforts. Some others reply, "If everything would come by our own effort, then nobody would remain idle. No one wants to be miserable. It is fate that decides whether you succeed in your efforts." Such people bring in astrology to prove their case. They say that your birth decides all future events. Well, the cosmic object and their radiations may influence life on this planet, but this does not mean you have been wrong of your free will. It seems destiny and free will are like two heavy weight champions boxing in Madison Square Gardens. Sometimes one seems to succeed, sometimes the other. No one seems to win.

A little thought will convince us that destiny is the accumulated reappings of what we have sown in the past. The law of reap as you sow is inevitable. The field of action does not end with death. The law does not cease with our demise. The cycles of birth and death is the operation of the Law of Karma, the law of reap as you sow; and hence, birth, death and rebirth. The fruit of all your actions culminates into destiny. The effect has to be worked out.

The result of our actions in previous incarnations is our destiny now. The action in early period in this life becomes destiny in later years. What one did last week becomes destiny this week. What one did last moment becomes destiny this moment. The fructification of Karma has to come about sooner or later. Your Karma may be mental, that is you might have an evil thought; yet you reap its result all the same.

Destiny is a timebound check drawn from total stored up Karma. These are the sowings that have done in the past. It is timebound for this life. Hence, Karma is sometimes described as threefold:

1. Accumulated Karma (sanchita)
2. Destiny, i.e. Karma to be fructified during the present life (prarabdha)
3. Current Karma (kriyamana). This represents the things we sow from moment to moment in this life.

In English, the word fate and destiny is generally used for number 1 and 2 types of Karma mentioned above.

Destiny is the inevitable resultant of our already accomplished efforts. He who sees a self subsisting entity in destiny is ignorant. Destiny is merely the fructification of our past efforts into good or bad circumstances.

Then, one may ask what is the use of merely giving the diagnosis? One may further ask, "Are we helpless before the onslaught of destiny? Is there nothing we can do about it?" Solar eclipsis could be predetermined by astronomers and there is nothing that one can do about them. Are we equally helpless about destiny?

The answer is plainly told by the Vedas, by the science of Yoga and by all the Divine Messengers and saints that graced our planet by their manifestations.

The Law of Karma which states that one must reap as one sows also states its corollaries. It tells us how to rid ourself of the chain of Karma. It prescribes rules to reduce the intensity of destiny. It finally assures us that misery that is yet to come could be avoided. We must first realize the magnitude of the misery we are in. Then alone the yearning for the search of the Kingdom of Heaven begins. This yearning is called 'second birth' in the Bible.

"Unless you will be born again ye shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

The generation of this yearning is Grace. This brings about our meeting a holy man who shows us the way. We practice the discipline further and rid ourselves of the chain of Karma.

Fate can be overcome by present efforts. Wrong actions of yesterday can be rectified today. If the present effort is intense, if it is properly orientated, if it is powerful, it can triumph over destiny as a youth triumphs over a child. We have to make strong attempts to overcome misery that is yet to come. The past is determined but the present can still be modified. If destiny brings an evil legacy from the past, it could be overcome by powerful efforts in the present. This is the practical aspect of free will with which we are concerned. While making efforts, we must see that we choose the most appropriate ones. Otherwise, it may prove to be mere dissipation of energy. The most appropriate efforts constitute the Fivefold Path starting with mind purification, proceeding to Tapa or self-discipline, austerities and then through Swadhyaya (self-study) culminating into salvation.

Tranquility of mind is the first condition for any effort to succeed. The tranquil mind is the master over sense organs. It is not ruffled in the midst of calamities or even festivities. Such a person does not desire any object nor does he denounce anything. To consolidate tranquility we have to choose the company of the wise. By wise, I do not mean an intellectual. In such a company, you achieve contentment. However, at every stage let us remember that Swadhyaya (self-study - who am I?) has no vacation. The powerful effort that we have to make to overcome destiny is towards achieving wisdom. Let us free our mind from all expectations. Let us just do our duty, what we feel to be our duty, and let us leave the fruit of our actions to the Lord. Let us free ourselves from both elation and dejection by what we do have. This is wisdom. Thus, holy company, contentment and deep reflection are the gates through which we pass. We thus overcome destiny.

We must learn to do action without attachment to the fruit thereof. Attachment binds us to the Law of Karma, to the law of reap as you sow. First, one must learn to get out of the vicious circle and enter the virtuous circle. Then one must learn to get out of the virtuous circle also. Thus, one goes beyond vice and virtue both. It is easy to understand why one should get out of vice; however, we must know why we have to get beyond virtue also. Even if one goes on doing good works all the time they bind us to the Law of Karma. They may land us into what is normally termed as paradise. However, our journey is towards 'the Kingdom of Heaven within you'. Sometimes the word paradise is used synonymously with Heaven. However, the word is used here in a different connotation. By doing a wrong action or having a bad thought, we create an iron chain around us. By doing good works we may create a golden chain; however, it is a chain that binds. Doing action without attachment creates no further bonds and there are no reapings to be done in the future.

We have to learn to transform all work into worship. Any action that we do involves a period of time, small or big. If we do not learn to transform all our works into worship, it will mean that we have lost some period of our daily routine for something which is not worship. We may be driving our auto, cooking food for the family, working on the drawing board or taking the baby to the babysitter. If we think it is our duty to do that particular action at that particular time, it means there is nothing better that we can do. So, the secret lies in learning to transform all these actions into worship of the Divine.

Each one of us is placed differently by the mold of destiny and thus each one of us has to face different situations from moment to moment. Hence, it is stated that it is not given unto us what to see. The Fivefold Path, particularly Swadhyaya (self-study) teaches us how to see. The wisdom of how to see things leads us to liberation as it must pass through the gates of non-attachment. Love and attachment are two different things or two different levels. Love does not need any outside support while attachment needs some outside support. If we learn to do action in a spirit of duty and service, then we should not entertain any expectations from the persons concerned in the course of our action. Thus, there is no attachment and no binding chain of Karma. When the chain of current Karma is thus cut off, we get added strength to exert our free will in the direction of 'Love thy neighbor'. Then, there can never be any resentment in life and thus our journey on this planet becomes an endeavor of joy.

The fourth aspect of the Fivefold Path, that is Karma, states, "Perform Karma for self-purification". When we decide to do this, certainly we shall not involve ourselves into bad actions, because they can never lead to purification. We can never perform actions with expectations because expectations lead to attachment and attachment will not lead to purification. Purification unburdens the mind and establishes us into a state where you see the Divine in everything around you. Purification means transformation of the mind. Thus, it is stated in the Bible, "Be ye transformed by the renewal of the mind". Bhagavadgita states that we should be concerned only with doing our duty and should not be attached to the fruit of our action. All the Divine Messengers have laid great stress on this single item. Performing action without attachment is the only way whereby we can get rid of the cycle of birth, death and rebirth.

A devotee of an Avatara, a devotee of a Perfect Master does not claim to be free from the Law of Karma. He too has to face the evil effects of destiny, his stored up Karma. However, there is a big difference. The mountainload of difficulties becomes merely a mole hill as he acquires the strength and wisdom to bear it. He feels the pangs of destiny no more. The Karma works itself out, but he feels the trouble no more. His work is done. A Perfect Master can, however, by merely willing, create new destiny.

His will is potent and it destroys the legacy of destiny. How does this happen? Intense devotion to such a Perfect Master, implicit faith in His words, total readiness to follow His commands; all this is intensely good Karma. This is intense effort made in the right direction which nullifies the effect of bad Karma. The method to do this is described in ancient Yoga tradition. One thing, however, one should note. The Perfect Master is not easy to find. Again, we may state that when a person is ready by his past good Karma, he is somehow given a link with a Master. This link comes in the most unexpected way, but it does come. Further, it is left to our free will how to proceed with the link that is given.

The Law of Karma also states that any action, good or evil done with great intensity, fructifies soon. You need not wait for incarnations or for many years to reap what you have sown. Let us examine what most of us do. We exert our free will in seeking happiness through material possessions and we wish to leave our progress on the spiritual path to destiny. Happiness never comes through the senses and we get involved more and more in wrong action. Why not change this attitude? For a change, let us leave our material conditions to destiny and let us exercise all our free will in intensifying our journey on the Path Divine. If you do this, you will be rocketed to highest bliss.

Humility is the hallmark of a holy person. Bible states that unless you be like a little child, "ye shall not enter the Kingdom of God". However, this childlike innocence has to be coupled with knowledge. A mere intellectual can never achieve contentment unless he acquires childlike innocence. Childlike innocence is always the concomitant of true knowledge and hence the first criterion to find a holy person is humility.

Bhagavadgita states that in this world there is nothing so sacred as knowledge. Knowledge loosens your total identification with your body and thus you do not feel the pangs of destiny. Such knowledge comes only through a true Guru.

Man, no doubt, has free will. He is, however, cast in the mold of previous Karma, i.e. destiny. Free will must be exerted with great intensity and in the proper direction. Then, you deserve to receive Grace. Thus the scope of your free will is enlarged. If you exercise it properly then again you receive further powers.

There is one more aspect from which the problem of free will could be understood. A fish in a river moves with its own speed. It also acquires the speed of the current of water. Similarly, we may say that man moves about by his destiny but he also moves about in the flux of the Divine Will. The flux of Divine Will has been determined at the beginning of each cycle. Our efforts to conquer over destiny have always to be viewed in relation to the flux of Divine Will in the cycle in which we live. For all of us, this is a pertinent problem. By Divine Will it has been decided to reset the energy cycle of the planet. We are in the early period of this cycle. The next few years will witness the emergence of intense holy vibrations. All holy people in the world will come together and work in concert. The wicked will be destroyed and the devoted will be protected. The flux of Divine Will is most appropriate to intensify our efforts to conquer destiny. The speed of the current of water is in our favor. Let us exert ourselves to the utmost. The aim of all our endeavor is the awareness that "the Kingdom of Heaven is within you", and "I and my Father are one".



He who has no desires is liberated in this very life. For him, there is no rebirth and no bond to the wheel of Karma. He may choose to come back to earth to help others on the Path. In Sanskrit there are two words which represent two states. SATPURUSHA is one who has seen the SAT (Truth) State. SADGURU is one who not only has seen SAT State but can also show it to others. A SADGURU (Perfect Master) is a SATPURUSHA first. Everyone has the potential to reach that state. Everyone has to make an effort to reach SAT State. Once you start walking in the right direction under the guidance of a SADGURU, you soon notice that you are not walking alone, but you are proceeding on an escalator of GRACE. It is GRACE ALONE. Any effort made in this direction is never wasted.

What is liberation? Liberation from what? The Fivefold Path gives the answer. The Fivefold Path shows the way.

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SAPTA SHLOKI  
(The Seven Verses)

Verse 4:

आर्षग्रंथेषु सर्वेषु श्रुतिप्रामाण्यमेव च ।  
सर्वतः सारमादद्यात् निजकल्याणहेतवे ॥

Arsha grantheshu sarveshu  
Shruti pramanya mevaca  
Sarvatas saramadadhyat  
Nija kalyana hetave

Purport: Of all the literature given through the seers, Vedas is the standard reference.  
Extract the essence for thy benefit.

COMMENTARY ON VERSE 4 (Continued)

...Vasant

Review of Religions

The noble Prince Gautama who was Buddha (literally, Awakened) stated four noble Truths. The first one states that the world is full of misery. Millions are born, suffer and leave the mortal coil. What is the life story of the average person? Born on a Sunday, married on a Monday and buried or cremated on a Tuesday? He struts about the stage of life like a begotting peacock with true or ersatz feathers. His pride carries him to several situations and he is knocked about, kicked about like a football. A few moments of sensual pleasure followed by long periods of disturbed mind is his routine. Every situation that comes about as the unfoldment of destiny seems to disturb the tranquility of his mind. He is harrassed and seeks the way out by indulgence in more and more avenues of sense enjoyments. He goes on sowing wild seeds and must one day reap the harvest. In such a situation he catches hold of any straw that he thinks would save him. He adheres to crystalized religious practices. He is deluded into believing that he is following the precepts of the great Divine Messengers after whose names the various formal religions of the world appear to originate. No wonder that a modern man brought up in the wake of material sciences says that religion is the last resort of the weak and the infirm of mind. Some even say that religion is the last resort of scoundrels. Mankind is sick with multiplied misery although it dons various outward garbs perfected by technological growth.

Millions pray in temples, churches, vihars, mosques; seemingly, the prayer falls on deaf ears. The 'gods' appear to be silent as the Egyptian mummy. Add to this the manifestation of misery in the form of increasing physical diseases and mental imbalances. The so-called favored few appear to play Neros, fiddle while Rome burns. Thus, a saint has stated, "In the entire world, show me the man who is truly happy."

The word religion has no plural. Almighty is one and his message is one. The message is for man to establish himself in the state "love thy neighbor as thyself". In the beginning, the Almighty Father enunciated the eternal principles of happiness through the Vedas. The word Vedas literally means knowledge. There is no label attached. This knowledge does not belong to any country, any group of people or any language as it is the inheritance of all humanity. When these eternal principles are trampled down on a large scale, either due to non-observance, i.e. sins of omission, or due to wrong observance, i.e. sins of commission, great Divine Messengers manifest on our planet to set things right. They preach the same eternal principles of religion (Satya Dharma) given in the beginning. They lay stress on those aspects which need to be stressed under the conditions in which they take birth. They use the language suited to the occasion to reiterate the same principles. The basic code is purification of the mind. The gist of these eternal principles is now presented in the form of the Fivefold Path.

1. Perform YAJNYA for the purification of the atmosphere.
2. Perform DAAN (sharing your assets in a spirit of humility) for generating non-attachment.
3. Perform TAPA (self-discipline, austerity) for fruition of your affirmations.
4. Perform KARMA for self purification.
5. Perform SWADHYAYA (self-study - who am I?) for liberation.

People who come after the prophets or Divine Messengers form themselves into several groups, sects and organizations, and a priestly class is created. This degenerates into vested interest. The other vested interests like politics join hands with the priestly class or vice versa and we witness fights, bickerings, bloodshed, crusades in the name of religions. Today we are in a better position to view this religious growth in the gamut of history. The advance in physical sciences and the various problems that appear as concomittant to the growth of a technological society have placed us in a favorable position to get a clearer perspective of these religions. Two things stand out clearly before us.

1. All these formal religions have taken birth after the preaching of some Divine Messengers who graced our planet by manifesting in human form.
2. All these messengers have appeared when the conditions in society have gone far too wrong.

From the above it could be seen that the the religions that go by various names like Hindu, Christian, Buddhist, Muslim and others have taken birth in circumstances which had extremely deteriorated. Hence, they are termed as APATDHARMAS (born under difficult conditions in society). Thus, Jesus stated that He came not to destroy but to fulfill.

In the beginning, through the Vedas, Eternal Religion was given. This was the first revelation in Almighty's own words. When we refer to any further revelation known to us, we have to calculate the time from the other end; for example, say Krishna about 3,000 B.C or Jesus about 2,000 years ago or Buddha about 6th Century B.C. or Muhammed 6th Century A.

SRUTI means Vedas. Vedas Mantras were heard by the seers. The seers faithfully transmitted what they heard in Almighty's own words. The same message was given through the seers of the Upanishads. The same message was again given through the Bhagavatgita, Bible, the Koran and other sacred books. The five principles which are presented as the Fivefold Path of Eternal Religion are considered a common inheritance of all humanity. Krishna, Buddha, Zoroaster, Confucious, Moses, Jesus, Muhammed gave the same message.

We shall now attempt to review the various world religions and spiritual movements.  
(To be continued)

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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 of 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 practicing the above. You will be a more righteous Christian, Jew, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, whatever be your formal religious label.

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