

# Satsang

Vol. II No. 16

January 2, 1975

Twice Monthly

## SAPTA SHLOKI (THE SEVEN VERSES)

Verse 4: आर्षग्रंथेषु सर्वेषु श्रुतिप्रामाण्यमेव च ।  
सर्वतः सारमादद्यात् निजकल्याणहेतवे ॥

Arshagrantheshu Sarveshu Shrutipramanya mewacha  
Sarvatah Saramadadyat Nijakalyanhetawe

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

Commentary on the Verse(Continued)

...By Vasant

### Review of Religious Systems

#### Jainism

The word JAIN comes from the Sanskrit root JI, meaning to conquer. A Jain is one who has conquered the appetites of the flesh, by methods of purification. The purification of the body, mind and speech leads to happiness and liberation from the cycle of birth and death.

Jain Tradition states that the principles embodied in Jainism were revealed in various cosmic cycles through Divine Entities called Tirthankars. Tirthankars may be conceptualised as similar to Avatars. In the present cycle 24 Tirthankars appeared, beginning with Adinath and ending with Mahavira. Adi means the first. Shiva of Hindu tradition is also known as Adinath. Mahavira literally means the great hero. He was born in the last quarter of 6th Century B.C. The last two Tirthankars are known to history although the name of Mahavira is more widely known. Mahavira was a senior contemporary of Buddha.

Since only the last two, and more so the last one are historical figures, the images of Tirthankars found in some Jain temples look similar. They are distinguished by different symbols under the images, which are associated with the different Tirthankars. The first one, Adinath, has the symbol of Nandi (bull). Shiva of the Hindu tradition, also termed Adinath, has the symbol Nandi (bull).

Jain tradition states that the cosmic cycle consists of two periods, one of growth and evolution (Utsarpini) and the other of dissolution (Avasarpini). After Mahavira, the last Tirthankar commences the end period of the decaying cycle.

### Three Jewelled Path of Dharma (Duty)

The Three Jewelled Path of Liberation (Tri Ratna) consists of the following:

1. Right Faith (Samyag darshana)

One has to get rid of superstitious beliefs and arrogance. Superstitious beliefs are described as three-fold. The belief that one has to bathe in certain holy waters to become more pure, the belief that one has to climb up certain holy hills or do some occult practices to be liberated and the belief in the powers of local "gods and goddesses" and offering prostration to secure liberation; these are superstitious beliefs.

Intelligence, worldly status, noble birth, physical or mental prowess, occult powers, powers that may result consequent on some Hatha Yoga practices - all these are likely to lead to arrogance. A person who has one or more of these has to take extra care that they do not become a cause of his downfall on the spiritual path. Humility is the primary quality of a Jain. Everything else comes afterwards.

2. Right Knowledge (Samyag jnana)

Right faith must be accompanied by right knowledge. Right knowledge refers to the nature of Self (who am I), what is Karma, how Karma binds, what is liberation, liberation from what, etc.

3. Right conduct (Samyag charita)

Right conduct is the key to liberation. Right faith and right knowledge will be of no avail if not accompanied by right conduct.

### Five Disciplines (Vratas)

Applied in an unlimited way, the Vratas become Mahavratas (Maha means great) and the ascetic (Muni) is enjoined to follow them strictly. In the normal way they become Anuvratas (Anu means an atom or small) and are enjoined on the householder. Right conduct is woven around five disciplines.

1. AHIMSA (Non-Violence)

On the touchstone of Ahimsa, all conduct shall be judged. AHIMSA does not merely mean non-killing. It means "Love thy neighbour as thyself". If there is an intention to harm or inflict injury, it is Himsa (Violence). The physical act may follow or may be avoided and yet, it is violence. AHIMSA is to be practised in thought, word and deed. Speech or the act shall not be motivated by hatred, prejudice and pride.

AHIMSA is the cardinal point in the teachings of Mahavira. Sacrificial offerings to fire involving flesh and blood were prevalent

in his days. It was necessary to deal a blow to these heinous practices. He thus laid great stress on AHIMSA.

2. SATYA (Truth)

Lying, slander, backbiting are to be avoided. To preach with a view to mislead others, scandal mongering, insinuating are to be avoided.

3. ASTEYA (Literally, non-stealing)

It means not to cast a longing glance on someone else's possessions, not to take things which are not offered to us.

4. BRAHMACHARYA (Conduct that leads to realization of Brahma)

The word, in common parlance, signifies celibacy. In case of a Muni (ascetic) it implies total celibacy. Mind and intellect must cooperate in this process. For a householder, it means faithfulness to the spouse in thought, word and deed. Carried a little further, it also means the act of sexual union only for the offspring and not otherwise. The total conduct of life in consonance with the Vratas is BRAHMACHARYA in its wider aspects.

5. APARIGRAHA (Non-possession)

In case of a Muni (ascetic monk) it applies not only the physical renunciation of all worldly things, but also to be away from them in thought. One has to undo the inroads made in his mind about possessions due to previous impressions stored up in the subconscious. A householder has to cultivate an attitude of non-attachment to worldly objects and treat everything he owns as a trust to be utilised towards his minimum needs and for the service of the society. This involves limiting the hankering after possessing various objects, as it leads to unhappiness.

The five Vratas indicate the path for a Jain to free his mind from the bondage of desires and make him free.

Jain teachings lay great stress on the Law of Karma, the law of "reap as you sow". There is no fatalism as the individual himself is responsible for everything that he has to undergo. The physical side of his being and also the psychical are determined by his Karma. The Jiva (though not literally, the purport is soul) becomes bound by his likes and dislikes. The intensity determines the time of fructification (reapings of what you have sown). However, it is clearly stated that the Jiva can free himself from the chains of Karma if he uses his discrimination. Man is his own friend or foe.

Moksha, the summum bonum of human existence, is liberation from the bonds of Karma which leads to cycle of birth and death. Karma, reincarnation and the Vratas to get rid of the chain of Karma are the cardinal aspects of Jain teachings. Jain teachings speak in terms of atoms and molecules of

Karma which prepare the chain bound in the period of time. One has to get rid of these chains to be free and truly happy.

Mahavira told the people that it was not necessary to postulate a creator to explain the nature of this world. Let people take care of their Karma and the rest will take care of itself. After breaking the chains of Karma totally, the Self manifests as Infinite Bliss, Infinite Knowledge and Infinite Power. Thus the Jain prayer:

"Him who leads to the path of salvation, who destroys the mountain of Karma, the knower of all Reality, Him I worship that I may realize His qualities."

Mahavira Prabhu stated:

"Four things are difficult to obtain in creation. Human birth, right faith, right instruction and the energy to practice control over sense organs."

"Dharma consists of Ahimsa, self-control and Tapas (austerities, self-discipline)."

"Be indifferent to success or failure, happiness or misery, censure or praise, honour or abuse." (This may be compared to Sthitaprajnya, man of Steadfast Wisdom of Bhagavadgita.)

"It is difficult to conquer anger, pride, greed. One who has conquered his Self has conquered everything."

Mahavira came to reiterate the Satya Dharma given along with creation through the Vedas. All Divine messengers, Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, Moses, Mohammed and others came to reiterate the same eternal message. They come to do as Jesus says: "I have come not to destroy but to fulfill." They are not interested in setting up any groups or sects. Their message is eternal and for all humankind.

Mahavira Prabhu manifested on earth in very difficult times when the meanings of the Vedas were twisted and the priestly class fattened on the ignorance of the masses. Sacrificial offerings to fire involving slaughter of animals was practised in the name of Vedas. Vedas clearly proclaim "Ma Himseeh (thou shalt commit no violence)". However, the people led by the priestly class had fallen into wrong ways. On one side were the intellectuals who would propound various theories of God and creation although their own conduct contradicted the dictums they preached. On the other side was the priest, firmly entrenched in so-called religious rites and rituals. Mahavira came to take the people back to the original message. That is why he laid great stress on Karma and even explained Karma in terms of material particles.

We can profitably look back to the situation which confronted Mahavira Prabhu. The whole stress is on the code of conduct. The mind is to be transformed. One of the definitions of Yoga is "inhibiting the outgoing tendencies of the mind". The Fivefold Path of Vedic wisdom explained through Satsang lays great stress on the purification of the mind. That is the only way.

Yajnya of the Vedas is a material aid to the purification of the atmosphere which brings about purification of the mind. It loosens the grip of desires

and makes us free. It gives a bent to our mind towards detachment. When flesh and blood offerings were introduced and became the practice, the effect was exactly the opposite. People's minds were disturbed and there was more hatred, violence and prejudice. The cycle of nature was disturbed leading to added doses of misery. Mahavira came to stop all this. However, after his departure from the scene, the people made a sect out of his teachings. This should not be surprising as people acted similarly after Krishna, Buddha, Moses, Jesus and Mohammed.

There are two interesting episodes in the appearance and departure of Mahavira, the significance of which is not generally noted by the people.

Before the birth of any Avatara, the mother is always told that a Divine messenger would be born to her. Before the birth of Mahavira, his mother Trishalamata had 14 dreams signifying the great event. All were significant but two of them have a special meaning which is generally overlooked:

1. White bull making NADA (roar)

The meaning as given in Jain tradition is as follows: "A son will be born who will spread Dharma." (Dharma means duty or religion.)

The association of a bull with the spreading of Dharma goes back to a mantra from Rgveda:

Chatwari Shrunga trayo asya pada Dwe Sheershe Sapta hastaso asya  
Tridha buddho Vrshabho Rorveeti maho debo martya a wimesha.  
(Rgveda 4.58.3)

2. Smokeless fire

The meaning given in Jain tradition is as follows: "karmakshayam vitanishati pavakena" (Fire brings about the eclipse of the bondage of Karma.)

The above two dreams refer to the reiteration of Satya Dharma given through the Vedas and the importance of the agency of fire for purification of the atmosphere leading to purification of mind.

When Mahavira was about to leave the body, Indra, the chief of Devas, approached him in all humility and said, "Sire, the time chosen by you to depart is extremely inauspicious. It is the nemoonday of Ashwinamonth. If you depart now, the Jain-Teachings will not be effective among the people for 2,500 years. I beseech you to extend your lifespan for the benefit of all humanity." Prabhu Mahavira refused to accede to his request. It is now 2,500 years since the departure of the Divine Messenger from earth.

(To be continued...)

\*\*\*\*\*

Excerpts from Satsang Correspondence

Dear Mr. M.,

The five words that epitomize the Vedic path for material prosperity and inner contentment may be described as follows. Yajnya, Daan, Tapa, Karma and

Swadhyaya. How far is this relevant to the conditions that we live in today? We are willy nilly tied down to the minutes and seconds of the clock and no one will be in a mood to tie himself down further unless one feels the extreme necessity to do so. If one feels the necessity to enlarge his wisdom, the means should be such that anyone in any walk of life should be able to practice them with very little effort. If not, it will only adorn the shelves of an ivory tower philosopher. It is not of much use merely to diagnose the disease; we must also carry the remedy in the other hand. The Fivefold Path which is Kriya Yoga is now offered as a package deal; like instant coffee one might say. Any discipline that we persuade ourselves to follow should be such that at every step one should feel it is a journey of joy. A long face and any discipline for happiness go ill together. We have first to understand the various factors that lead to burdening the mind. We have then to give a thought to the ways and means of eliminating them. We have to consider all these things in terms of eliminating them. We have to consider all these things in terms of modern psychology as well as Yoga psychology. We have to examine the whole thing to the farthest limits of our reason and then decide the issue. We have to see that nothing that we say or do is against reason. Some things may be beyond reason as the Nobel prize winning physicists say.

One of the first things that we must consider is ecology. Polluted atmosphere has put a heavy strain on all of us. This is the unanimous opinion of the scientists of several countries that met under the auspices of United Nations.

Ancient Vedic knowledge about the science of bioenergy has a remedy for it. In general, it was termed Yajnya. Kriya Yoga begins with a small exercise in this direction which was reiterated recently by Divine Will. It is the purification of atmosphere which brings about purification of Prana. It is based on three disciplines.

1. Vibrations of Mantras uttered at the prescribed timings of sunrise and sunset.
2. Burning of specific substances into fire.
3. Cultivation of the attitude of surrender.

The above Vedic process is based on what the latest in physics calls Circadian Rhythms. The relationship of Prana and mind is not yet fully known to modern science although various pointers have been established.

The day has already dawned when science and religion become synonymous terms. All the Divine Messengers come to re-establish the same Law, i.e. Satya Dharma. Krishna, Buddha, Mahavira, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed are some of the well-known names. They all carry the same message. They use the language suited to the occasion and hence people who come after them sometimes fail to understand the message. Mainly it is ignorance coupled with vested interest that brings about the conflict. However, the time has now come when we will be forced to don the robe of a scientist and discard all superstition.

We teach all this in our Kriya Yoga classes. The aim is unfoldment of the Divine within you. One may belong to any religion or any ism; Kriya Yoga will unfold from within him a treasurehouse of Bliss.

FIVEFOLD PATH IS THE WAY

- 1) Agnihotra is the way  
For all the joy and all the bliss  
Agnihotra is the way.

It will make things very clear  
Purifies the atmosphere  
Next the Prana then the mind  
Do not be one left behind  
For all the joy and all the bliss  
Agnihotra is the way.

- 2) Daan is the way  
For all the joy and all the bliss  
Daan is the way.

Treat your assets as a trust  
To share with others is a must  
With humility every day  
Thus Daan is the way  
For all the joy and all the bliss  
Daan is the way.

- 3) Tapa is the way  
For all the joy and all the bliss  
Tapa is the way.

Do not in any way  
Make lust and greed part of your day  
Remove your anger and your pride  
Temptation envy throw aside  
Thus you practice every day  
And Tapa is the way.

- 4) Karma is the way  
For all the joy and all the bliss  
Karma is the way.

Offer fruits of action to the Lord  
Make work a way you pray  
You're the reaper of the deed  
You're the planter of the seed  
Thus you worship every day  
And Karma is the way.

- 5) Swadhyaya is the way  
Self study is the way  
For all the joy and all the bliss  
Swadhyaya is the way.

Who am I? Who am I?  
Start the search today  
Soul vision thus results  
Swadhyaya is the way.

- 6) Come join us on the Fivefold Path  
Find Joy in every day  
Come join us on the Fivefold Path  
You'll find it is the way.

For all the joy and all the bliss  
The Fivefold Path's the way.

(Vasant, Christmas, 1973)

\*\*\*\*\*

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

\*\*\*\*\*

Editor: Vasant V. Paranjpe  
Publisher: Sally Hobart Kocak for Fivefold Path, Inc.  
Parama Dham (House of Almighty Father)  
RFD #1, Box 121-C  
Madison, Virginia 22727  
U. S. A.  
Published on the first and third Thursday of each month.

All Satsang correspondence should be directed to Satsang Editor  
Agnihotra Press  
P. O. Box 13  
Randallstown, Maryland 21133

Reproduction by permission only.