

January 28, 1979 Satsaṅga with Baba Hari Dass

Edit notes: The following was typed from notes handwritten at the time of the darśana. Q denotes a question. B indicates what Babaji wrote on his chalkboard, as read by the reader, and then as heard and noted by someone present. R is comments likely of the chalkboard reader. Comments in square brackets are generally those of the typist. There was editing for format and IAST transliteration of Sanskrit terms.

Q: In reading and thinking about Indian philosophy, a way to split it up seems to be the idea of seeing God in everything, and then on the other side seeing God in nothing. It is possible to integrate these paths, or do you pick one and stay with it?

B: You choose one way. If you say “not this, not this, not this,” you go on rejecting things. Finally you attain truth. In the same way, with the other path, you go on saying “this is God, this is God,” and you expand so much that you attain the same truth. You can’t do both togetherR:

Q: Why do we yawn when we’re not tired?

B: Yawning is one of the emotions. When people start worship, they start yawning. Sometimes it increases so much that they faint. In tantric rituals it happens.

Q: In sādhana, distinct images come, other than the object of concentration. What causes this?

B: A thought. You’re not aware of it. Like anger. It makes an image.

R: Before thoughts are expressed in words, they’re pictures, images in the mind.

Q: Babaji says in Silence Speaks that fear has been developing in us from the day when jīva first died. Do all jīva have the same duration? Were all jīva created at the same time? Did all jīva take first birth at the same time?

B: Jīva take birth at different times. Jīva is the soul within the body, which goes through pleasure and pains. Some forms were before human beings. Some will be after.

Q: What is the difference between jīva and ātman?

B: Ātman is not trapped within a body. Jivātman is the soul [trapped within the body].

R: Jivātman is ātman inside a body. Ātman is a more general term of that universal soul.

Q: It’s not individualized at all?

B: As jivātman it’s individualized

Q: Why does jivātman differentiate from ātman and take birth?

B: According to the need of expansion, forms are formed.

Q: Is that answer any different from saying that only God knows?

B: Again the question will arise, what is God and where is he?

R: It does get down to basic unknowns.

Q: The jivātman doesn’t actually experience the pleasure and pain.

B: Yes.

R: It goes through it but doesn’t actually experience it. What is it that actually experiences the pleasure and pain?

B: Ignorance.

Q: Does the mind experience it? The body?

B: The mind which is in ignorance. Enlightened mind doesn't.

Q: How important is it to have a chosen ideal of God, an iṣṭa?

B: Having an iṣṭadeva is like blinders on a horse's eyes.

R: So that it can't see any place except straight ahead.

Q: Is that good or bad?

B: It's good if you're a horse. I mean when you have to run straight to one aim. Not a real horse.

Q: When I'm in a situation, I find I'm constantly trying to realize [foresee] the consequences and then I get involved in good or bad.

B: For example?

Q: If someone wanted to borrow money, I would wonder if the person would be able to pay me back and it would sway me as to whether I should lend the person money.

B: It builds up a whole story.

Q: Yes.

B: It's fear. The fear is hidden in all situations. Some people can't sleep when they have to travel the next day. They worry about where they'll put their suitcase or coat, etc.

Q: [Paramahansa] Yogānanda said that the Guru appears at the time of a devotee's death to guide and protect him. Is this so?

B: At the time of death, the mind acts like a lamp which gives more light when the oil is just burning out. Some can understand that which they never could understand in the past. We can say it is the appearance of Guru.

Q: If one has intellectual questions, is it best to ask them or wait until the answer is revealed within?

B: You have all the answers. If you concentrate a little, you will know. All the scriptures are written by those who concentrate.

Q: You seem to be saying it is better to concentrate, oneself, than to ask questions. So why are you answering our questions?

B: I'm not answering without [people first] asking.

Q: Instead of question and answer period, we should all just sit.

B: I like that.

Q: Kṛṣṇa says in the Gītā that without clarity one can't discriminate, and that discrimination is the whole reason for being alive. What kind of discrimination is he talking about?

B: It's called viveka buddhi. This kind of knowledge is developed after attaining sāmādhi. When we concentrate on some object we don't only see its outer form, but we pierce deep

inside and attain the knowledge of its formation. When we attain the knowledge of the formation of two objects, then we really know the difference. Ordinarily we say, “These two people are alike.” Or “These two apples are exactly the same.” In fact, there are no two things the same.

Q: More a discrimination of energy and elemental make-up, rather than specifics?

B: [Babaji nods.]

Q: What is wrong when one is trying to meditate and keeps dropping off to sleep?

B: People can sleep for various reasons: food, laziness, lack of concentration. If we are really trying to concentrate, then the mind can't sleep because it is engaged in concentration. The mind is a very tricky thing. It can trick us in anything. Sādhu do jala sādhana, which is sitting in cold water up to the nose and meditating, and still they fall asleep.

Q: As a child I was always taught to pray to Jesus Christ, and I still find myself doing it by habit, even though I can't understand that. I can understand that I am praying to an energy. Is it better to name a deity in one's prayer? Does it matter what deity?

B: Any name of God with which you feel comfortable. God is one.

R: With different names.

Q: Once I was working in an old people's home. An old man was very upset and said he was going to die. I tried to cheer him up and said no you're not. He died a few hours later. How do people know when they are dying?

B: The body dies gradually. If you watch yourself, you can feel the changes.

Q: Why do we sit with men and women on opposite sides of the room at satsaṅga?

B: In airports I saw separate bathrooms. I thought it must be a good thing. Males and females don't need to be together all the time. Sometimes they are more comfortable with their own sex. Also, in satsaṅga it is calmer when they are separated.

Q: I seem to be lacking in patience, and become angered easily. How can I improve my state of being?

B: Do silence once a week. It will develop tolerance.

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