

September 16, 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: What is the difference between dispassion and indifference?
B: Indifference can be not caring, when [whereas] in dispassion you care with no attachment. If the dispassionate person sees an animal with an injury, he will not remain in an indifferent mood.
R: He will care for the animal, but he won't be attached.
- Q: If a person can digest milk, how long is it okay for him to live on just liquids, such as tea with honey, milk, and ghee?
B: Forever. Milk is a complete diet.
Q: Is such a liquid diet a purification?
B: Yes, it purifies, but after some time, it also needs purification. Change of diet always purifies the body and mind. Solid diet to liquid diet, and then change back again.
- Q: If the body is retaining a lot of fluids, is there some way to reduce it?
B: Barley flour is good to eat. It is cooked in various ways.
- Q: I understand that Hindu astrology is a very intricate subject. Please give some idea how one could at least determine one's own beneficial planets.
B: I've not studied astrology. .
- Q: I've read that kuṇḍalinī is awakened by stopping breath, that she starts to suffocate and so rises up...
B: If that's all it takes, it means that ocean divers can be enlightened [maybe not Babaji's exact word]. It's not only holding the breath, it's regulating the breath, which is called prāṇāyāma. Holding is a part of it.
- Q: Is kuṇḍalinī related to the raw energy of our will to live?
B: Will to live is the main purpose of life. Kuṇḍalinī is the energy which keeps our life going from life to life.
- Q: If someone's job is one of helping and advising people, how does one know, given that everybody has to take their own path and make their own mistakes, to learn, how does one help someone else?
B: A person says look, there is a bird on the tree. The person points his finger in a direction. Now the seer sees it on his own.

Q: My parents plan to have our eighteen-year old dog put to sleep tomorrow. They won't listen to me, but they would to you.

B: Is the dog sick?

Q: Old....

B: But he's not sick?

Q: I don't know if age is a sickness. He looks sick.

B: Old age itself is a sickness.

R: The prognosis is death.

B: It's better to take care of the dog.

Q: Take care of it by keeping it alive?

R: He doesn't mean take care of it by killing it.

Q: If they don't listen and kill it, will we all share in the karma?

B: It affects karmically.

Q: Sometimes I see a small intense purple light. Do you know what that is?

R: It appears outside?

Q: Yes.

B: It happens by practice of trāṭaka or meditation. The mind creates a blue or purple light outside if the gaze is fixed. It can be used as an object of meditation inside the mind. Or the memory of it.

R: As an object of meditation.

Q: Is there any way to intensify it?

R: By using it as an object of meditation, that will intensify it, and it will become a real light.

Q: If one wants to learn the value of silence, and learn to be quiet, to learn the practice of silence, what would you suggest? How would you learn how to be silent?

B: By not talking.

R: That's just the gross method. The mind works overtime at first. Then you have to learn to silence the mind. That's the second stage.

B: It's most easy practice.

Q: Would one day a week be a fair beginning?

B: One day a week silence is a good practice

Q: Why don't you speak to us?

B: To practice silence.

R: He's habituated to his practice now and has no desire to speak anymore.

B: Verbal silence is practice for silencing the mind, which is the main aim of life. By verbal silence, we gradually cut ourselves off from the desire of associating with others. Also it's a method of preserving life energy.

Q: Why would you want to cut yourself off from associating with other people?

B: To silence the mind.

R: You realize, too, he's speaking as a monk. He's speaking as someone who's been a monk since the age of eight. Practices for monks are somewhat different from for people in the world.

Q: Have you chosen America as your permanent residence, and if so, why?
B: Nothing is permanent. I never felt permanent anywhere. I lived in so many places and always felt like a traveler.

Q: Is it all right to chant out loud in public places, such as at bus stops?
B: It will collect people.
Q: Will it harm anything?
B: No. They will be curious. Then you will have to explain to them what you are doing.
Q: Do you think it would be better for me to avoid setting up that kind of situation?
B: Yes.

Q: What is the best way to practice meditation on the heart?
B: There's a method of concentration.
R: For mediating on the heart.
B: Visualize a twelve finger width of flame where the rib and the stomach join.
R: The place where the solar plexus is, the bottom of the ribcage.
B: The tip of the flame touches the bottom of viśuddha cakra.

Q: In the reading for today, Brother Lawrence [Nicolas Herman] talked about the importance of faith. Is there a similar concept in yoga?
B: Yes. Śraddhā and visarga, faith and effort.
R: And that gives the result.

Q: Why do you give candy to children?
B: They like it. They ask.
Q: Isn't it bad for them?
B: It can be bad if they eat too much.

Q: How do you feel about affirmations, visualizations, for material things?
R: Like what?
Q: A house.
B: You do it anyway. The whole world is created like that.
R: That's how it works. You get what you want.
B: The idea of yoga is to remove the mind from the world.
R: Not to expand it.
Q: So is to do visualizations like that negative for spirituality?
B: It will always create attachment.
R: Attachment is the biggest hindrance to spiritual practice.
B: You will visualize a house. And you will repair it. And you will rent it. And then the tenants will destroy the walls, and you will get angry and run to beat them.

Q: Brother Lawrence said he had lived in the presence of God for thirty years, and in a letter written in the last week of his life, he said I hope I'll be able to see Him in a few days. Are these two different things he was talking about?

B: One is peace.

R: The thirty years of peace is the presence of God.

B: Second, Who is the Creator of peace?

R: Go see Him.

B: After thirty years, his mind awakened again.

R: Vyutthāna in Sanskrit.

Q: Would that be like a final liberation, if he went from those thirty years of peace to God?

B: Yes.

[Continued below]

Q: Is taking care of the physical body and physical needs a hindrance to spirituality?

B: If you have to cross a river, you have to keep the boat in good shape.

R: You're the boat.

[Continuing from above]

Q: Vyutthāna?

R: It's the initial awakening, followed by vyutthāna after vyutthāna. Vyutthāna is the awakening impulse. Once you're in a stage, awakening to a higher stage. Then the previous vyutthāna becomes a hindrance. Brother Lawrence was apologizing to his superior for not doing the practices, because when he was wrapped in bliss, he couldn't do them.

Q: Do the desires and ambitions necessary for success in the world ever come to a point where they're in the way of the desires and ambitions we have for reaching God? Where you have to make a choice?

B: Yes. Everyone's mind clicks in their lifetime. Some ignore it, and some change their mind.

[A child asking, perhaps]

Q: When you were a boy, what role did you play in the Rāmāyaṇa?

B: A monkey. Then they did not want me as a monkey, so I played a demon.

R: Then he beat all the monkeys.

Q: What costume did you wear?

B: Same as you.

Q: How many people were in the cast?

B: About 150-200.

Q: Were there masks, clubs and other props?

B: Yes.

Q: What scenes did you do?

B: Śiva meditating on Mt. Kailāsa, and other monkey and demon scenes.

- Q: When meditating, I become distracted by noises, such as someone in another room, or a bird outside, and I have a distinct feeling of fear that comes down in my body and stops between my heart and my navel.
- B: It happens if someone makes aloud noise very close to you. Otherwise, it can't happen. One can faint.
- Q: Usually the noises aren't very loud.
- B: Wear earplugs. It stops.
- Q: Why do noises seem so loud during meditation, such a shock to the nervous system?
- B: The mind is concentrated in one object. A loud noise breaks that concentration, and the whole mind turns to that noise. At other times only a partial mind turns to the noise, and we don't feel it very loud.
- Q: Does the nervous system react?
- B: Prāṇa in the body shoots up.
- Q: Pain in the knees when sitting for meditation....
- R: Pinesap plaster is what Babaji usually recommends for that. Put it on at night and take it off in the morning.
- Q: How much can a pregnant mother influence the karma of the baby by meditating, if the soul is already in the fetus?
- B: Babies take karma of their own and karma of their parents, society, and friends. The baby in the womb can get good saṁskāra by the mother's positive attitude.

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