

Life Mission

Mebane, North Carolina, USA

July 17, 2011

Swami Satyanard's Lecture on Guru Purnima Day

“Lead us from illusion to reality

Lead us from darkness(ignorance) to light(knowledge)

Lead us from death to immortality”

Today is the Guru Purnima Day. It is called the festival of knowledge. According to the scriptures, knowledge leads to salvation, Moksha. But what kind of knowledge? By reading books, by reading scriptures? Information becomes memory, and memory is a vritti of Chitta. Yoga tells to control vrittis, desires. So this information is not knowledge. It is bondage. Whatever information we receive through worldly means becomes memory which binds us. It becomes a burden later on which even disturbs our sleep.

The scriptures say “(Sa Vidhya ya Vimuktaye)”. True knowledge is that which relieves us from bondage. Also in the scriptures it is stated “True knowledge is yoga-bound, and yoga is connected with Atman. It is called the Asthang Yoga.” Only through Sadhana, this can be understood.

Lord Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita:

“Na hi jyanen sadrusham pavitram ih vidhyate

Tat svayam yoga-sansidhhah Kalen atmani vindanti!”

This means nothing is holier than (true) knowledge and it can be achieved through yoga over a course of time. It emerges from the atma which ultimately leads to Moksha. Thus yoga is the sole means for salvation. Lord Krishna continues to say, “For the welfare of the mankind, I have told three-fold Yoga, Karma yoga, Jyan yoga and Bhakti yoga. Besides this, there is no other avenue”.

Yoga vidhya is also called the Brama vidhya. Secrets of yoga cannot be had without the Guru. Saint Kabir said, “*There is inverted well in the sky where in there is nectar. Those having real Guru will sip it but Guru-less will go thirsty.*”

Yoga sadhana continues for years and for births; because samskaras from several

births need to be abolished. That is why Lord Krishna says in Bhagvad Gita, “Bahunam Janmanam ante, Jyanvan mam Prapadyante!” *“The seeker finds me after so many births.”*

The question may arise. Why do I have to do this long term, on-going yoga? Once I was giving a talk on “who am I” in L.A. in the USA. A doctor devotee asked, “I enjoy my life, and I wish for the same in all my birth. I am not interested in Moksha because life, to me is pleasant.” I replied, “Are you sure you will never get pain? You are happy in this birth, but are you sure you will get the same happiness in the next birth?” “You may get happiness for many more births to come, but you will never be able to escape the cycle of birth, death and rebirth.

You perhaps do not know what kind of suffering the Jiva undergoes through while in the mother’s womb. This has been described in Garudpuran. The womb is very limited area. The child cannot stretch its hands and legs. There is filth all around. He tries to move out to a clean corner out of misery, but the mother feels joyful because she feels the life of the child. What a contrast? The child is in pain. He feels each day as long as a year.” When it becomes unbearable, God makes him know his past lives. Then the child understands the reason for his misery. He urges God to relieve him from the pain with a promise that once freed from this hell, he/she will endeavor hard to attain Him. But after birth, the Jiva forgets God, his promise, and gets involved with the Maya.

Moksha means end of suffering from birth and death, old age and disease. Freedom from heat and cold, pain and pleasure, fatigue and sleep, hunger and thirst, likes and dislikes, from all the natural laws and law of karma or any kind of limitations. One becomes unlimited, one with the rest. Saint Kabir said, “Muve ko Moksh kya? Where is the question of Moksha for the dead? Those who die cannot get Moksha.”

Lord Krishna said,

Jara-maran mokshay mamashritya yatanti ye

Te brahm tatvidyuh krutnam-adhyatmam karm ch akhilaam !

“Those who come to me and try to conquer old age and death, are able to know Brahm, Adhyatma, and all deeds.”

Human life is for the liberation of the soul. This is not possible in any other species in the entire universe. Even heavenly beings cannot achieve liberation without having human bodies. Brahmaji created 8.4 million species but he was not happy until he

created human beings because only human beings have a chance of attaining liberation through their physical bodies.

This is a special favor done for us by Brahma as follow:

1. God had made man in his own image. God likes the creation of man because through Sadhana, man can merge with God. The human body has a secret path to achieve liberation which can be unveiled by a Guru only.
2. God has given us discriminative intelligence so that we can attain liberation. Man can do new Karmas. No other species can do this. They can just enjoy or suffer the fruits of their previous deeds. Even heavenly beings enjoy the fruits of their good deeds but once they are squared up, they come back as human beings.
3. Kalashakti is energy. It is live, creative and luminous. The lord has sixteen kalas, the highest of all. Sattvic human beings have eight kalas. Through Sadhana, a human being can achieve up to fifteen kalashaktis. Heavenly beings have eleven kalashaktis.
4. From the point of view of space in the universe, we occupy the middle position, Bhulok. There are six higher realms (various heavens) and seven lower realms (patalas). The higher realms are Bhuhvarlok, Svarlok, Maharlok, Janlok, Taplok and Brahm lok. Lower realms are Tal, Atal, Satal, Rasatal, Talatal, Mahatal and Patal. Man can achieve either the higher level or the lower level.
5. God gave us instrument-human body for liberation.

So we are in the middle; half of the Kalashakti of God. We have a have choice to go up or down, have free will to do new karma, and can attain moksha. God is so kind that he reminded us in mother's womb and of all of these favors. If we can fulfill the purpose of human life, then we will have moksha. Such opportunity cannot come to us again and again. As Milarepa, the great Tibetan yogi said, "Life is short, and the time of death is uncertain; so apply yourselves to meditation, avoid doing evil, and acquire merit to the best of your ability, even at the cost of life itself. Our life is a boundary- mark whence one may take an upward or downward path. Our present time is the most precious time, wherein each of us must decide, in one way or the other, for lasting good or lasting ill".

It is the Kaliyuga now. Kaliyuga lasts for 432,000 years. We have passed about five thousand years so far. The world has changed enormously in the last 40 – 50 years. Values are changing. Violence is increasing. Man is losing trust in another man, and also in God. Man is feeling lonely. Love is becoming a rare commodity. Families are breaking down. We do not know what we are getting into. At the height of Kaliyug,

our life-span will be twenty years. An eight year girl will conceive and become a mother. If we do not try for Moksha now, how many times would we be born and how much would we suffer? It is for our benefit to choose the path of liberation through yoga. God has granted us another favor. If you do Sadhana in Kaliyug, you get four times more benefits compared to that done in Satyug. This means that ten years of Sadhana in Kaliyug equals forty years of Sadhana in Satyug.

Now the question is how to be free? What really bothers us? Why are there physical and mental suffering? We have physical pain because our consciousness is connected with the body. If we withdraw the consciousness from physical body, there will be no physical pain. To do so, we need to cleanse our bodies through the practice of Hatha yoga. To conquer mental pain, we need to withdraw consciousness from the subtle body which consists of senses, their objects, mind and ego. To do so, we need to practice Lay yoga. As we progress in Lay yoga, detachment from the world comes naturally based on true knowledge. Afflictions of raga- dvesha and egoism fall away. Once the ego melts, true surrender to God comes, which leads to Samadhi. As Patanjali puts it “ Samadhi is attained through Ishvar-pranidhanadva”. During Samadhi, Atman connects with Parmatma. This spiritual process aims at subsiding the mind and ego. In reality, we go the other way. We nourish mind and ego. As we indulge in Bhoga, we go away from Yoga. Bhoga and Yoga are opposite to each other. We need to follow Yam and Niyam. Bhakti says the same thing. Bhakti means to worship, to love, to observe. We follow rituals in Bhakti but if we do not follow Yam and Niyam, it brings no good results. Not only that, but acting counter to Yam and Niyam are considered greater sins by the scriptures. Lies, violence, greed, stealing, hypocrisy and adultery are greater sins and lead to Hell. For spiritual growth, Naitikta (morality) and Satvikta (serenity) are the basic, fundamental requirements. Our behaviors need to be pure and transparent. Impure and dishonest behaviors take us away from Atman and Parmatma. It creates conflict between Atman and mind. It results in disharmony between body, mind and soul. We can't decide right from wrong. Our life falls off the right direction leading to a tragic end!

We all are entitled to Dharma Purusharth, but for the Moksha Purushartha, we need to earn the eligibility through Dharma Purushartha. According to Sanatan Sanskriti, every individual has to perform four Purusharths. This means the purpose of life. There are four purposes. Dharma, Artha, Kam, and Moksha. Dharma, Artha, and Kam are social duties, whereas Moksha is an individual duty or purpose. Social duties are performed through Sadachar (sat+achar), meaning the behavior through which Atma, Ishwar, Brahm, and Truth can be achieved. Dharma and Sadachar hereby can up lift

the individual in the family, in the society and even in the whole world. Dharma and life are inseparable. Dharma resides in the individual, e.g. heat is the dharma of fire. Without heat, there is no fire. In the same manner, humanity is the Dharma of every human being. Without humanity, he will be called an animal.

As said in our scriptures,

Ahar Nidra bhay maithunasch, atad samanya pashubhihi naranam

Dharm hi tesham adhiko vishesh, Dharmen hina, pushubhihi samana!

Diet, sleep, fear and sexual enjoyments are common in man and animal. Dharm is a special endeavor for human beings for without dharm he is an animal.

To follow these four Purusharthas, our culture has established four Ashrams.

Brahmcharyashram, Gruhasthashram, Vanprashthashram, and Sansyasashram. In previous ages, a six year old child was sent to the Guru's Ashram, in the forest away from society. He worked at serving the Guru and gaining knowledge for twenty-five years. He had no contact with money until then. Next he would go back home, get married, have kids and fulfill all social obligations for the next twenty five years. Kam Purushartha was suggested until the first child was born. At age fifty one, he would start detaching himself from worldly allurements and begin with Dharma Purushartha. For the last phase, he would go away and do Sadhana for Moksha.

Many of you have crossed the fifties, but you are not inclined to Vanprashthashram. You may say that there are no more forests left. My dear fellowman, this Ashram is in the jungle! You may come here and get Sadhana according to your prakruti. My personal experience tells me that Seva and Sadhana are the two things that can uplift us. Come here for a few days and learn to live a simple but spiritual life of a real Ashramite. You may come up with all kinds of excuses and claim you are too busy to do such a thing. But on the other hand, if the doctor recommends you go to the hospital because of a terminal disease, would you not go? There are no excuses there. I recommend this plan to win the whole birth-cycle. As you grow older, you need to reduce worldly attachments. Let the kids take over the responsibilities, and you get involved with activities leading to self-search.

You may even argue further that in this Kaliyug, and in this materialistic world it is impossible to live according to the Ashrams. Let me share with you happily and proudly that I have been living according to the Ashrams. I followed celibacy and gained knowledge until I was twenty-four. Then I got married, enjoyed all worldly attractions until I turned forty, and then, I gave up everything and started living

Vanprashthashram. I lived with the society but as a sadhu, monk. Since age 57, I have been a Sanyasi, a sadhak, doing Seva and Sadhana per my Guru's command. I am happy. I am content. I know I am not going to get Moksha during this life, or even many more to come, but I am on the right path. My Guru has put me on the right track. Before this, I was like a shunting engine. It was a futile exercise. What I learned is that we should start practicing Moksha Purusharth during this life, because we do not know when it is going to end. We should not feel regretful at the time of death that we did not or could not do what we are supposed to. I need to prepare for my next birth now. Or what would I tell my God when I am up there?

Self- conquest is better than world- conquest and renunciation of the world better than accumulation of all the riches of the world because all worldly pursuits have but the one unavoidable and inevitable end, which is sorrow: acquisition ends in dispersion; building in destruction; meeting in separation; birth in death. Knowing this, one should, from the very first, renounce acquisition and heaping- up, building, and meeting. Be faithful to the commands of an eminent Guru, set about realizing the Truth (which has no birth or death). That alone is the best science.

Let us decide on this holy day of Guru Purnima that we will walk along the path of welfare and betterment as shown by His Holiness Rajarshi Muni. May the blessings of Lord Lakulish and H. H. Rajarshi Muni be bestowed upon you all.

Jai Bhagwan to you all with love,
Swami Satyanand