

Satsang with Om Baba

(from Satsang on 12.12.2015, Rishikesh, India)

Non-Stealing

The Self, abiding in infinite forms, enjoying this timeless sleep for lifetime after lifetime, form after form, enjoying the sleep, until, in one moment, He gets tired of it. He hears some rumours of an awakened state and, always looking for something fascinating, the Self wants to have a taste of this awakened state, and that's why the Self in many different forms is here today; it wants to have a taste of the awakened state.

So, many times, we speak about Vedanta. Sometimes we speak about Yoga. Both paths are perfect. Both paths lead to the same destination, which is awakening.

In these days, and for ten satsangs, we speak about the foundation of Yoga, that is the Yamas and Niyamas – the ten disciplines, the ten restrictions, the moral code of the Yogi, the first step in the practice of Yoga. Five Yamas, five Niyamas: non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, brahmacharya, simplicity – five Yamas. And five Niyamas: purity of body and mind, contentment, tapasya (austerities), study of the scriptures and repetition of the holy name (one discipline), and lastly surrender.

We have already spoken about non-violence. We have spoken about truthfulness. Today, we will speak about non-stealing. This is a very deep and important Yogic discipline. If you ask people in general if they practise non-stealing, they will say “Of course!” In the whole world, nobody's stealing, nobody...

As we said with truthfulness, that only a truly spiritual person is really truthful. The same thing with non-stealing: only a yogi, or a true spiritual person practises non-stealing.

What is stealing and what is non-stealing? You can say the whole of the universe, or the whole of universal experience is like a supermarket – a supermarket filled with infinite experiences. It's a very, very big supermarket, it's a mall, very big, with many departments, many branches and filled with infinite experiences that we can possibly have as aware beings. And every experience has on it a price. And we are strolling inside this supermarket. It is our favourite place. We are strolling inside the supermarket that is called the universe, our universal experience. It is called Mahamaya – the grand illusion.

And we are watching all these fascinating experiences. Some of these experiences are sensual experiences in the sensual department. Another department is mental experiences. Another department is divine experiences. Three departments. And we are going around with our shopping basket and we are looking at these experiences. And each one of them has a price.

Many times, we feel attracted to one universal product – to one product of the grand illusion. And we say “I would love to have this”, but then we see the price and we say “Whoops!” and we go to the next one. And sometimes we are so attracted to a certain experience that we don't care about the price and we take it and we go out. And, as a rule, as a 100% rule, before we step out, there is a hand that comes onto our shoulder and we hear “Hey, you! Where are you going? Please come to the counter, Sir”. And then you have to pay. And sometimes, most of the time, you have to pay a bit extra in these cases – because of the inconvenience.

Stealing, in truth, does not exist. It's impossible to take something from the universe, without giving something equivalent in return. It is impossible. So, the first and fundamental principle of non-stealing is that you cannot do it! You cannot have any experience, either sensual or mental or divine without giving something equivalent in return, without paying the price.

There is the possibility that we will have to pay more than the price as in the case we talked about before, when we try to play tricks. We might be forced to pay more than the price, to pay the extra fine. That is called stealing.

We cannot actually steal, but the intention itself, if I may call it the wickedness, the wicked intention, the cunning intention, that itself creates imbalance in the universe, and that comes back. That is the extra fine.

So, stealing, or non-stealing, is not connected just with taking money from somebody, or taking some objects, or cheating somebody. Stealing is a connection between the individual person and the universe.

Just like all other faults, stealing is also connected with the ego. It has its root in the ego. Why? Because, for some reason, there is something inside of us that is not happy with what it already has. We are surrounded by so many blessings, by so many gifts, and something does not appreciate that, something wants more, something is always discontent – it wants a little bit more. That quality, that energy – you can call it whatever you like – it always wants something more. We call it the ego. It is, by its nature discontent; it can never be content. Even if you give it the full supermarket, the most pristine sensual experiences, the most pristine divine experiences, it will still want something more. It is never happy.

So, the wish to have something more – that comes from the ego. It comes from the misconception that we don't have everything. It comes from discontentment. It comes from a lack of appreciation and a lack of gratefulness.

So, when something inside feels that it needs something more, and it slowly, slowly becomes a craving, it becomes a burning craving, then it just tries to snatch it. It tries to take it by a tricky way, without paying the price. That, by itself, is not possible to do, but that effort to do it is what we call stealing and it is the cause of a very great loss of energy for the human being. It's a great source of suffering for the human being. For the spiritual man, it is like a hole through which the spiritual energy leaks out.

By receiving anything, without giving something equivalent in return, this is also called stealing. By giving a gift and then taking it back – this is called stealing. By having some service offered by somebody, by not offering to him what he deserves, this is called stealing. By going to the market here to buy some bananas and you ask, "How much is a banana?" and he says "100 rupees, Sir" – this is called stealing.

By going to the market to buy bananas, let's say one costs five rupees, and you ask him, "How many rupees?" and he says "Five rupees" and you say, "Come on, five rupees! Take four" – this is also stealing.

I tell you, if you are not sure, if you have doubts, give more. Let him take it. If he tells you ten 10 for a banana, pay 10 rupees. If he tells you 20 rupees, pay 20 rupees. If he tells you 50 rupees... go to the next one. Don't take the risk.

Now the question arises, how can we know exactly the right price for what we are offered? How can we know what we should give in return? So we know that we are not somehow doing something unfair. How can we know? It is difficult to know. My suggestion is offer more.

If you are not sure if it's 20 or 30, give 30, don't think about it. You will not lose the extra you have given, it will come back to you, don't worry. But don't make the mistake of giving less. Give more. That is the practical principle of the Yogi.

Many times, what we have said before, about experiences and the price of those experiences, to many of us this is clear in the sensual world; we know if we want to buy a car, we have to pay a certain price – this is very clear. But, when it comes to, say, a mental experience, it is not clear. We do not understand that we have to pay a price for this as well.

When it comes to a divine experience, ahhh, this is an important issue. Many people wish to have a divine experience, and say “Oh, this is easy” – just take a pill and then have a divine experience. It doesn't work like that, you cannot have it – you have to pay its price. What will be its price? It could be suffering, it could be pain. Usually, it is a form of suffering, whether suffering that comes before or comes after. Observe! It may have happened many times in your life, where you have one or two days or a period of very great suffering and you don't know where it comes from and that, at the end of that period, some gift, or reward comes and you say, “Oh, it was truly worth it! Not only three months of suffering, but 30 years of suffering was worth that gift – a truly powerful, divine experience”.

Sometimes it works like this; sometimes it works the other way round: you have a divine experience and then some balance comes in the form of purification or in the form of something unpleasant, something inconvenient.

Now, craving for divine experiences, for example, a person who wants to develop a siddhi – a yogic power, a divine yogic power – we read in the scriptures many times that some aspirants, (especially those of a demonic nature), go up to the Himalayas and practise tapasya for 10,000 years. They stay for 1,000 years without food and every year they cut off one finger – this is the way of the demons to acquire divine power.

You don't need these things. They go through very much suffering, self-torture in order to get a universal experience with a very high price tag. This is a way to pay for it. Of course, this is not the pure way, not the sattvic way.

Spiritual practice, a sattvic spiritual practice – not that which I just mentioned – a good spiritual practice, to do japa, to do meditation, to offer selfless service, to give charity, service to the Master, all these things, this generates spiritual energy, spiritual Shakti. This spiritual Shakti we can use to manifest any experience, and you don't need to do any stealing. You will be like a rich man – a truly rich man. It is through the spiritual Shakti that any universal experience can be purchased. Anything.

When you lack that spiritual Shakti, you will need to pay in another way, through suffering, or you will simply not have the experience. Any universal experience, for example, to have a wife, or to have children.

Many people come to me who wish to have a child – I say to them: “No, this is not what you truly want! What you need is a good child, not just a child”. Otherwise, a child it can be a source of tremendous suffering. You should wish for a good child”.

A good child is a source of joy. A bad child is a source of suffering. Be careful what you wish for. But how can you have a good child? You need to have some spiritual merit, spiritual money, so to say.

So, do your practice, do your spiritual practice. Purify yourself and you will attract pure energies. You will attract a pure companion. You will attract pure children.

In your connection with other people, with other human beings, which are nothing other than the manifestation of your own Self, in this connection we must try to offer more than what you take. When you have birthdays, don't ask for everyone to give you gifts. It's a very bad habit of the Western culture. When you have birthdays, give to everybody! Celebrate your birthday by being a source of happiness for other people. Don't seek to receive happiness from other people. Be yourself the source of happiness.

You should cultivate the attitude "I was not born in this place to receive happiness from everyone – I was born in this place to give happiness."

There's a very beautiful, small ritual you can do on your birthday, or on any other day. Instead of wishing to receive things, offer things.

In all your transactions with human beings, offer more than what you want from them. You don't need anything from anybody. In truth, there is nothing that anybody can give to you; you have everything already inside. Seek for this, for spirituality, discover it and share it with everybody.

When one realises the infinite wealth he has inside of him, then there is no space for stealing. There is no craving. There is no wish for anything else. What comes by itself is welcome. If nothing comes, again, you are happy.

As long as this wealth, this source, has not been discovered inside, then, inevitably, there will be some desire for something external. Inevitably there is the danger for stealing, that is to take something without giving something back, because you feel you need it to be happy, to be fulfilled.

You need to be with a person, for example, a husband or a wife, and this person comes after much suffering and austerities, perhaps subconscious austerities that you have performed. All beautiful external experiences can come only after many austerities.

Still, you will not be happy and you will need children, and you will need your children to be like this and that. Then you will need grandchildren. And it never ends.

There is only one true solution to stealing: realising yourself. Find contentment with what you have. Be grateful for the gifts that are constantly showered upon you. Contentment. Gratefulness. Then, you become a source of happiness for other beings. You don't crave for happiness from them. And if somebody feels like stealing from you, then you say, "Come you can take it. I have so much. No matter how much you take I will have enough. Take, take!"

That is what Jesus Christ meant when he said that if somebody comes and steals your upper clothing, give him also your trousers, give also your coat to him. You have so much, so much.

So, in the state of ignorance, stealing is always a danger. As long as we feel we need something, that we truly need something, then there is danger – danger for violence, stealing and untruthfulness. In the state of contentment, there can be no danger.

Many times, all of us human beings wish for something in our lives. And some things do not arrive immediately. We say, "I want to have this. I want to go to India. I want to go to the Bahamas. But, somehow, I don't have the money now. What should I do?"

Patience is something that helps. When there is a strong wish for something, sometimes it is only a matter of time until it comes and it is fulfilled.

When we have generated the spiritual energy we need for that, either through spiritual practice, or through suffering, then that becomes fulfilled. It may take one hour, one day, one year, one lifetime, but it will be fulfilled.

You can say in this way that spiritual practice is a sort of voluntary suffering – a sort of austerity, a sort of tapasya. It generates spiritual Shakti. This is one way. The other way, if you deny this, if you neglect it, is to go for involuntary suffering – suffering we don't wish to have. And maybe in this way your wish will also be fulfilled, but I don't suggest it.

Spiritual practice, sadhana, and austerities are the medicine for the disease of stealing. Going inside yourself, discovering yourself, discovering the truth of your being, discovering what lies behind the mind and the body, that brings perfect contentment. At the same time, much spiritual Shakti is generated.

Selfless service, or karma yoga, is the opposite of stealing. We offer something without expecting something in return. Again, in this case, it's impossible that nothing will come in return. Not only will something equivalent come back, but something even greater will come back. When you have this clear understanding, and one starts to practise more and more selfless service, to offer to others whatever he can offer – some people have money and offer money, some people offer some talent or strength and they can offer this. Some people have knowledge and they can offer this. Without expecting something in return. How beautiful! How fulfilling!

Only a very rich person can do this. The person who practises selfless service is very rich. The person who always seeks for something from the others is a miserable, poor fellow, even if he is a billionaire. And the world is full of these people – billionaires that seek for something from other people. At the same time, there are people who have nothing, and yet, the little bit that they have they want to share.

So, we said that every one of the disciplines is accompanied by a divine power, by a siddhi. We spoke about the siddhi for non-violence, that is whoever perfects himself in non-violence, never encounters violence, either directly or indirectly. Wonderful. This is the secret to peace.

The siddhi for truthfulness, whoever always speaks the truth, whatever he says will become true.

The siddhi for non-stealing, for whomever practises non-stealing, is that he will always be provided with what he needs without any effort. That person, who practises non-stealing, will always have from the universe whatever he or she needs without any effort – it will come by itself. And I am sure that many people, if not everybody who is here, belong to that category. Otherwise, you would not be able to be here. You would be back in Europe or, even worse, back at work now.

So, a person who practises non-stealing, who perfects himself in non-stealing – either in this lifetime or in the next lifetime, is always provided with what he needs without any effort. A person who practises stealing, stealing of any form, will need to work even for the basics. Poverty is the fruit of stealing, and it comes from stealing alone and nothing else, just as a balanced, content life comes from non-stealing.

On the other hand, that person who gives selflessly, either his service or he gives his money, who is charitable, that person will not only be provided with everything he needs without any effort – he will also be provided with many extras.

For example, he will be born in a rich family, or even in this very lifetime he will acquire some extra convenience, you could say. He will have not only what he needs, but many extra things, which, if he is an intelligent person, he will not keep for himself, but he will share with others. And, by sharing, he will become richer and he will share even more. And, again, by sharing, even richer. And that is the way to supreme wealth. That is the way to be a billionaire – a billionaire of the spirit, not a material billionaire.

So, in this respect, my advice is offer what you can without asking for something back. Restrain your ego. Restrain yourself. Say to it: “You don’t know what you want. You are never satisfied anyway. Let the universe provide for me what I need.” And whatever you need, not what the ego wants, but whatever you truly need will be provided at all times – and much more than that. Without asking, without even asking – by itself, like a gift, like the rain from above, by itself it will be provided. How beautiful. This is the teaching of non-stealing. The Self is the destination.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti!