

Tests for the disciple

Welcome everybody to the Satsang!

What about shall we speak today?

Let us speak a little bit about the noisy India. Everybody comes here to India to find some peace, to experience an environment that is ideal for meditation, that is supporting the meditation, a peaceful environment. And, when he comes here to India, he realizes how much wrong he was.

Peace on an external level it is very difficult to find here – maybe only deep in the forest. Whatever the ideas we have, how a proper place must be for our spiritual growth, the Truth is very different.

The spiritual path is not a path of roses, it's not a path that is spread with rose petals that we can walk upon. It's not an easy path. It's not necessarily a pleasant path. It's certainly not a path as we would like it to be - certainly not! If things always come as you would like them to be it means that something is very wrong.

If you happen to be with a Master, if you are blessed to be with a real Guru, you will find that things come almost all the time as you don't want them to come! Because that which wants, one thing or another thing, which has preferences, this is nothing else than the Ego. This is the very strong, deep rooted idea of individuality inside of us - that I am an individual being, I have these desires, I have these aims, these goals, this purpose in life. I have this purpose and I must fulfil it. It is so stupid... you cannot fulfil your purpose, only His purpose can be fulfilled and you can only be an instrument of that, willingly or unwillingly.

Spiritual growth is not so much about having a peaceful environment. Spiritual growth is about transcending our own Ego. Spiritual growth is about developing patience, compassion, strength, sincerity and we have a lot of opportunities for this here in India.

There is also one more reason for these external difficulties. Many people come here to India or to other spiritual places having a little bit of curiosity - they are coming here like tourists "let me check out Rishikesh, let me check out the capital of Yoga" - because nowadays it is the coolest thing to come here to Rishikesh. This is what everybody does, come here to take a Yoga certificate, then he will have something to brag about himself later on.

These people don't have much an opportunity spiritually so when they come here and see this environment being very much different, very noisy, very difficult, very challenging... the energies are challenging, the food is challenging, the colours are challenging, the noise, the monkeys, the motorbikes are challenging, challenges from all directions - most of the people simply don't stay. They just go.

This is something very positive because only the true ones remain. If you are true and sincere in your goal, in your path, no matter what happens externally, no matter how much noise, how many difficulties, no matter if you have money or no money, people or no people, what people think about you, whatever, you are going to stay.

When I was with Maharajji, many of the younger people would have a very hard time with elder ones, who seem to be quite tough and even "territorial". So, most of them, maybe nine out of ten, they would go, saying "No, this is not the divine Sangha that I was imagining, this is not like a pleasure garden, this is not like a path with rose petals, it is not for me, I go somewhere where it is more easy". Very, very few stayed, very few, and the sage in his room he was smiling because he wanted only these few.

Maharajji was inside his room, he was not going out but he was listening anything that was happening outside, he knew everything and he never tried to change any of these difficult situations. All these unpleasant situations in the Sangha and he never tried to change, because those who were sincere they were going to stay for sure. Those that were not sincere they were going to go, anyway. So why to interfere? Maharajji wanted only the true ones: few, maybe one, maybe two, maybe three... good! This is the second challenge.

You can say, the first challenge is the various external difficulties, like noises, food, etc. Challenges within the Sangha is the second test: maybe a feeling that I don't belong here, maybe a feeling that I am not welcome, that I am not respected, that I am mistreated, some people even may say "I am abused". "Why are you abused?" "He looked me in this way!" - this is not abuse! "I said to him 'Hi' and he didn't say anything. I feel abused". This is the second test, the Sangha itself. Sangha is nothing else then an extension of the Guru, an expansion of the Guru, that works as the Guru wants it to work most of the times.

The third challenge, even greater, is what happens inside of us, our own Ego.

You may endure the difficulties of the place, maybe it is cold, maybe it is noisy, whatever.

You may be even stronger and sincere than that and you can endure the difficulties of the Sangha and the people around you because they are not as you want them to be, but how will you endure your own Ego when he will be crying for survival in the presence of the Guru? When it will be crying and begging to run away to survive - and it is truly a cry for

survival because, close to the true Master, the Ego is bound to dissolve, it cannot possibly survive.

This is a challenge that most people are failing. This is the great test, this is the supreme test even for a very advanced spiritual devotee, even for somebody who has walked for long time with the Guru. There comes a moment where he feels “now, I am long time with the Guru, now I must be Guru myself, I don’t need anymore to have a teacher or a Master. Now I am Guru myself, I am the same like the Guru, he cannot talk to me like that, I will not bow to him, I am the same”.

This person that advances spiritually will attract people, people will start coming to him, this is natural. He will have his own students. The arrogance will grow, the Ego will grow and that’s the greatest danger!

Sri Shankaracharya used to say: “Even if all the emperors of the world come and put their head on your feet, if your mind is not at the feet of the Guru then, what’s the meaning of it?” Then you have nothing, you have failed. Even if all the emperors of the world and all the queens, all the kings and stars, celebrities, politicians, everybody come and put their head on your feet, if your mind is not at the feet of the Guru, you have failed.

To have all the great ones to bow at your feet, this is not at all an indication of success. To have your mind at the feet of the Lord, that is indication of success.

If you manage to pass these three challenges, there is nothing else standing in your way for the highest Truth, there is nothing else standing in your way to merge with the Guru, to truly receive his knowledge, to truly receive his blessings. There is nothing else standing in the way to merge in the Supreme.

Maharajji was saying that “when we have a very sincere thirst for the Truth, then the Guru will manifest. When we will lose this thirst for the Truth, then the Guru will vanish.”

The Guru is nothing else then a manifestation of the thirst for the Truth that we have, the seeking for the Truth.

When we feel “I have everything that I need, I don’t need anyone or anything, I am fine as I am” the Guru will vanish. He says “Ok, you go your way”.

Some people may ask “when it is the time to let go of the Guru? Is there a time for this?” Because some may think “Ok, I am with this man long time now, when can I let go? When will I graduate? When will I finish the college?”.

To leave the Guru or not, is your choice, but the seeker of Truth will never do this, even when he reaches the highest goal. How can he leave the Master? Do you think my Master ever left his Master? Do you think his Master ever left his Master? If somebody gives you by his Grace the highest of Truth, how can you ever leave that person? Where will you go? You will be forever bounded to him, you will be forever indebted to him.

Maybe you are yourself a Master and you have thousands of disciples, you will know very well “without my Master I couldn’t do anything”. This is something that personally I know very well, I don’t stop remembering it a single moment.

Without Maharajji there would never be an Om Baba and without Saccha Baba there would never be Maharajji and without the first Saccha Baba there would never be the second Saccha Baba.

We can learn many things from our teacher, many practical things, many helpful things, but our own Being we can learn only from the Guru. Who we truly are, our own Sacchahood, our own Truth - that we can learn only from the Guru by merging into him, not by just listening to him, not by just reading the Satsangs, but by merging into him, by dissolving our Ego into him, by surrendering our Ego at his feet.

When we do this great sacrifice, this Surrender, then the only thing that remains is the Self. The Self is constantly here but it is covered by the Ego. When we take out the Ego, when we take out the covering, only the Self remains. Then there is no separation anymore, there is no Guru and disciple, no other Sangha people and me, no other noisy people and me. And that Unity is so sweet, so beautiful.

As long as we think “it is me and them” there will always be suffering. There will always be conflict and competition, as long as the idea exists “me and them”. It’s self-inflicted suffering.

When this idea drops and we see there is only me – the one life-energy manifesting in many forms, it’s only me - then there is love, effortless love and unconditional love.

How can we be free from this idea “me and them”? How can we be free from the Ego? Either we’ll have to work and work with it and always remembering “it’s me, myself manifesting in every form, it’s just me there is no others”. Work, remember, remember, hard work or, the indirect way and the most successful way is simply merge to the Guru and merge to his own understanding and this will become your understanding.

Can you do it by yourself? Can you do it with your own strength, to take out your Ego?

I don't say it's impossible, I just say it is supremely difficult and very highly improbable. That's why they say "the Guru is necessary". Instead of trying yourself to do this mission impossible, merge with the Guru and receive what he has received.

How did he receive it? By merging with his own Guru.

And how his Guru received it? By merging with his own Guru.

They didn't do it by their own effort.

Of course, there is effort involved but, ultimately, it is this merging.

So, don't be intimidated by challenges, either noisy challenges or, you can say, Sangha challenges, or internal challenges, which are all your own ideas actually, they don't really exist. Accept the challenges, face them bravely, don't be intimidated. There is nothing that can hurt you, go ahead. Remember the saying of Sri Krishna - he said to Arjuna: "Arjuna, what you are the fire cannot burn, the wind cannot blow away, the water cannot wet, the death cannot approach. So stand up Arjuna and fight!".

Don't let little challenges throw you away and out of your path.

When we started today, we were saying "it is a challenging place" but I tell you, it's one of the most fruitful places, one of the most nourishing places. The spirit grows in its own mystical ways.

That is why so many sages are to be found here. So many sages had come here throughout the ages to practice spirituality, in this place. I am sure, they would have construction noises back then, three thousand years before, I am sure, five thousand, ten thousand years before, they would still have construction noises! But all this is superficial.

So here we are pushed to intensify our practice, to step a little bit further, to expand our limits a little bit more. To do a little bit more than what we are normally doing. This is the place to do it!

This is the place and this is the time to expand our limits a little bit more. This is a perfect opportunity.

Expand the limits until we see clearly that we are limitless, that what we are nothing can touch it: the fire cannot burn, the water cannot wet, the imaginations cannot hurt it, the worries cannot hurt at all what we are, the noise cannot hurt it. The way that other people look at us, the way that other people think at us it doesn't hurt us at all, it doesn't even touch us.

What we are is limitless, untouchable, invincible, undefeatable and may we all realize this.

- Om Shanti Shanti Shanti! -