

*Satsanga*  
*Brahmachari Allen*  
Glendale Temple  
February 16, 2012

Tonight is a *Satsanga* and there are four questions.

First: *Why do we chant the "Battle Hymn of the Republic?" I find this odd in such a peaceful place.*

Answer: Br. Allen explained that although he wasn't certain, he thought it came from the Civil War. Okay? As most of you know, Self-Realization Fellowship [SRF] calls it *In the Beauty of the Lilies* and our Guru modified one of the verses that we often chant at the end of the Sunday services. It is one of the more common closing chants. Paramahansa Yogananda is the one who actually modified the verse. He liked the music.

Br. Allen said that he checked in Self-Realization Fellowship's Manual of Services. It is a booklet that is mailed out to all the Centers and Groups to be used to help guide their services on Thursdays and Sundays. The following is included in the booklet regarding closing chants: "Any of the Cosmic Chants sung that are particularly recommended are: *Oh, God Beautiful* and Paramahansa Yogananda's adaptation of a stanza of the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*."

Br. Allen continued by saying he understands that with the song there may have been previous associations from the past when it was about the war. Knowing what we know about reincarnation we might have been in the middle of the Civil War and are just sick of the whole thing, right?

If we look at the words of this chant, they are very beautiful. Br. Allen's recommendation was that when singing the chant to focus on the words one hundred percent. They honor Christ, a messenger of God, who was sent here to this planet to help redeem His children and bring us back to God. Also, very lovingly, it acknowledges and honors our brotherhood with all people when we sing "let us live to make men free." Imagine a world where everybody lived to help everybody else. There would be no wars, no hunger, no cruelty. The world would be a paradise! If we look at it in that way, in that light, this is a wonderful chant. Try to see it that way. This is a tradition started by our Guru and SRF is very protective of his traditions.

Second questions: *Master said that we should meditate day and night to find God. Then how is it that our bodies need so much care, housing, food, vitamins, etc.*

Answer: it is wonderful to study and read our Master's teachings and do our best to live them. It will help us get back to God. Our Guru was a master at motivating people to seek God, to give them that sense of urgency to find God but we have to remember that language is imperfect at best. That being said, if we take his words literally, we will be in a constant state of confusion while we're reading his teachings because the words are just so imperfect. We have to try to see the spirit behind them. We cannot always take them literally.

Any scriptures we read, like the Bible or any other scriptures, we read things that create turmoil in us because our minds say how can we do that; that it's impossible! or we see discrepancies. They may say one thing here and another thing there that contradicts each other. It is because language is imperfect that we cannot perfectly express God and that we cannot perfectly express these truths.

We have to look at the words and try to understand the spirit. When Master said that we should meditate day and night, he did not mean that we were going to sit in our meditation chair, in meditation posture twenty-four hours a day. Unless we're saints, we will not be able to do this. It is impossible!

Br. Allen went on to share what his thought processes may have been when he read this a long time ago. Obviously, we cannot sit in meditation twenty-four hours a day. What is meditation? It is putting our minds on God, right? That's how Master described it...giving our attention to God. Master is encouraging us to put our minds on God and not only during our normal meditations but also at other times. In a sense he's encouraging us to practice the presence. Looking at it this way it becomes more possible to follow his advise, no matter what kind of care we have to do to our bodies. Whether we have to eat or sleep or whatever it is.

From a book Br. Allen found in the Book Room he read the following: *"In the difficult struggle to maintain balance between meditation and activity, the greatest safety lies in the consciousness of the Lord. Everything that I do with the consciousness of God becomes meditation."* Now we can follow

Master's advise, right? At least we know what he meant and what we have to work towards.

Master kept his mind on God and his life was meditation, day and night. He goes to say: *"Those who habitually drink can work while they remain under the influence of alcohol. So if you are habitually intoxicated with God you can work without interrupting your divine communion."* Looking at it from that aspect, now that is something we can work through. There's no longer an issue whether it is impossible or not.

Daya Ma used to say that when she lay down to sleep at night she would imagine herself lying in the palm of Divine Mother's hand...sleeping in her palm all night. It's that beautiful! She is also following Master's advise and keeping her mind on God during the night as well as at every other time. This is an example of how we can work toward living what Master is asking us to do. We can do what Daya Ma did or we can be creative and figure out our own way to keep our minds on God.

Perhaps we work in an area where we serve people or perhaps we thank God for the spark within these people...the same spark is within me...or in anything else we do. Master said that he did everything as a service to God. We try to do a good job while working. What if we try to see God behind it and see ourselves as serving God. Now we're starting to live what our Guru is recommending...meditating day and night...and that's how our life becomes a meditation.

We read the books about saints. There is nothing in their lives that they did not relate to God and that they did not see as coming from God. It is a very difficult thing to do. It is not going to be easy but it is something to work for. That's one thing that sometimes makes our Guru's teachings seem difficult because he's set such a high standard. Remember, too, that he said: *"If you follow just a millionth of what I've given, you will find God."* He is not expecting us to be perfect in everything. Just to try our best. In order to try our best, again, we have to find the spirit behind Master's teachings. Let's not torture ourselves by taking everything so literally.

For last part of the question as to why our bodies need so much care, food, housing, vitamins and everything is because that's how God set up this creation and this person is going to have to ask Him why He did it. Our

Guru brought this up with God a lot; he even scolded God asking: *“Why did you put us in this mess?”* He knew it wasn't easy.

That is one the toughest things to overcome in this creation because we have to stay involved in it. In the meantime, say someone has a really bad habit, like an alcoholic. First thing alcoholics are taught is to separate themselves completely...they never have alcohol in the house; they never go to a bar or a place where alcohol is being served. The same is necessary whatever the habit may be. The problem is we're trying to separate ourselves from this creation and get back to God but we cannot separate ourselves completely from it, can we? We still have to eat. We have to work. We have all responsibilities to our families and friends.

We're in a situation of having to stay involved with creation, while at the same time trying to separate ourselves. It is easy to get caught up in it. It's the toughest battle we are every going to have to fight. It is not going to be easy. That's why Master even scolded God for putting us in this mess.

Br. Allen continued by paraphrasing a story told by Bro. Achalananda during a Convocation. A saint was, also, scolding God. He said: “Sir, here's what you've done to us. You've taken us, bound us and then picked us up and then thrown us into a lake telling us to be careful not to get wet.” We can't win. We have to fight our way out and it's not going to be easy. If we could separate ourselves completely and just meditate all the time, like Master's almost hinting at to meditate day and night, there would be nobody on this planet because we would be back with God right now. This is the battle we have to face. It's the toughest battle we will ever have to fight. It will also give us the reward that is ever satisfying.

Third questions: *if we are a soul and it is omnipresent, how is it that we cannot perceive it?*

Answer: That's an easy one, right? Simple answer is because we are not at peace. Our minds and bodies are restless. Our restlessness drowns out our ability to perceive God's omnipresence and to perceive our oneness with that omnipresence...our oneness with God.

A simple analogy is: we're in a room and there is some beautiful music playing but in another corner there's a TV blaring and somewhere else someone talking on a microphone and in another part of the room there's

some rock music being played. Are we going to be able to hear that beautiful music anymore? We can't! The other things are all drowning it out. But if we say "wait a minute" and go turn off the TV, kick the rock band out, as well as the guy talking on the microphone, all of a sudden we are able to hear the music again. The music was always there, it didn't go anywhere, but we just could not hear it.

It's the same way with us with the situation we're in. We're here right now. We're part of God and that will never, ever change. However, our restlessness, caused by how we're caught up in this world. How we're attracted to all these things in the world, along with our desires, which especially produce a lot of restlessness. All our thoughts, our emotions and our physical restlessness drowns God out.

Our Guru used another analogy in his teachings. He would say that if the moon was up in the sky and we're near a pond that has ripples on it, a clear reflection of the moon cannot be seen. Flickers of light may be seen now and then but he said that it is only when the pond becomes perfectly calm, the surface becomes like glass, that we can instantly see a clear image of the moon in that pond.

That's exactly what will happen to us when we make our minds perfectly calm and peaceful. We will instantly become aware of God's presence; we will become aware of our oneness with God...our omnipresence.

What's the quote from the Bible? "*Be still and know that I am God.*" In the stillness we are aware of God. It is that simple! Stillness brings God into our lives and makes us realize our oneness.

There's a foot note in the *Autobiography of a Yogi* [AY]: "*The goal of the science of yoga is to attain the necessary inner stillness by which one may truly know God.*"

Br. Allen went to say that the following is probably one of his favorite quotes by Master: "*If at this moment you could completely calm your body, your thoughts and your emotions, you would instantly become aware of your true self and soul and your great body of the universe throbbing with the joy of God.*" When we can enter that state of stillness our consciousness will instantly expand into infinity and we will realize our oneness with God.

That is exactly why we meditate. The whole purpose why Master came to the United States is to spread the scientific meditation techniques that are in the Lessons because they are the most directly, powerful and fastest way to get that stillness that brings that oneness.

Fourth questions: *What does our Guru say about the metaphysics of language. I am trying to change what I say, especially following I am and it is. I remember reading somewhere that Master said: "Never say, I am tired." Do we manifest the ideas stated in our word choices? How does the law of attraction work through thoughts and language? I also know a devotee who refers to her body as "the body" so that when she's not feeling well she says that the body is unwell, not I am unwell. How important is our language use? Can you tell us if there are SRF readings pertaining to the metaphysics of language.*

Answer: Br. Allen said he found some things in Master's teachings that he would discuss. Master didn't focus on this a lot but was more focused on our thoughts than anything. There's an old saying by Lao Tsu that goes like this: "Watch your thoughts; they become words. Watch your words; they become actions. Watch your actions; they become habit. Watch your habits; they become character. Watch your character; it becomes your destiny."

Words are in there but the base is thoughts. Words are the reflection of what we're thinking, right? We can work with anything in that stage, whether it's character, habit or whatever and it influences our lives. There is no doubt about it. Always remember that underlying everything is our thoughts and that's why meditation and keeping positive is important.

Br. Allen explained that a lot of what this person is talking about is keeping positive. Master didn't want us to say "I am tired" because then we're associating with the body and, also, with a negative state. He wanted us to remember that we are not the body. We are souls and how can a soul be tired. It is everything, so it has all the energy it will ever need.

There is a story in the AY where Master is with his older sister, Uma. One day she was teaching him some lesson outside under a tree. He tried to pay attention when he could spare his gaze from nearby parrots. [Even Master wasn't into study, Br. Allen interjected.] Uma had a boil on her leg

and she went into the house to get some ointment to put on it. When she came back, she put a little ointment on the boil and Master grabbed the ointment and started rubbing it on his forearm. Uma asked why he was putting ointment on a healthy arm. Master said: *“Well, Sis, I just think that tomorrow I’m going to have a boil on this very spot and I want to see if the medicine works.”*

Uma got a little ruffled and called Master a liar. He replied: *“Now, Sis, don’t go saying that until you see what happens tomorrow.”* She didn’t take heed of this advice and called him a little liar a few more times. Master got a little mad, and said: *“An adamant resolution sounded in my voice as I made a slow reply. ‘By the power of will in me, I say that tomorrow I shall have a fairly large boil in this exact place on my arm and your boil shall swell to twice its present size.’”*

Of course, the next morning Master had a boil on the exact spot on his arm and Uma’s boil had grown to twice its size. Uma could not believe it. She called Master a necromancer. [Br. Allen again interjected that he did not know what this means but thought it might be some form of black magic.] Master’s mother heard of this. She came to him and very seriously told him never to use the power of words to do harm. Master said that he always remembered her counsel and followed it.

These are examples of the power of words or that can be in words. In the foot note to this story in the AY it says: *“...Any word spoken with clear realization and deep concentration has a materializing value...”* That’s the power of words.

In summary, what are some of the important things? That is, words that have a positive influence. Here are some of the more important things:

- Being truthful. We’ve all read that in Master’s teachings. We’ve all told those little white lies and we need to watch out for that. Beware of exaggerating. [Br. Allen says that he’s been fighting this one for the longest time and that still catches himself now and then.] When we exaggerate we get out of the realm of truth, just like with a white lie. That weakens the power of our words. The *Yoga Sutras* has a nice quote...it is another AY footnote:

*“The Hindu scriptures declare that those who habitually seek the truth develop the power of materializing their words. What commands they utter from the heart come to pass. (Yoga Sutras II:36)*

Also:

*Because the worlds are built on truth all scriptures extol as a virtue by which man may tune his life with the Infinite.”*

Being truthful is very important. Part of us being truthful helps us tune in with God because we're tuning in with that reality and anything that does that makes us more calm and peaceful. It helps us to tune in with God. It is important to remember that.

*Mahatma Gandhi often said, ‘Truth is God’; his lifelong striving was to perfect truth in thought, speech and act. Throughout the ages the ideal of satya or truth has permeated Hindu society. Marco Polo tells us that the Brahmins ‘would not utter a lie for anything on earth.’”*

There was an English judge in India who wrote some articles about his experiences there. He said: “I have had before me hundreds of case in which a man's property, liberty or life depended on his telling a lie and he has refused to tell it.” That is important! It is proof that truth has carried over from the higher ages even in India -- even in the lower ages it carried over. Truth gives power to our words.

- Keeping silence more. Master talked about staying silent more often. A quote of Master's in which he says, *“If you would have magnetism, don't talk too much. Don't be a chatterbox and talk, talk, talk. Idle talk dissipates your magnetism. It is also dangerous because those who talk to much always end up saying the wrong thing. These little words that come out of the cannon of the mouth have the power to explode empires or if they come from a man of wisdom they bring peace. The person who talks too much is a shallow thinker and has very little magnetism but when a silent man of wisdom talks, people listen. That is how my guru, Sri Yukteswar, was. When he spoke his words were full of meaning and power. Otherwise he was silent.”*

That's the power we're talking about. If we use our words more sparingly for important things and don't dissipate our power in idle talk, we develop magnetism. That's what gives power to our words.



- Meditation. If we want our words to have power, we meditate. When we're calm within we can become attuned to God, right? Repeating...in stillness comes God's presence.

If we get to that point of being still, our soul begins to manifest. The power of God is behind our words. This infinite power is behind our words when we are attuned to God. If we want to make the words powerful, meditate. That is the ultimate way. Start tuning in with the soul within. Not only that, but the words we say will be in tune with God's will because it starts happening naturally when we tune in with God. Then there is a double whammy and strength behind our words because what we say is what God wants too. Remember that meditation is the biggest thing.

Our Guru said: *"Meditate deeper and deeper every day and you will acquire tremendous magnetism."* Br. Allen reiterated that we should remember that there is this power behind the magnetism, as our Guru said. That's what the saints have. That's why people were drawn to Master. It is not just an attractive force, it's a powerful force. In a sense, it is attractive because when we say something that thing may be attracted into our lives.

It also tells us the importance of staying positive because a lot of these questions seemed to be about being positive. That same power that is behind our words when we're positive is also behind them when we're negative and they can have a detrimental effect on our bodies. We need to stay on the positive side, okay, and not let our minds go to the negative, which can have a very strong negative effect on our bodies.