

SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS OF SHRI NISARGADATTA MAHARAJ

-- By Shri Bhainath Maharaj

God has no physical existence. It is but natural, therefore, that those who can not capture the Abstract in their imagination gave it form to facilitate its worship. But, for want of knowledge the truth remains unknown and, worship of imagery increases, and the belief that the ultimate truth is in images only and the idol itself is the God is its dangerous outcome. Since this earnest love for the God is devoid of knowledge, the ritualistic worship does not lead to worship of non-dual. When the love for the God is illuminated by the knowledge, only then the God and his devotee will become one. Traditions and practices create mighty influence in the name of religion that create a perpetual scare. But such an influence become weak and eventually wane in the company of saints and worship with complete faith too causes change of heart. The Self resides in the body but it encompasses the whole universe.

There are many stories related to the revered trees like banyan and pipal the rivers like Ganga, Yamuna ritualistic observations and gods like Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, etc. (On reading these stories) one gets the impression that the Unconditioned (Nirguna) has given unqualified permit to Maya (the illusion), its operative force, to go about doing anything and everything the way it pleases. In truth, however, the Nirguna remains uninformed of havoc caused by Maya. When the Nirguna experiences false and misleading awareness in momentary deep sleep awestruck, it automatically secretes a flow of love and devotion (that is, universal consciousness). The consciousness comes into being from its own aura and creates the Void (Akash) and while engaged in the sport of imagination, unharnessed and uncontrolled, it makes merry, laughs, feigns anger and cries and howls. Also, to make all suffer mountainous sorrows, many times it offers pinch full sugar of happiness and this way, alternating between threat and temptation, it makes everybody dance willingly and (yet) under some spell, to the tune of Triguna (three attributes of Cosmic Substance). In this play it alone becomes the allegation, the accused, the accuser, the witness, the advocate, the barrister, the court, the judge, the justice, the penalty, the penalizer moreover, the God, the guru, the disciple, the devotee, all forms of life, the world and the Brahman. It alone assumes all these roles simultaneously and after playing havoc to its own amusement and to its own heart's content, feeling tired, it merges in its own state of supreme beingness without any announcement. From there it replenishes the required stock of energy and, thoroughly refreshed, reappears on the stage of universe to reenact tragicomic burlesques and tearjerkers, exhibiting novel skill of emoting happiness, fear, humor, hope, dejection, love, enjoyment, sacrifice, enmity, devotion, etc.

Thus, from this self- amusing hobby and its natural magical powers, the physical beingness gets prominence for want of knowledge and ideas peep out. If an idea is tended, it flourishes unhindered. The returns are commensurate with the faith. (Many mind boggling things happen. Say, people start calling a person, a godhead). But to whom? To one who is still in the confines of ideas and to one who has not crossed the boundaries of Triguna and thus has not stepped out of the cage. Actually, this is a play of emotions. You, the experiencer, is beyond the experience. This (experience) is of no use to you. It is all fruitless exercise devoid of any outcome and causes only pain. Basically, knowledge is the only solution. Total devotion backed by true knowledge is the only escape route. In all the states like hunger, sleep, fear, physical yearnings, wakefulness, dream and deep sleep; with awareness or otherwise, what one experiences is I Consciousness. All experiences are felt in the mammoth jaw of wakefulness and dream state.

In the absence of consciousness, there will not be experience of space. What experience one will have and what one will do? Whatever experience one experiences or witnesses magical happenings or sees visions - all these are products of pure consciousness and not of matter. This self remembrance is true manifestation of universal consciousness. One who has realized this on the basis of one's own experience is free from all bondages. The truth is, when one is beyond all experience, one is not aware that one exists or one does not. When one, without awareness, gets the sense "I AM", the great illusion (Maya) surfaces. The space happens in the aura of Maya. And within less than a quarter of time it takes to bat an eyelid, the space further breeds other four elements. The space is the liveliest element among all. The worship of space i.e., universal consciousness embraces worship of the great, the mightiest, gods; moreover the Brahman itself. This is the best form of worship. Only the knower knows how to worship the space. The spiritual is more valuable and more important than the material. Materiality, may have its greatness, beauty of being important and may provide physical pleasures but lacks timeless existence and satisfaction of being the self.

The bright orb of awareness in you is but really the illuminator of the whole universe. It houses All the knowledge and stores the whole universe. This bright orb contains movable, immovable multicolored world. One who has perceived this reality with the eye of wisdom only can truly say that the whole universe is his abode. In this huge abode thousands are born and thousands die every minute. The departed ones will never be seen around again and those who exist now will not probably be around after sixty-seventy years. In celebration of birthday of which child the departed should distribute sweets, and to whom? And whose death should he mourn? What is an auspicious day for him and what is inauspicious one? We see many creatures in many forms in the world. Because of the illusion the world appears real. But it is neither real nor illusory. If you observed the base on which this all is reflected and saw that bright orb, in its true glory, would you not see the whole universe as only a bright light? There is no one living nor anyone lifeless here but only the rule of spirit rolled in pure knowledge. To the knower, since the whole universe appears as reflection of his own true form, he does not suffer duality nor (such classifications as) good-bad, small-big trouble him. Moreover, any living being that experiences awareness is nothing but knower's consciousness split as self-knowledge in all and inherently present in all. Because of this firm belief the world appears holy and blemish less to him. Therefore, he can rightfully say that the whole universe is his abode.

All practices are meant for purification of mind and to become capable of knowing pure knowledge. Ultimately, all this leads to self-realization. After running through scriptures, listening to discourses or delivering an effective and rich in erudition discourses oneself that would enthrall the audience, one realizes that except for empty words one has earned nothing. From among thousands, hardly one Poses a pertinent question to oneself - what is there to know? Therefore, one should drop all worldly temptations and concentrate on pure knowledge which is but reflection of the sublime Brahma's own beingness. In this cocoon containing seeds of worlds, all secrets and basic solutions in tiny forms are hidden. At minutest level it is cosmic energy (Shivshakti), at existential plain it is cosmic substance and spirit (Prakriti-Purusha). This Shiva is god of all gods, worship Him as Guru. One who knows the world does not shy away from reality), one who knows oneself does not suffer shamelessness either. He harbors neither awe nor fear yet is polite and since he has abundant faith in the limitless powers of the Unending (Ananta)

dwelling in him, he appears calm in all situations. To control the waywardness of one's mind and to experience state of super consciousness (Samadhi) and, thereby to know the resident -vital force (i.e., pure knowledge) within is the life's only and ultimate fulfillment. For self-realization that brings pure knowledge, blessing of the Guru is a must. And, there is no alternative to following the path of knowledge-backed worship. Only through such worship one will be able to cross all boundaries of directions and time, and through self-realization will experience how the indescribable and out-of-this-world cosmic energy fills the whole universe with supreme bliss.

The highest philosophical perception among the seekers all over the world is the same, It is incorrect to say that after negation of illusion-bred duality, there is no room left for worship of cosmic oneness. (Now) it becomes worship of Shiva by becoming Shiva. In this (worship) the worshiper loses his separate identity.

Non-duality worship is (a fact) / But one can only experience it./ and can not be narrated. The Reality, that is something without any break and is unbreakable, is absolutely unique, indescribable, out of bounds of attributes or feelings and is utterly separate from everything else. We are sailing through difficult times. the materialist nations are at war at intellectual level. From the newspaper reports one can infer that the materialist scientist are readying to put the whole world on fire by producing annihilating atomic weapons. Today, in India, financial, social, educational, and familial conditions are rapidly changing. Disrespectable, undisciplined, irresponsible, filthy, calamitous way of thinking is gaining prevalence. Scarcity of sterling qualities like trust, faith, respect, etc. is spreading unchecked. The effective solution in these modern, scientific and critical times is self experience based on self-realization and it will help spread peace and contentedness in the world. In life, rule based behavior, restrain, faith and fortitude is needed. If concerted efforts are put in this direction, only then the problems related to future of coming generations will have solution and will have glimpses of bright future. Knowledge is sacred. Words fail to describe how much knowledge of non-duality is pure and sacred. In the absence of meaningful understanding , the mind wavers, thinking become uncontrollable and the same sacred Knowledge comes to be branded as fruitless and worth discarding as poison. In such times, worship of true knowledge under able guidance of self-realized saints who in their own life faced difficult times and yet nurtured the stream of sublime truth in their Himalayan inner being, is a necessity. And this must happen NOW. As long as physique is full of energy, the self-realization should be attained. In the company of saints the dormant love (for knowledge) stirs. But the common man, trying to come to terms with the conflict of exultation and dejection, surrenders to his own failings and so as to get rid of moral nagging of sins, falls wordlessly at the feet of the saints. But many a time this repentance turns out to be short-lived and then it is back to

In all learning, self knowledge is the best. Because it helps to penetrate the surrounding darkness (of ignorance) and help perceive the light of truth and (in this light), differences in the world vanish forever. This perennial stream of knowledge resides only in the Guru. (He is) filled with all qualities, is mighty strong and omnipotent, one that will fulfill all your dreams and (help in all your) deeds and is the mighty protecting force ever ready at your command. This divine power is existent and resident in you in the shape of self-love and godly elemental form. Believe not anything except this power.

This stream of knowledge is like tiny mechanism showing movements of the universe. With a certain type of thermometer one gets to know about hurricane at a distant place or from electromagnetic seismograph one can instantly come to know about an earthquake at hundreds of miles away. Likewise, a Yogeshwar (one who has attained realization through yoga) can reach beyond mind's play and the realm of inner knowledge to perceive flawlessly changes at cosmic level by knowing changes in his consciousness. Once resignation from I-am-the-body identification is submitted by employing discrimination (viveka) and the belief that physical existence is the one's true and real existence as well as concepts "I" and "mine" are demolished and the mind is steadied, the Vyakti-bhav (feeling that one is body) drops and Vyakta-bhav (belief of being evolved, and anointed Self) sets in. He transcends and enjoys cosmic expansiveness. Because of the firm belief that Brahman only can know Brahman and I am witness to it (signifying aloofness even from Brahman), their every deed goes to the account of the cosmos and (reciprocally) any and every movement at universal level is felt by them. With this perceptive eyesight they wordlessly bear with cosmic beingness with fortitude, self trust and firm belief of being knowledgeable ones.

Considering today's problem of uncertain times, hardships, threats and troubled life, it will be appropriate to follow the Vihangama (like a bird taking flight directly in the direction of the destination) path rather than Pippalika (like an ant trudging its way through ups and downs and uneven) path towards worship of knowledge. The body of one creature is food of the other. The germs, insects, fish, beasts and other animals, for their survival, feed on smaller of the species. Ferocious beasts like tiger feed even on human beings. However, the tiny Tam-ness that carries and moves about several kilograms of weight of human beings cannot be devoured by that beast. In sum, there is (really) nothing like human being. (in existence) but what really exists is pure consciousness. To understand this discussion it is necessary to probe into manifested forms (Saguna), true essence (Satva guna), Chinmaya, Chiddan, essence that is Self (Atman guna). The consciousness that says "you are unborn" is the true source of knowledge. It is the seat of the ultimate principle with the three attribute (being + consciousness + bliss) in absolute perfection. When the liberated (Nivrutta) gets to know that he is the master of whole universe and understands this (fact) in its true sense, it becomes (for him) the self-experience that he is the Entire. And there is rarest among the rare ones who sees himself (even) beyond the Entire. Despite hearing these true facts several times, the miserable believes that the body is the medium to rely upon and identifies himself as body and values the Lord in his heart less than the footwear he wears. The firm and the filthy belief in him that he is "a breed of a mortal being" will go away only when with the blessing of a realized one he will witness the universe encompassing light of self-consciousness in his inner self. There is no alternative to this.

The attribute-less (Nirguna) moves (is felt) with Gunas (attributes) and Gunas are experienced through existence of the world. The Great Reality (Mahatatva) is as much blissful and is happiness filled with happiness as it is source of sorrow, is horrendous, problematic, filled with (contradictions like) luxuries and miseries, co incidents and accidents. Lord Vishnu (as per mythology) lies on the penta headed cobra (symbolizing death) - unbothered, relaxed and blissful. Octa-armed Goddess mahakali, on the other hand, rides a fearsome and ferocious tiger (death), with exultation. One who has turned the death into a ride, recognized the true nature of the death and has ridden it with knowledge, confident and fortitude is the proven knower.

We are the Real, perpetual and complete - yet we are utterly ignorant of this fact. The first sound OM comes into existence in the light of supreme flame of Triguna and five elements. One should be very clear about whether one is in the light of that first sprout of consciousness or the source from which the sprout emanates. The Mantra given by your guru is your true character, remember only this. Remembering this mantra non-stop is characteristic of best meditation. The Mantra is (your) form and that form is the Mantra. Unless the Guru with his beak of teachings breaks the egg of supreme reason (of beingness), your heart will not fill with the light of the Lord Janardan and His unconditional character will not be intelligible.

One is forever beyond the self-awareness, I am Brahman. "I am Brahman" is devotional love, self love, the core need of all your needs, the greatest likings of all likings; unbroken self-awareness. Its one sighting is enough for emancipation of the fallen. However, whatever indicated, foretold or shown by that awareness, should not be accepted by you for your own benefit. You are unaffected by pain or pleasure of the body, moreover, of the awareness. That tiniest pure knowledge is your very characteristic. This invisible power does everything. You feel this power, you are the unintentional witness to its existence.

The full grown crop brings cob with grain in it. Likewise, in your self-remembrance there is unmasked core of energy. In that you have in stalled a false belief that "you are" and the desire to perpetuate. The pleasure is as small as sesame seed but the botheration is as huge as the world itself. Wakefulness in the state of forgotten ness is incompleteness. Complete rest from forgetting, resting place for the rest is that perpetual, indescribable true wakefulness. This ever alert emancipated Niyogi (self-realized), for a split second, experiences the heavenly experience of awareness caused by the play of illusion and as a consequence of falling pray to mesmerizing temptation of consciousness, ignores the strength of that heavenly moment and divine power and grabs the body as his true form. Really speaking, nothing truthful takes place. One (needs) to employ faculty of discrimination, stand aside aloof and witness the momentary ebb and flow in the belly of mirage and, eventually become the whole.

Be steadfast on the point that the inspiration "I AM" that you have is the memory of your Guru. "I am Brahman" knowledge and "I am Brahman" inspiration are two feet of the Guru. The light of this knowledge has environed the knowledge (itself), the movables and the immovable, including the living beings of the world. The encompasser and the encompassed is the same - that knowledge. Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu enact their roles in this atom-tiny self-knowledge. It is the supreme cause of existence of infinite universes. The Guru likes it the most and loves it the most. Every living being yearns for it and hence tends it out of deep love for it. (It is) the holiest of all holy, embellished by all the best attributes, is cause of blissfulness and is the god of all the gods that is remembered at the beginning of all the auspicious events. Without the Guru form (Sadguru swarupa), no creature can have even atom tiny existence. Moreover, Vishnu and Shiva can not have self-awareness (without it). There is rare one who falls for it and faithfully embraces it for good. Do not ignore it or go to any other god or goddess for the blessing. The guru is in complete know of all these gods and goddesses. Guru witnesses the self-knowledge but self-knowledge never gets to see Him.

This self-knowledge is Ram, it is Bhagwan. All bodies are its clothing. The body is product of matters and by itself can not do anything, All body movements and that of universe are caused by this Bhagwan. The man goes by his intelligence and brags about it and (wrongly) takes the credit. Then there are some who take themselves as ignorant and (hence) out lesser mortals. Yet they are not hair's breadth away from the original steadfast, perpetual and unbroken state (of being Brahman). In the end the knower drops the body. Dropping the body is an immensely painful experience - like experiencing bites of thousands of scorpions simultaneously. If you wish to avoid this painful and horrible eventuality, now is the time to surrender to Him. It is not necessary to leave your job or your vocation or run away from your duties. You can go about attending this merrily knowing your non-dual true Self. Surrender to Him unconditionally and, without any expectation of a gain in mind, worship Him for the sake of worship. Once your love for Him and His for you is established, you will experience blissful flow of devotion and love from within. Thereafter forget you are a man or a woman and go tell Him all your problems during trying times. Accept only His advice. More the faith in devotion, greater shall be the ascendancy. The God Himself is shackled in the golden fetters of His own supreme devotion. He is gracious, kindest, craving for your inner true feelings and is one who yields to weakest prayer of His devotees. Once He is firmly enshrined in your psyche and felt in all his glory, in the end, it will lead to rocksteady, glorious immortality and you will experience beatitude and heavenly love of cosmic bliss. This unique, ultra-sweet, fortuitous benefit is topmost among all the great and celestial happiness. This permanence granting rarest of rare and glorious occasion occurs when one's very own immortal, true, lasting self-knowledge merges in the ocean of immortality. These are earnest statements of self-realized sadhus based on their self-experience.

Shri Nisargadatta Maharaj gives prominence to self-knowledge and propounds knowledge based Advaita Philosophy. He enunciates through discourses the self-knowledge and non-duality that has been propounded time and again by realized saints like Saint Mukundraaj, Shri Dnyaneshwar, Shri Sadguru Bahusaheb Maharaj (of Umadi), Shri Sadguru Bhagwan Siddharameshwar Maharaj and others. While propounding this philosophy, the intention is that one should have unique place in the uplift of mankind. The self, from which flows the universal inspirational force and energizing power; and the self-knowledge are one and the same. He impresses this fact effortlessly with devotional love and earnestness. His skill to embellish ordinary words with new shade of meaning is mesmerizing. Those who listen often to these discourses on pure knowledge and ponder over them will unflinchingly take them to total progress and emancipation. Glory to these saints! They bathed in confluence of knowledge with self belief and reached beyond the confluence and its origin. They attained emancipation and, to uplift the society and let the society experience the highest state of existence. (i.e., of self-realization) and thereby help it attain emancipation, the saints kept the light of knowledge burning by their writings on priceless knowledge. While experiencing bodily existence they remained detached from physical attributes and became immortal experiencing the bliss of being pure self. Such saints by their own conduct provide reputation to moral values. In all societies, the revolution caused by the universe encompassing thoughts and conduct in self-knowledge, is most important. Since time unknown, all the gurus carried the rock-steady faith that "Guru, in elemental form, is complete self". (at a stage, when they realize that) they do not get experience as per their guru's teachings, they ruthlessly ignore the body and give one's complete charge to the "I" principle and uproot the false belief that they are somebody. Also, since they know the secret "even while engaged in the

battle, there is no break in super-conscious state". It is firmly established that at present one is nameless pure knowledge in a guise of human being, that exists only in a dream. Consequently, from the beginning of their beingness to the end of being, even in their normal conversation heart-touching reflection of much demanded softness of nature is witnessed. In their brief company, a happiness of highest order of self-bliss is felt by the audience and hence people get attracted and the saints are revered everywhere. Therefore, if there is any true inheritor of the legacy of these saints, it is the sun of knowledge and the entire universe is their true and vibrant shrine.