

The Relationship with the Master in Spiritual Life



Question::

Is every individual really an isolated entity?

(or)

Can one individual influence another individual?

(or)

What are the advantages of having a darshan or a sahavas/company with a Perfect Master?

(or)

When can one yield the full significance of a Perfect Master's darshan?

(or)

What are the two qualities that are most essential for spiritual life?

(or)

Why falling at Master's feet and washing them are considered sacred? What are his feet used for?

(or)

Why feet of the Perfect Masters are considered highest?

(or)

What does offerings– like honey, milk, coconut–at the feet of the Master, represent?

(or)

Can one establish 'mental contact' with a Master? How so?

(or)

What sort of protection does the Master provide for the aspirant on the path?

(or)

How does Perfect Master help economize one's "spiritual energy"?

(or)

Why some yogis cook their own food?

(or)

It is said that the Master SHARES His "divine work" with his disciples. How so?

(or)

Master is said to help the aspirants both “directly” and “indirectly”. How so?

(or)

How come “Master’s help” intensifies one’s longing for God?

(or)

When is the “internal eye” of the aspirant opened?

(or)

Does “Om Point” really exist? If so, where?

(or)

How does a God-realized-soul see the “universe”?

(or)

What happens when the “third eye is opened” or “Om (Creation) point” is reached?

(or)

When can one realize the “nothingness of the universe”?

(or)

Why are Siddhis regarded as obstacles to Self-realization?

(or)

How come God-realized Masters control the affairs of the universe? What sort of responsibility does the ‘Masters of wisdom’ shoulder?

(or)

What sort of qualification allows one to shoulder the responsibility of furthering the Divine Plan on earth?

Answer:

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Those who have even a preliminary acquaintance with the structure and laws of the inner spheres of existence know that complete isolation of human beings is a figment of imagination. Whether they desire it or not, all persons are constantly acting and interacting upon each other by their very existence, even when they do not establish any contact on the physical plane.

There are no limits to the spreading of the influence of the individual. The magnetic influence of the subtle spheres knows no barriers of national frontiers or any other conventional limitations.

- Good thoughts as well as evil thoughts,
- cheerful moods as well as gloomy moods,
- noble and expansive feelings as well as 'narrow emotions,'
- unselfish aspirations as well as selfish ambitions,

–all these have a tendency to spread out and influence others, even when they are not expressed in words and deeds.

The world of mental life is as much a unified system as the world of gross matter. **The gross world as a vehicle of spiritual life has its own indubitable importance**, but the links and connections existing between different persons can by no means be fully estimated if one merely considers the tangible transactions that take place in the gross world.

For an aspirant to see a Perfect Master does not yield its full significance except in the context of all the corresponding happenings of the inner planes of consciousness.

The rishis, or sages attach great importance to having the darshan (contact through sight) of Perfect Masters. For, they are the source of the constant flow of love and light which emanates from them and makes an irresistible appeal to the inner feelings of the aspirant, even when he receives no verbal instructions from them.

The effect of darshan is dependent upon the receptivity and response of the aspirant, whose reaction is determined by his own sanskaras and past connections.

Often the aspirant is completely satisfied with the darshan of a Master and he desires nothing further from Him. **To derive bliss and contentment from the mere darshan of the Master is a great thing because it indicates that the aspirant has 'desirelessness' and 'love' which are the two essentials of spiritual life.**

Having had the darshan of the beloved Master, the aspirant naturally desires nothing except to have more of his darshan and is thus impelled by his inner spiritual urge to seek the sahavas (company) of the Master as often as possible. Further, sahavas of the Master implements and strengthens the purifying effect of darshan,

and also results in drawing the aspirant closer and closer to the Master on the inner planes.

Like darshan, falling at the feet of a Master also has special value of its own. The feet, which are physically the lowest part of the body, are the highest from the spiritual point of view. Physically, the feet go through everything— good and bad, beautiful and ugly, clean and dirty; yet, they remain above everything.

Spiritually, the feet of the Masters are above everything in the universe, which is like dust to them. *When people come to a Perfect Master and touch his feet with their hands, they lay the burden of sanskaras on him. He collects the sanskaras from all over the universe, just as an ordinary person, in walking, collects dust on his feet.*

There is an ancient tradition that after the aspirant has the darshan of a Master and falls at his feet, he washes the Master's feet with milk and honey and places a coconut near them as his offering.

- Honey represents red (bad) sanskaras,
- milk represents white (good) sanskaras, and
- the coconut represents the mind.

Thus this convention, which has become established in some areas in connection with greeting the Masters, really symbolizes throwing the burden of all sanskaras on the Master and surrendering the mind to Him. Adoption of this inner attitude constitutes the most critical and important step that the aspirant must take in order to get initiated on the spiritual path.

Once the aspirant experiences the bliss of the darshan of a Master, that sight gets carved on his mind. And even when he is unable to establish frequent personal contact, his mind turns to the Master again and again in an effort to understand his significance.

This process of establishing mental contact with the Master is essentially different from merely imaginative revival of past incidents. In the ordinary play of imagination, the recall of past incidents is not necessarily animated by a definite purpose; whereas in establishing mental contact, there is a definite purpose.

Owing to the directive power of “purpose,” imagination ceases to be a mere revolving of ideas and reaches out to the Master and establishes contact with him.

Such mental contact with the Master is often as fruitful and effective as his physical darshan. The inward repetitions of such mental contacts is like constructing a channel between Master and aspirant, who becomes thereby the recipient of the grace, love, and light that are constantly flowing from the Master, in spite of the apparent distance between them. Thus, the help of the Master goes out not only to those who are in his physical presence, but also to others who establish mental contact with Him.

The Master devotes careful attention to the individual needs of the disciple, and the first thing he does is to protect the disciple from influences that will divert his attention from the path or interfere with his progress.

Often the Master requires the disciple to accept some kind of temporary isolation so that his mind is guarded against impacts that might impede his spiritual progress. Thus some yogis, under instructions from their Masters, prepare their own food and do not allow anyone to remain present at the time of eating it. The reason is to avoid impressions of evil from the glance of bad persons.

A disciple is also likely to catch impressions of another's lust, just as a clean cloth may be readily soiled by dirt.

In the earlier stages, the aspirant must guard against any complications that might arise through association with others who are not on the path. But the Master gives special instructions for the severance or avoidance of certain connections and contacts only when they are specifically indicated for a special case.

In most cases, however, all that is necessary is secured merely by the constant company of the Master, and no need arises to submit the disciple to actual isolation. *Although the disciple may be outwardly in touch with the world, he remains mentally detached from it because of his inner connection with the Master.*

Just as the Master may isolate a close disciple from undesirable contacts and connections, he may actually encourage and bring about new and fresh contacts, that he deems to be in the spiritual interest of the disciple. *He has a consummate understanding of the 'sanskaras' and 'karmic ties' and their complications.* Thus he can consciously help people to enter into such associations as will allow and call forth important response and activities, and help the progress of all concerned along the line of least resistance or by the shortest possible route. *He uses his knowledge of the past lives, sanskaras, and connections of people to help them economize their spiritual energy and use it for the best results.*

The unity and solidarity of the inner planes make it possible for the Master to use his disciple as an instrument for his work even when the disciple is unaware of serving this larger purpose of the Master. This is possible because - the disciple, through his love and understanding of the Master, as well as his 'obedience' and 'surrender' establishes a rapport with the Master, and comes to be in tune with him.

Those who come into direct contact with the Master receive his direct help and those who are closely connected with his disciples receive the Master's indirect help.

The sharing of spiritual work is by no means one-sided. Even the disciples who merely think of the Master, or meditate upon him have the privilege of sharing the spiritual and universal work in which the Master might be engaged at that moment.

As he is one with the Eternity, the Master is beyond time and all limitations of time. As he is also interested in the spiritual upliftment of humanity, he assumes many of the limitations of time; and his work can be helped by the voluntary cooperation of his disciples.

The Master feeds upon the love of his disciples and utilizes the spiritual forces released by them for his universal work.

In this way, the Master is like the relay station that receives a song only in order to broadcast it to the world at large. To love the Master is to love all, not merely symbolically but actually; for what the Master receives on the inner planes of consciousness, He spiritualizes and distributes. Thus he not only strengthens the personal links that the disciples may have with him but also gives them the privilege of sharing his divine work.

In infinite ways, the Sadguru tries to draw the aspirant into his own being so that the aspirant may get disentangled from the mazes of the universe, and come to desire God. *This longing for God is present in the aspirant from the very beginning, but the Master makes this primary longing more intense and articulate by opening the internal eye of the aspirant.* When the 'internal eye' is opened, God who is the object of search and longing is actually sighted.

As the gaze of the soul is turned inward and fixed upon the supreme Reality, the desire to establish union with it becomes much more ardent than when the soul is groping for God through mere speculation or imagination. **When the time is RIPE, the Master can open this internal eye in an instant.**

Ultimately the aspirant has to realize that that God is the only Reality and that he is really one with God. This implies that he should not be overpowered by the spectacle of the multiform universe.

In fact, the whole universe is in Self and springs into existence from the tiny point in the Self referred to as the 'Om Point'. But the Self— as the individualized soul— has become habituated to gathering experiences through one medium or another, and therefore it comes to experience the universe as a formidable rival, other than itself. **Those who have realized God constantly see the 'universe' as springing from this Om Point, which is in everyone.**

The 'process of perception' runs parallel to the 'process of creation,' and reversing of the process of perception without obliterating 'consciousness' amounts to realizing the nothingness of the universe as a separate entity.

The Self— as the individualized soul— sees first through the mind, then through the subtle eye, and lastly through the physical eye; but it is vaster than all it can perceive. The big oceans and the vast spaces of the sky are tiny as compared with the Self. In fact, all that it can perceive is finite but the Self itself is infinite.

When the individualized Self retains full consciousness and yet sees nothing, it has crossed the universe of its own creation and has taken the first step to know itself as Everything.

The entire process of 'withdrawing consciousness from the universe' and 'becoming conscious of the Self' is accompanied by an increasing control of

all the vehicles of consciousness. Such control is made possible by the vivification and activation of unused centers of control and the functioning of new centers brings in its train a number of hidden powers.

These new powers are commonly known as 'siddhis' and they can come before the aspirant has become spiritually perfect. **In fact, egoism can flourish through the acquisition of such powers.** The aspirant may not only take delight in possessing them but might actually use them for mundane purposes from which he has not necessarily freed himself.

Siddhis are therefore rightly regarded as obstacles to the attainment of Realization. However, after God is realized all these powers dwindle in their importance. The siddhis have their scope in the nothingness that is the universe; whereas the person who realizes God is permanently and immovably established in the supreme Reality.

Although, the whole universe is like a zero to the God realized person, he may voluntarily assume responsibility for those souls who are enmeshed in the tangles of the universe. In that case, he can freely and legitimately make use of these powers for the spiritual good of others.

There is nothing that does not admit of direct or indirect control by the Masters of wisdom. Large social-phenomena (such as wars, revolutions, and epidemics) as well as cosmic phenomena (such as earthquakes and floods) are equally amenable to their control and direction through the release of the forces of the exalted planes on which the Masters are consciously stationed.

The Masters may also use occult forces to effect cooperative and coordinated spiritual work. They frequently hold meetings and conferences on the higher inner planes for securing the advancement of humanity.

The Oversoul in all is only one, and it always functions as a unity. Those who have become conscious of this unity become fit to understand unlimited responsibility. Because they have shed the limitations of the human mind and have become so impersonal and universal in their interest, they are effective vehicles for the execution and furtherance of the divine plan on earth.

– Meher Baba

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