



Practise and Stop Preaching

For you all, discipline means coming before time, for me it means waiting for you. [...] Babuji always used to bewail the fact that people go and stand in line for a cinema ticket half an hour before the show, just to see some stupid things happening on the

on cold stone floors in the winter, with the temperature just above zero or at zero, with the hay spread on the floor for warmth, and that cost a lot of money - my Master was not able to afford it, even that.

themselves. And they preach loudly and vociferously and repeatedly because their conscience pricks, their inner voice says, "Hey guy, you are not doing this." [...]

So let us please get on with the job of practising Sahaj

Marg, remembering that what you do, what you speak, what you practise, makes of you an example for Sahaj Marg - rather than all the teachings and the books of what you are going to do, to spout



screen, all of which is illusion. Today's civilisation panders to such illusory goals. Today's security requirements for aircraft, aeroplane flights, we have to be there two hours before flight. You have to take off your shoes, you take it off; you go behind a screen and undress - if he asks you to, you do it. I mean, otherwise you don't get on the aircraft.

But in spirituality we are treated, what shall we say, with gentle gloves of kidskin. We are pampered, we are treated like royalty. In my Master's days, when I was new in this Mission, we slept

Today, we are put up in comfort with wooden floors, heated, carpeted, air-conditioned rooms, all of which I think promote in us, if not a disinterest in spirituality, at least a sense of, shall we say, degrading the interest in spiritual life. Because the temptations of the material life, its luxury, its glamour, are so much.[...]

So the first principle of Sahaj Marg should be to practise and stop preaching.

One problem with the growth of our Mission, as far as I can see here, has been that our preceptors [prefects] preach more than they practise

yourself from one tenth digested material. Few of you really know what Sahaj Marg is, what it is all about, what the Brighter World is. [...]

So we should not degrade Sahaj Marg into a sort of institution, where we are guided by temptation and fear. [...]

Many of us are held back by the fear, as I was at one time, and that fear is no more a fear but a certainty, that if and when I do get into the Brighter World my Master will have a new assignment for me. [...] I assure you the Brighter World will not be what you think it is going to

Thus speaks:

Lalaji

- *Speaking and talking are of no use, Make up your mind to act; You have myriad forms of illusion Why labour under that? .*

Babuji

- *Service and sacrifice are the two main instruments with which we build the temple of spirituality. Love of course being the fundamental basis.*

Chariji

- *Sadhana is the foundation; without the foundation there is no house.*

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be - either way. And the best way of finding out is to get there first. And the only way of getting there is to do what you have to do right here and now, faithfully, sedulously, day after day, practise Sahaj Marg as it is meant to be practised. Stop preaching, get on with the job. And that reminds me that it is now ten o'clock and we must meditate.

Please start meditation.

Talk given by Shri P. Rajagopalachari at San Jose, USA on August 7, 2003

Echoes of the Centres

Abidjan (Côte-d'Ivoire)

On the occasion of Lalaji's birthday celebration, on February 2, a public conference took place in Abidjan's centre at Treichville on the topic: "Role of spirituality in human evolution: the case of Sahaj Marg". The conference given by brother Clément Bosson, preceptor in Abidjan, was opened to non abhyasis; it was followed by a questions and answers session of which some excerpts are published here below.

Q.: Is Sahaj Marg a religion or just a spiritual practice?

R.: Sahaj Marg is a spiritual practice, not a religion, meaning by that, a practice, an art, that of remembrance, the remembrance of our divinity and thus the will to revert to it through this practice. It is purely a spiritual way; its goal is to lead man to God.

Q.: Which benefit can be derived from meditation?

R.: The benefit – let's call it like that - is of a spiritual nature. One grows in love with a more peaceful mind, which guides on the evolutionary way towards the goal of life: merging into the divine.

Q.: Is it a type of psychic education?

R.: No, it is purely spiritual education. The

aim has no bearing with psychic capacities. The latter do not necessarily reflect a high spiritual level; generally even they tend to inflate one's ego, which can be an hin-



drance to the targeted evolution.

Q.: Does it include civics or ethics?

R.: On this path, it's strongly recommended to observe a country's laws. And, as we know, without morality and virtue, there is no spirituality. Moreover, everything is geared towards the virtue of virtues, the culmination of all these: love...

Q.: Is he who discovered this practice at the same level as Jesus or Mahomet (...)

as we know them in our different religions)?

R.: He who discovered this practice, Lalaji, to be specific, is a man who achieved the divinisation of his self, who achieved the goal of merging into the divine which is love. Jesus and Mahomet certainly reached the divine source, as realized beings. However, there is no rivalry between these light-like beings, as is the case among men. The main thing to remember is that each one of them leads their followers to the goal.

Q.: Is Sahaj Marg exclusively reserved for the initiates or can a simple layman attend any activity of your organization?

R.: Initiated into what and with respect to what? No condition is required to join Sahaj Marg, except for the willingness of the person interested and his desire for God – not the expectation of getting solutions to purely material problems. What matters is only his determination. However, to practice, it is necessary to be introduced by a preceptor. The introduction consists in establishing a spiritual connection between the candidate and the Master, thus can practice start...

Sources of Answers to Our Questions

Who are the preceptors and what should be my relationship with them?

The preceptors are also basically abhyasis (sadhakas). In addition, they have taken up voluntary spiritual work. When one is committed to one's sadhana, is convinced about the efficacy of the system, and is willing to give one's time for taking up spiritual work for Master, he or she can be appointed preceptor by Master. One is then authorised by Master to do the work of yogic transmission and *prana* on His behalf, and serve spiritual seekers and abhyasis of the Mission. But, a preceptor has to continue his or her own daily sadhana as prescribed for all abhyasis. You should, therefore, treat the preceptor as your brother or sister and pay attention to any instructions regarding the sadhana. You are also welcome to approach Master freely at any time, or to

The first issue of Echos d'Afrique (2006, 1st year, page 3), presented the resources offered by the Mission to help us to understand Masters' teachings and to deepen our practice. Among these resources, the website of the Mission (www.srcm.org), displays several sections, including Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), an excerpt of which is shown here.

write to him, seeking clarification on spiritual matters. You are advised to restrict your relationship with preceptors to spiritual training only as they are *grihasthas* (householders) with worldly commitments and cannot be expected to socialize with abhyasis. Treat all preceptors as equal and do not develop any preference or attachment to any of them.

Will all my worldly problems disappear if I practise sadhana regularly?

We should know that the end of sadhana is to realise Him and not to get rid of problems in this life. It is worldly problems that test us and strengthen us and this is very necessary for spiritual progress. But, it is a fact that many problems that used to arise as a result of our egotism and *samskaras* stop coming up due to the removal of those *samskaras*. However, Master says that some *samskaras* are left behind so that some troubles and challenges that are necessary for our spiritual evolution will be permitted to come our way. They should, therefore, be accepted as Divine blessings. Sadhana, therefore, strengthens us to face life's problems in a masterly way and we are not expected to run away from them.

Echoes of the Scholarship Training Program

About the Program

The Scholarship Training Program (STP) on sadhana, held from December 9, 2007 to January 6, 2008, in India, for the sixth consecutive year, was financed by the Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation. It brought together 25 scholars from 17 countries of Africa, America, Asia and Europe. The training course was opened on Sunday December 9, 2007 and closed on January 6, 2008 after the 9:00 a.m. satsangh in Manappakkam

during a ceremony where each scholar received their certificate handed by our Master. As was the case in the previous training sessions, some scholars (10 out of 25) were made preceptors. Most training courses took place at the CREST in Bangalore where simultaneous interpretation was provided in 6 languages: English, Chinese, Spanish, Farsi, French and Indonesian. The program included practice, training and leisure times.

Practice

In addition to the 9:00 a.m. daily satsangh, the daily schedule for all scholars included meditation and cleaning in the meditation hall.

Training

Training focused on various Sahaj Marg topics ranging from philosophical aspects to practice, including communication techniques. Every evening, at 8:00 p.m., a video of "He the hookah and I" was shown, thus allowing us to listen from Master's own words the various teachings provided through the daily lectures or group work.

Golden Silence

Between cleaning and dinner, we had to observe one hour of "Golden silence", a true moment of individual reflection, absorption and interiorization. Equally important were the moments spent exercising (6:00 a.m. every morning), in spite of the low temperatures, doing volunteer work between 4:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. and the movie show after the 9:00 p.m. Universal



prayer. We learned some physical Yoga or Taichi's exercises, and did a bit of gardening: making a furrow and sowing seeds. We also learned how to prepare chapatis and some Indian sauces, etc. All these activities were punctuated by a bell ringing the beginning or the end of each particular activity.

Let us underline that each scholar or trainer was requested throughout the training ses-



sion to carry out some communication exercises, in public, such as introducing a person selected randomly. This enabled us to better know each other. Other exercises included reporting on a reading topic that mostly impressed us, or simply sharing experience about our practice. A series of Open Doors days were organized in Manappakkam during the last week with attendance from the public (other than scholars), by language group. This is a critical exer-

cise given the immense task ahead in the field, once back home.

Leisure

Combining business with pleasure, we visited selected famous places such as: the Bangalore Palace; the Brindavan Garden of Mysore and the Lalaji Memorial Omega International School at Kolapakkam, in Chennai.

Unforgettable moments

We will not forget, among so many other aspects: the show offered to abhyasis living in the CREST and its surroundings in the Christmas Eve, in the framework of Christmas celebrations; the sitting Master gave us on the New Year's Eve, from 11: 45 p.m. to 0:15 a.m., followed by prasad distribution by Master himself, thus blessing the commencement of the New Year. Such a sweetness and peace in the heart! And, finally, Master invited us for a lunch reception, in his Gayathri residence in Chennai, on Saturday, January 5, on the eve of the closing day.

The way back...

Separation was painful after five weeks spent together. The Transport desk crossroads - for those who know the Manappakkam Ashram - was our wailing place. But interestingly enough, every one of us made at least one resolution. We then loudly promised ourselves: meet again next year; from now on, I will return to this place every two years; soon, I will correctly speak English or French; I will come back for one year to India to learn Hindi or Tamil, etc. The way back is like the end of one's meditation; we

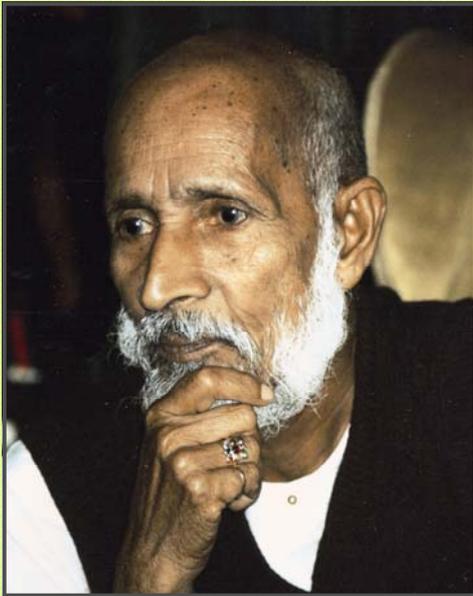
emerge from our heart to return to the hustle of our environment. Alas!

Admittedly, the training was successfully organised, but its actual success will depend on our individual work at home in the medium and long term.

E.Y.

Whispers From the Brighter World

Sunday, October 5, 2003 – 10:00 A.M.



My son appreciates these messages; their regularity maintains the effectiveness of the scribe who must remain efficient. The bulk of these writings constitute a teaching that will be added to the many books which our brothers and sisters already know. So there will be a very wide choice. As the number of our abhyasis in the world will grow, the Mission will be able to meet their expectation through a diversified teaching. Their thirst for knowledge will grow. This teaching will be seen as a special one, in that it comes from the world of the spirit. It will outlive this century and will feed our brothers of the future, who will then imagine how the Earthly life was during the life of the first Masters, who have contributed to the development of the Sahaj Marg Mission.

“The life of our brothers of the future will be restricted to essential aspects. Their way of life, quite different from what it is today, will be more rewarding spiritually, and their very broad views will make them appreciate the source of these writings. We will therefore continue for some time again, by opening our remarks to realities which will necessarily have to be admitted, with due respect to obstinate people incapable of going beyond their present limitations. We work for all, but only those who really want to advance will be able to follow us in the prospects we offer to them. Humanity is evolving through sufferings, the divine intentions are like that, and may it understand where its salvation lies.”

Babuji

*Daily Reflections***That Thou Art**

We have to become children of the Master. Forget this nonsense of abhyasis and preceptors and central region and all these stupid hierarchical notions of power and positions. I must see him as he is. That can be done only when I become like him, when I look at him and I see myself reflected in the mirror. And then he sees me

and says, "Yes, this I knew I was. Now I see it in you. Therefore I know myself too. My son (daughter), thank you for that."

Taken from The Spider's Web, vol. 3, p.151 –Rev. Charij

Astrology

Astrology no doubt may have a place in life, but for abhyasis astrology very often does not work, indeed cannot work, be-

cause they are doing something to change their destiny. So please stop consulting astrologers. They can only tell you, perhaps, what has been fixed by the past sam-skaras. But when you are changing, the horoscope does not change. So how can the predictions be correct?

Taken from The Spider's Web, vol. 3, p.186 –Rev. Charij

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