

TRANSMISSION OF SPIRITUAL POWER

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There is a process by which a real Spiritual teacher imparts his spiritual power to his disciple. The process is known as “Shakti-pata” or transmission of spiritual power. The teacher who is possessed to this power of transmission can give his knowledge of Truth or the knowledge of the way of union with the Divine to a deserving disciple in an instant without any effort whatsoever. Nay, he can transform his desciple into his own likeness, स्वीयं साम्यं विधत्ते as the great Shankar declares in the first verse of his work, the “Vedant Kesari”. Tukaram, the great saint of Maharashtra, repeats the same idea in one of his Abhangas where he says, that the real teachers make their devoted disciples exactly like themselves in no time. A philosopher’s stone, he says cannot stand in comparison with the Guru whose greatness is beyond all measure. Jnyaneshwar, the crown-jewel of saints, declares in choicest terms the greatness of the real Guru in his “Bhavarth-dipika”, the great commentary on “Bhagwatgeeta” to the effect that, a man on whom the real Guru lets fall his glance or on whose head he places his lotus hand, be he however small and insignificant a being, is at once raised to a status equal to the Lord of the Universe himself. He who has the good luck of receiving spiritual teaching from a real Guru is at once freed from all dualities and is established in his own real self. The Guru gives and the disciple at once receives the “Mahayakya” or the great word of Vedant, and the same moment finds himself transformed into a living embodiment of the great word. Jnyaneshwar then proceeds to describe how the Lord, in the “Bhagwatgeeta, transformed Arjun, his greatest devotee, into his likeness by transmitting his power to him. The Lord extended his right hand with its dark-blue colour and the radiance of the bracelet round the wrist and embraced his loving devotee, Arjun, to his heart. The Lord intended to give him that transcendent experience of self where no speech or intelligence can enter and the embrace was a device for the purpose. Heart met heart and the content of the one was poured into the other and without giving up the dual form, Arjun was made one with “Shri Krishna”.

The realization of Brahma is never attained merely through a study of the shastras. It is the grace of the Guru that brings it. “Samartha Ramdas” states emphatically that no knowledge is possible without a real Guru. This is corroborated by the “Shastras” themselves. “Neither words nor a keen intelligence, nor any volume of hearing of spiritual discourses can make one realize the spiritual self”, say the Upanishadas – “It is only the grace of the Guru that brings that realisation”. Power of the nectarean glance of the Guru representing immeasurable streams of compassion finds a beautiful expression in the words of “Acharya Shri Shankar” in the following verse –

तद् ब्रह्मैवाहमस्मीत्यनुभव उदितो यस्य कस्यपि चेद्वै ।
पुंसः श्रीसद्गुरुणामतुलितकरुणापूर्णपीयूषदृष्टया ॥
जीवन्मुक्तः स एव भ्रमविधुरमना निर्गते नाद्युपाधौ ।
नित्यानन्दैकधाम प्रविशति परमं नष्टसंदेहवृत्तिः ॥

To whomsoever is brought the realization of the truth, “I am the Brahma”, by the ambrosial glance full of immeasurable compassion of the Guru, he is liberated while yet in this body with his mind freed from all delusion and doubt. He enters the supreme abode of eternal Anand.

Thus the Vedas, the Puranas, the Tantras and saints of all ages have fully testified to the idea of transmission of spiritual power. The 'Yogvasistha' relates the facts of 'Vasistha' having transmitted his power to Ramachandra to raise him into a state of 'Asamprajnata Samadhi' or complete absorption in Brahma on which events even Vishwamitra thus spoke to 'Vasistha', "O high solued Vasistha, son of Brahma, thou art really great, thou hast established thy greatness by transmitting the power in an instant". The 'Yogvasistha' then mentions in the next verse the three methods of transmitting power into the body of the disciple, दर्शनात्स्पर्शनाच्छब्दात्कृपया शिष्यदेहके (by sight, touch and word, all through the grace of Guru). The process of transmission is described in fuller details in the 'Suta-Sanhita' of the 'Skand-Puran'. The Tantric works also give a long description of initiation through transmission. The Nath cult is the most noted of all the cults in initiating the disciple through the transmission of power. The cult is as ancient as spiritual knowledge and the Science of Yoga. Gurus possessing this mighty and effective power of transmission are very rare now-a-days, but they are not altogether extinct. Mahatmas of this rare type roam through the world in disguise and when they come across a deserving disciple infuse in him the power they possess.

Teachers possessing knowledge and power of transmitting the power of Yogic power and thereby rousing the power of "Kundalini" in the disciple are, as we have said, occasionally met with here and there. The experience I had of such a Mahatma forms the basis of the present article. It may not be of any practical benefit to the general reader but if it only succeeds in convincing him that there are really men of perfection who can transmit the yogic power in others and that one can avail himself of their grace, I shall consider my attempt to have been amply repaid. For if a sadhak fortunately comes across such a Mahatma and succeeds in obtaining his grace, he can easily realize the object and purpose of his human existence.

The principle objective of yoga is to attain Samadhi in which state all modifications of the mind are stilled and suppressed. To achieve this object one has to go through the eightfold process of yoga, which is very difficult to practice – under the guidance of a qualified Guru. A slight error in this Sadhan may result in injury to the practitioner. This difficulty prevents many an ardent seeker from pursuing the path of yoga which comprises a long course of Asan, Pranayam, the practice of various Mudras, the rousing of the kundalini power and thereafter opening the gateway of the central nerve within spinal cord and directing the Prana to an upward course towards the cerebral region. Now, the whole of this process can be brought about almost without an effort by transmission of power.

The effect of transmission is immediate on the Sadhak who has control over his mind and senses, who observes the laws of the "Varnashram Dharma", is devoted to Devas and Brahmans, possesses an unswerving faith in the Guru and is young and healthy. The one thing needed above all others is sincere service of Guru and gaining of his favour.

The four methods of transmission have been mentioned in the following passage:-

विद्धि स्थूलं सूक्ष्मं सूक्ष्मतरं सूक्ष्मतममपि क्रमतः ।
स्पर्शन-भाषण-दर्शन-संकल्पजने त्वत्तश्चतुर्धा तत् ॥

These are transmission (1) through touch,(2) through the spoken word, (3) through sight and (4) through thought , and are classed as the gross, the subtle, the subtler and the subtlest respectively.

यथा पक्षी स्वपक्षाभ्यां शिशून् संवर्धयेच्छनैः ।
स्पर्शदीक्षोपदेशस्तु तादृशः कथितः प्रिये ॥
स्वापत्यानि यथा कूर्मी वीक्षणेनैव पोषयेत् ।
दृग्दीक्षाख्योपदेशस्तु तादृशः कथितः प्रिये ॥
यथा मत्स्यी स्वतनयान् ध्यानमात्रेण पोषयेत् ।
वेधदीक्षोपदेशस्तु मनसः स्यात्तथाविधः ॥

These verses describe three of the methods of initiation, the “Sparsha-Diksha” (initiation by touch) resembling the action of a bird which nourishes its babes by keeping them under its wings, the “Drig-Diksha” (initiation by sight) resembling the action ones simply by keeping an eye over them and the “Vedha-Diksha”(Initiation by concentration of the will) resembling the action of fish which nourishes its infants by concentrating its will onthem. There is no mention here of “ Shabda-Diksha” (initiation by word) which can be of two kinds, initiating the disciple by chanting a Mantra or by blessing him by a word of mouth and thus infusing yogic power in him.

The following verse describes the marks which indicate that the power has been transmitted to a disciple.

देहपातस्तथा कम्पः परमावन्दहर्षणे ।
स्वेदो रोमाश्च इत्येतत्कृतिपातस्य लक्षणम् ॥

“The marks of transmission are – falling of the body, tremor, ecstatic delight, perspiration and thrill.”

Appearance of light, hearing of the inner sound, lifting up of the body on the Asan, and an automatic action of the different processes of Pranayam with their different Bandhas follow a little later. Some Sadhakas immediately feel the ascent of the Power from “ Muladhar” to “Brahmarandhra”, which brings about perfect peace in mind. The Sadhak feels the great change come over his body. All these experiences on the first day, may continue for hours, in some cases for half an hour only and in others three hours at a stretch, and then cease. So long as the Power will work, the eyes of the Sadhak will not be inclined to open them an attempt to open them will cause trouble. But when the Power stops working, the eyes will indicate whether the Power is working or it has ceased to work. Whenever the Sadhak closes his eyes he will feel a variety of movements. We should not obstruct or put any obstacle in the way of the inner working. He should simply watch it as a witness without assuming any responsibility for it, for it is the work of a divine power consciously acting from within. And in this state he will feel very happy, indeed and his faith will grow strong and unshakable.

Once by the grace of the Guru the yogic power of the Sadhak is awakened, Asan, Pranayam and Mudra and other accessories of yoga lose their utility for him. These Asanas, Pranayams and Mudras are practiced only to help the awakened power to reach Brahmarandhra. When the passage of ascent is opened for the ascending power these processes become unnecessary and the mind gets progressively established in peace.

There are occasions when even an illiterate Sadhak possessing no knowledge of Asan or Pranayam may be seen doing all these processes exactly prescribed in the Shastras under the influence of the transmitted power just like a yogi who had a training in Yoga for several years. The fact is that the Kundalini power herself gets all these things done according to the needs and demands of the case for the growth of the Sadhak.

The most difficult processes of yoga are done as if no efforts were needed. The processes of Pranayam - Purak, Rechak and Kumbhak, take place automatically. A two minute Kumbhak is mastered in a week or two. All this takes place without any risk to the practitioner for awakened power herself takes care that nothing is done which may do harm to the Sadhak. The Sadhak proceeds safe with his Sadhana which practically works out itself.

When a teacher has awakened the Kundalini power by transmission in his disciple, the power of transmission grows in he latter. For he grows into the likeness of his Guru. So the power of transmission continues in a line of succession from Guru to the disciple. The seed of the power is sown in him by the Guru so that the disciple, when commanded by the Guru, may impart the same power to his disciple and thus continue the line of succession. This privilege, however, is not enjoyed by every disciple. In some cases, the disciple enjoys himself the presence of the power but cannot transfer it to anybody else, as pointed out in the following verse:-

स्थूलं ज्ञानं द्विविधं गुरुसाम्यसाम्यतत्त्वभेदेन ।
दीपप्रस्तरयोरिव संस्पर्शनिर्घवर्त्यसोः ॥

The gross method of transmission (i.e. transmission by touch) is of two kinds according to the difference in the kind of Guru. One is like the oil lamp which lights up any oiled wick the moment it touches it and gives to it the same power of lighting other wicks and thus continues the line of succession; and the other is like the Philosopher's stone which turns by the touch the iron into gold but does not impart the same power to the gold. It lacks the power of continuing the line of succession. The disciple of the first type of Guru fulfills his own life and becomes the source of the fulfillment of the life of others and the disciple of the second category only redeems himself but cannot redeem others.

Similarly, transmission through word is also of two kinds :-

तद्वद्विविधं सूक्ष्मं शब्दश्रवणेन कोकिलाभ्युदययोः ।
तत्सुतमयुरयोरिव तद्विज्ञेयं यथासंख्यम् ॥

The moment a young cuckoo brought up by a crow hears the voice of a cuckoo, it gains its voice which has the power of awakening the same consciousness in other young cuckoos. And the line of succession through word thus continues unbroken.

The peacock, however, is delighted to hear the thundering of the cloud but cannot, like the cloud, delight other peacocks by its voice. Here the line of succession is not continued.

The same difference is to be found in the case of transmission of through sight.

इस्थं सूक्ष्मतरमपि द्विविधं कूर्म्या निरीक्षणात्तस्याः ।
पुत्र्यास्तथैव सवितुर्निरीक्षणात् कोकमिथुनस्य ॥

The subtler method of transmission (i.e. through sight) is also of two kinds. The tortoise nourishes its young ones by a mere concentration of its sight and the young ones get from it the same power which awakens in them when it is needed for the same purpose. They are not conscious of it until they grow and give birth to their own babes. A disciple of this category, similarly, is not conscious of the power of transmission and continuing the succession given to him by the Guru so long as he does not find his own disciple. The ruddy goose pair, on the other hand, are delighted to see the sun but they themselves cannot delight others of their kind.

Lastly, the transmission through will :-

सूक्ष्मतरमपि द्विविधं मत्स्याः संकल्पतस्तु तद्बुधितुः ।
तृप्तिर्नगरादिजनिर्मात्रिकसंकल्पतश्च भुवि तद्वत् ॥

The subtlest method of transmission, that is through concentration of will is also of two kinds. The one resembles the action of the fish nourishing its young ones by the concentration of will and the other the action of a juggler who creates towns and cities. The former gives its power to its young ones also, but the latter has no such power of giving it, to his creation.

In all cases quoted above the power of continuing the line of succession seems to have been vested in the mother. The Guru is, therefore, rightly called the mother.

Once the transmission of power is effected in a disciple by his Guru, all the processes of Asan, Pranayam, Mudra, Pratyaha, Dharana and Dhyana are easily mastered by the former. He will require no special effort or struggle of any kind and guidance for this purpose. For the power herself will guide the Sadhak through all these processes.

The greatest point in favour of this kind of Sadhan is that the sadhak is always safe against injury and harm of any kind. The ordinary yogic practices of Asan Pranayam are attended with risks as the 'Hathyoga-Pradipika' points out that an error in such practice may bring about all forms of physical ailments अयुक्ताभ्यासयोगेन सर्वरोगसमुद्भवः । . But the Sadhan pointed out here is a natural sadhan and it frees the body from all diseases and even the most incurable malady is thereby thrown out of the system. A worldly man can avail himself of its various advantages. The delight and peace, the great boons one expects to get from the arduous and difficult process of Yoga are easily attained through this sadhan. A sadhak following other paths of sadhan has to pass through a trying period of painful experiments in the hope of attaining bliss and when the power within is awakened, the Power herself leads the sadhak to the goal of Self-Realization. The Power continues to work incessantly until the disciple attains the supreme state. In the meanwhile, if it becomes necessary for the Sadhak in exceptional cases to pass through many lives, the awakened power will continue awakened and will never sleep again until the goal is reached. Such is the assurance of the Guru in this path of sadhan. All that has been said above will, it is hoped, convince the reader of the great importance of awakening the Kundalini power.

Once the sadhak is initiated through the transmission of power, he cannot by himself do any progress of Yoga nor can he feel happy in doing it. It is the impulse of the power within that he will obey. Any disobedience on his part will make him miserable. When a man, for instance, is overtaken by the sense of sleep, he cannot do without sleeping. If he acts against the natural impulse, he will be restless and unhappy. It is the sleep along that will give him rest and happiness. Similarly, when the sadhak sits on his Asan, there comes to him the impulse from the power within to do a particular thing or to make a particular movement and he must act accordingly. If he disobeys he is troubled and restless. But if on the other hand, he opens himself to the action from within and follows it, he is calm and happy. The type of sadhaks who pin their faith on personal effort is unlikely to yield to and solely depend on a power beyond their personality. But the way of the transmission of power is a way of surrender and dependence. The sadhak initiated into it has no thought of the progress he would make during the present term of life. He is happy to be led where the power leads him and the power protects him from all disaster and leads him to his spiritual destiny. For those who aspire after Yoga, under modern conditions, there is no easier method to follow the process of transmission of power. Whosoever, therefore, comes in contact with any Mahatma having power of transmission, should not lose the opportunity of gaining his favour and thus realizing the object of his life. In this age of Kali, this method is like the immortal drink of the heavens brought to the mortals of this earth. There is no easier, no more effective sadhan than this, always lifting the sadhak above griefs and sorrows, above the wrong activating of the little and perverted mind and bringing him Supreme Peace. In conclusion, let us pray to God in the words of "Acharya Shankar" in the "Shivanandalahari" :-

त्वत्पादाम्बुजमर्चयामि परमं त्वं चिन्तयाम्यन्वहं ।
त्वामीशं शरणं व्रजामि वचसा त्वामेव याचे विभो ॥
दीक्षां मे दिश चाक्षुषी संस्फुरणां दिव्यैश्चिरं प्रार्थितां ।
शम्भो लोकगुरो मदीयमेतसः सौख्योपदेशं कुरु ॥

"I worship Thy lotus feet and meditate on Thee, O Supreme: I take refuge in Thee, O Lord, and by word of mouth beg of Thee to initiate me into Thy acceptance by transmission through thine eye full of compassion, which is ever so eagerly desired by the Gods. Teach my mind, O Shambhu – the World-teacher, the way to real happiness".

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