

Siddha Marg



LOOK TO GOD RESIDING IN THE SKY OF THE HEART.

BHAGAVAN NITYĀNANDA*

Yoga has always declared that the nonphysical space of the heart is where Consciousness dwells. Science is now coming to see this, too.

So much is going on in our hearts and minds. So much stuff has been stored within us over lifetimes. For this reason, the heart has to be cleansed, purified.

How do we purify the heart? Through all the practices we do: chanting, meditating, study, contemplation.

MAHĀMANDALESHWAR SWAMI NITYĀNANDA

* *The Sky of the Heart*, Rudra Press, 1996, p. 212.

During September and October 2011, Mahāmandaleshwar Swami Nityānanda traveled to Argentina and Mexico, where he offered a series of satsaṅgs, Intensives, and retreats. This issue of Siddha Marg presents extracts from two talks he gave at stops on the tour.

Look Within MAR DEL PLATA, ARGENTINA

With great respect and love, *namasté*. I'd like to thank all of you for joining us here this afternoon. It is Sunday. The weather is beautiful. You have a nice place to walk along the ocean. You could go to Sierra de los Padres and enjoy yourselves there. But you have chosen to come and listen to a swami from India. So welcome. ¡Bienvenidos!

I have been traveling for so many years, yet there is still so much to see. The universe is full of water, yet there is so much land we can still see. Yesterday and today we have been driven around by a very lively young man, full of life, full of purpose. And as I drove with him for five hours from Buenos Aires to here, I thought, "This is how one should live life." And then as I stepped out of the car, coming into this theater, I was greeted by a lively woman.

How wonderful to meet two people with so much life! Both are from Mar del Plata, so something right must be happening here in Mar del Plata. Because to meet two such full-of-life people in twenty-four hours from one city is not always easy. I travel a lot, so I know.

I am reminded of a story about a young man who wants to be happy. So he goes to a master. He says, "I want to be happy all the time."

The master looks at him. He says, "Go find a man who is laughing always, twenty-four hours a day. When you find such a person, ask him for his shirt. Then wear it. And laugh."

Look Within (continued)

The man sets out, seeking, looking for a person who is laughing all the time. All of us know from life, that's not easy. You can watch as many comedy shows as you want, but sooner or later there is a moment of despair.

In the Indian stories, a person always seeks for twelve years. So this person also seeks for twelve years. One day, he arrives in an area like Sierra. He is told a man lives there who is always laughing. He finds this person under a tree, standing with his back turned, and laughing.

When he hears a pause in the laughter, the seeker says, "Excuse me, I want to ask you something."

The laughing man says, "Yes? Go ahead and ask."

"I would like to ask you for your shirt."

The laughing man turns around. "If you look closely, you'll see I'm not wearing a shirt."

As they come face to face, the seeker realizes this is the same master who sent him on the search twelve years before.

The master says, "Look within. That is where the laughter will come from. I hope you don't think a shirt is what will make you happy."

The seeker says, "But why didn't you tell me this twelve years ago?"

The master says, "You wouldn't have understood then."

Because he has traveled for all these months and days and years, looking everywhere, he understands what the master tells him: look within.

In the same way, you have decided to come and sit inside a theater this evening, rather than go up into the mountains or along the beach. You have realized, "I want something in my life." That something can only be found when the mind turns within.

Baba Muktānanda's teaching was "God dwells within you as you." He always told us, "Don't think you will find Him here or there. Don't go looking for Him anywhere. Simply learn to become still and quiet. When you turn within, you will find He is there with you at all times."

Though happiness is right within us, all of us do so much in our lives looking for that experience. When we ask ourselves, "Why do I do all the things I do?" the answer is to enjoy. But when we ask, "Do I really enjoy doing everything I do?" the answer is that we only enjoy what we do if we're already enjoying ourselves.

To really enjoy anything in life, we must be joyous first. Where do we find this joy? We have to realize that external objects only give us a glimpse, a fleeting vision, of what joy is. The object itself is not the source of joy. Nothing outside ourselves is the source of joy. The actual source of joy is within ourselves.

The sages tell us we look for it in the wrong place. Start looking for it in the right place. Once we have learned a wrong tendency, we continue to follow that tendency. Now we have to tell ourselves, "I must change my habits. I must train myself not to look outside. Rather I must train myself to look within myself."

Go within yourself. Become established there. And when you become established within, view this world from

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Look Within (continued)

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there. Then whatever experiences you encounter, this very world will become filled with joy. This very world will become filled with peace. Because your outlook will have changed. Your perception will be different.

A husband and a wife sat every morning for breakfast at their big glass window. While they had breakfast, the neighboring wife would hang her laundry.

When you sit for breakfast, you have to talk about something. Usually it is never about the Self. It's about others. So each day, the breakfast wife would complain to her husband that the neighboring wife was not washing her laundry well.

A few weeks later, they were having breakfast. Again, the neighboring wife put out her laundry to dry.

This time the breakfast wife looked at the laundry and said, "Finally! Today her laundry is clean!"

The husband took her hands. He said – I don't know what you say in Spanish, but in English they say Sweetheart or Honey – "I cleaned our window yesterday."

Therefore, Baba Muktānanda would say, "Change the prescription of your glasses."

The universe is fine. Everybody is perfect in his or her place. We are perfect where we are. We simply have to accept that we are where we are because of who we are. The only thing we can do if we don't like where we find ourselves is to make our vision larger. The mind has to have a vision that includes everything, everywhere – especially in this modern world, where we can connect to each other so quickly across the continents. We have made the universe seem so small. So we have to change our mental vision.

Baba would say, "The biggest mistake we make is to think poorly of ourselves. The biggest sin is to think lowly of who we are."

There is nothing greater than Consciousness, which lives within this body. Come to know and experience the divinity that dwells within you. Only when you come to realize that divinity will you realize the value of who you really are.

Great sages sit and contemplate, asking themselves, "Who am I? Who am I? Who am I?"

Of course, you immediately say, "I am Emilio." "I am Sylvia."

But the sages tell us, "That is the body." The day that body dies, the name also goes with it.

Baba often used this example. You go to sleep at night. You have a dream. You wake up the next morning, and something tells you, "I had a dream."

But "I" was sleeping. Emilio was sleeping. Sylvia was sleeping. Still, when Emilio and Sylvia wake up, they say, "I had a dream." The body was sleeping, yet something was awake and witnessed the dream.

Who is that who had the dream? Have you ever asked yourself this? You wake up and say, "I had a dream!" But which "I" had a dream?

This is the "I" you have to find – the one who was awake while the body was sleeping. This is the quest. Find this "I" who is always awake, always watching, witnessing everything that goes on.

It may just be for a brief, fleeting moment, but it happens. But because it is brief and fleeting, you don't

Look Within (continued)

really register it. Yet it remains in your awareness that this has happened at different times in your life.

The poet-saint Kabir says, “Live life in such a way that when you check out of this guesthouse, you go laughing.”

This entire world is a large guesthouse. We are all travelers who have come – either to Buenos Aires or Mar del Plata or Patagonia or the USA or Europe, somewhere. I’m sure all of you have stayed at a guesthouse or hotel at some point or other. When you check out, you have to pay the bill. You have to settle the account for everything you used during your stay.

Similarly, when we leave the guesthouse of this life, we have to settle the account. There is no credit card. There is no check. There is no money. What is effective are the actions we have performed while living this life.

My Guru was kind to me. He gave me the name *Nitya-ānanda*. It means eternally blissful. In case I forget, somebody just has to call me by my name. Then no matter where the mind is, it has to remember, “Okay, be blissful.”

If you don’t remember anything else from tonight, just remember: laugh. Don’t get worked up. Don’t worry. Don’t get anxious. All that is going to happen is going to happen anyway, whether you worry or not. So you have a choice. You can laugh, you can be full of life, you can enjoy all that has been given to you.

Don’t look at God and say, “You didn’t give me everything.” Because when you pray to Him to give you everything so you can enjoy life, He will tell you, “I have given you life for you to enjoy everything.” God’s vision is that you already have everything. Learn to enjoy it.

Flying here on the airplane, I was reading about the Pachamama celebration you do, I think in August. You thank Mother Earth for what she has given you. Ceremonies like this exist across all traditions. We honor and respect nature and the divine forces for supporting this life.

Over the next nine days in Sierra, our two priests, who have come from India, will lead us in the celebration of the divine goddess. We pray that divine energy is always around us, protecting us and taking care of us. It is this very energy that brings fullness and richness in our lives. So we offer our gratitude for all that we have received in our life.



**God’s vision is that you
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Pearls of Wisdom

MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

The scriptures give us qualities we must look for when we look for a Guru. A true Guru is established in the experience of divinity, well versed in the scriptures of his tradition, and able to give us a direct experience of that divinity which is within each one of us.

The same scriptures talk about qualities we as seekers must have. As seekers, we first of all have to accept the existence of divinity. Then, once we have chosen a path, a Guru, we must accept and follow that.

When Baba Muktānanda left the US for the last time in 1981, he held a question and answer session. Of course, at that time, we didn't know it would be his last visit. We thought he would come back again.

A person asked Baba this question: "When you go away to India for some time, should I continue following your teachings or should I look for a new Guru?"

Baba answered with a story. Mullah Nasruddin decides to go on a six-month pilgrimage. His wife asks him, "Should I wait for you to come back or should I look for a new husband while you are gone?"

In our tradition, we are taught that the Guru-disciple relationship is internal and continues from life to life within.

In our modern society, we think of everything as transitory and moving fast. But when we go deep within ourselves,

we realize our path didn't just begin now. And it's not going to end now. It is a process that has been going on.

In today's world, we like to say all paths are one, and therefore I can follow anything.

I'll give a very simple example. Today our host fed us tamales for lunch. Now, food is food, right? So you might think, "Why not put some ketchup on the tamale?" Maybe put soy sauce on the tamale, or whatever else. But the eighty-seven-year-old mother of our host would tell us, "That is not the way!" That is not how you will appreciate the taste of that which has been cooked with so much effort.

So in this modern way of thinking, where we see everything as one, as the same, we mix so many things. In the end we don't really know what we are following.

We have to fix our mind. The mind needs focus. It needs one-pointedness. When the mind doesn't have focus and one-pointedness, it takes us all over the place.

We have to become clear: I am not tortured by anyone. My own mind tortures me. I don't suffer because of anyone else. My mind is the cause of my suffering.

When are you content? When are you at peace? When your mind is at peace.

On Monday we took a quiet boat ride in Xochimilco. At the end, everyone said it was so relaxing.

When we go deep within ourselves, we realize our path didn't just begin now.

Pearls of Wisdom (continued)

**The divine is what
propels the mind to
think.**

Now, imagine if your mind is torturing you. The boat ride is beautiful. The company is excellent. The music is good. But inside you there is a war. The battle is going on. All you have to do is look at your own face, and it reflects the war within.

I tell people, "As you go about life, look at faces." That is the best live television. Because you see eyes, you see foreheads, you see hairstyles, you see the way people walk. They don't know they're being seen. But if you learn to observe and witness, you realize that what you are seeing is nothing but the expressions of different minds.

A wise person asks, "Is *that* how I look? Is *that* how I act? Is *that* how I talk?" And thus begins the process of knowing and understanding oneself.

A Sufi master once said that three kinds of people are the most difficult to teach: those who are delighted they have achieved something; those who, after learning something, are depressed they didn't know it before; and those who are so anxious to progress that they cease to be sensitive to their progress.

You have to ask yourself, "Which one am I?"

Don't feel frustrated that you don't understand. Don't think, "I need to know better than anyone else." This is more a matter of the heart than of the mind. The sages tell us the mind has the ability to think because of the existence of divinity. The divine is what propels the mind to think. Therefore, we can't tell ourselves that we will try to understand the principle of divinity through the mind.

At some point in our seeking, we must go beyond our own mind. When we come to that place beyond the

mind, we become still and quiet. In that place of stillness, we experience divinity. So as seekers, we must first of all become honest with ourselves. Any game we play, we play with ourselves.

A disciple goes to a master one day. He says, "Can I study with you?"

The master tells him, "For one day."

He says, "Okay."

All day long, people come to the master and ask about different things, request different things. The master sits quietly. He does not respond.

At the end of the day, a man comes with a bundle of wood and asks directions to a particular village.

The master gets up, takes one part of the man's bundle, and walks with him toward that village.

As they come to the edge of the village, the master gives him the bundle, and tells him, "You are here."

The disciple is also walking with them. As they are walking back, he says, "I have to ask you a question. All day long, people came to you and asked so many things. But you did not respond to any one of them. When this man came to you with a bundle of wood and asked for directions, why did you help him?"

The master said, "Because he was the only one who sought the object he claimed to want."

Think. Whenever you have been successful in life, what was it? It was because there was clarity in your thought. When you performed your actions, there was depth, there was focus, there was one-pointedness. You didn't

Pearls of Wisdom (continued)

**We keep going farther,
until we become
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divine.**

doubt yourself, and therefore your action was performed from a place of certainty. Thus, that action bore fruit for you.

When we commit to a path, we are given teachings. We are given practices. We are told, “Do these.” As we do the practices with focus and sincerity, our effort is with love, and it bears fruit. As it bears fruit, it inspires us to do more. And as we do more, it bears more fruit.

Baba used to tell a great story. He said one day a man is in a forest. He meets a holy man. The holy man simply tells him, “Keep going farther.”

So the man begins to walk in the forest. As he walks, he comes across a grove of sandalwood trees. Sandalwood trees are fragrant. The man thinks for a moment, but then he recalls, “No, the saint said, ‘Keep going farther.’”

As he keeps going farther, he comes across silver. He thinks to himself, “Silver will set up my life.” But then he remembers “keep going farther.” So he keeps going.

He finds gold. He stops, he thinks, “Gold.” But then he remembers “keep going farther.”

Then he finds platinum. But he remembers “keep going farther.”

Finally he arrives at diamonds. And maybe he stops there, maybe he keeps going farther. The point the story makes is that throughout our lives, we come to different places where we can stop. We tell ourselves, “This is fine, this will do.” We think, “No more effort is needed.” Then we start to become lazy.

But we must remember the teaching “keep going farther.” Farther in this case is not external, but deeper within

ourselves. We keep going farther, until we become established in the knowledge of the divine.

As we walk this path, maybe we see a little something. Maybe we get a little wisdom. Maybe we hear something. And we can think to ourselves, “I have gotten something.” But it is only a little bit. It is not the full wisdom. So therefore, as seekers, we must remember to “keep going farther.”

If we don’t keep going farther, we remain shallow. And if we remain shallow, we will never become established in divinity.

Most of you have seen buildings being built. A civil engineer decides what the depth of the foundation should be. The size of the building determines the depth of the footing. The footing is then created and left to cure. In the same way, each of us has to create a secure footing.

The sages ask us, “How did this world come about?”

If you say, “It just happened,” that would be like answering the question “How were you born?” by saying, “Well, one day I found myself.”

Exactly how you are laughing now is how people would laugh. They would say, “You have a father. You have a mother. Their union is what created you.”

In the same way, this universe is created by energy. Our scriptures say it has six powers, six *śaktis*.

First, it is *sarvajña*. It is omniscient. It is aware of everything. Personally, we are aware of ourselves, but we don’t have a special knowledge of everything. Sitting inside this room, we aren’t aware of what is going on outside. But that divine power knows. It has knowledge

Pearls of Wisdom (continued)

of now, before, and after. We worry about so many things, but when we begin to trust that divine energy, that worry dissipates.

Second, it is *tr̥pti*, content. When we connect with that energy, we find ourselves contented. It doesn't come from any object because objects come and go throughout our life. But in that moment, we are connected to the divine energy.

It has *anādi bodhi*, knowledge of everything. It is not limited knowledge; it is unlimited. When we go deep within ourselves as we meditate, sometimes we experience fear. But if we go beyond the fear, we see that knowledge of all arises from within.

It is *svātantra*, independent. We think, "I am independent," but we're not really independent. We always need something or other. But that divine energy is not dependent upon anything.

It is *nitya*, eternal. It was here before me. It is here while I am. When I leave this world, it will still be here.

Finally, it is *ananta*, unlimited. The example I think of is the sky. The sages tell us, "Find where the sky begins and where it ends." Similarly, divine energy is unlimited.

All of the energies that exist in the divine creator exist within us also. When we look within ourselves, we will find all of these qualities. But because we have limited ourselves, we don't experience these powers. Instead, we run, looking, looking, looking.

We have to ask, "Where am I really running?"

I think we are actually running from ourselves. We aren't running from anyone else. We are running from our own thoughts. We are running from our own emotions.

I don't know if in Mexico you have a happy hour, where everybody goes at the end of the day for one hour and thinks, "I'll get rid of all my worries." They down tequila after tequila and think, "All my problems are solved."

But when the tequila is gone, the problems are still there, maybe worse. So we should ask ourselves, "What is a happy hour really?" It is supposed to give happiness, but that happiness is superficial. It only lasts for a little bit. When you begin to ask, "Where did I think I was going to get to in this hour?" you become wise and you realize, really, nowhere.

Once again, we have a choice. We can be like a hot iron. When water is poured over the iron, it becomes steam and evaporates. Or we can be like an oyster. The oyster takes a drop of water, and over time makes a pearl out of it.

We have the same choice when it comes to knowledge. We can be so hot and excited that it simply evaporates. Nothing goes in. We don't remember anything; therefore, none of it is put to use in our life. Or we can be like the oyster. We can take those drops, and over time they become pearls of wisdom in our life.



All of the energies that exist in the divine creator exist within us also.

G L O S S A R Y

anādi bodhi

knowledge of everything

ānanda

bliss

ananta

unlimited

bienvenidos

welcome

Kabir

[1440-1518] poet-saint and weaver

namasté

I offer my salutations to the divine within you

nitya

eternal

Pachamama

celebration of the goddess Pachamama (Mother Earth)

śakti

the creative energy of the universe;
the awakened spiritual energy

sarvajña

omniscient

satsaṅg

in the company of a knower of the Truth (saint)

svātantra

independent

tr̥pti

content

