

Pratyahar

MANY, MANY THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO, the sages sat down and divided the science of yoga into eight different aspects. I would like to talk to you about one part. It is called *pratyahar*. *Pratyahar* is a secret science to reach God. You won't find it discussed fully in any books. All they say is, *pratyahar* means "to contract." Contract what? They don't explain it. In some places they say *pratyahar* is *pratyahar* and whosoever does *pratyahar* reaches God. How are you going to make any sense out of it? That is how these old sciences happen. It goes from teacher to student, teacher to student, and so is passed on. The most beautiful art of yoga and the most pure science of yoga is *pratyahar*. *Pratyahar* means, correctly in English, contract or synchronize.

I will give you an example. Some of my students today sent me a birthday present. I should feel very grateful that the present has come, and they wanted me to participate by thanking them. But when I saw it, I couldn't immediately thank them. Since at that time, I had been analyzing just what *pratyahar* is. It is a habit to synchronize towards God. So, immediately out of my mouth came, "Blessed is Lord God, who has given them the heart." I could have said, "Thank you, they are beautiful." But nothing like that happened, and I started wondering why I could not say that. A gift is a source of happiness. But who provides the gift and who is the ultimate provider of the gift? If the consciousness does not synchronize immediately and focus on that point, you are not a yogi.

Bowing to the Source. For twelve years a woman and her husband tried, but they were never blessed with a child. It took twelve years, but finally she got pregnant. A beautiful son came. All they did was start meditating, chanting, and praying. When people came to them saying, "Well, God gave you a beautiful son. We're so happy," they said, "Yes, please sit down and meditate and chant with us." For forty days I saw nothing but kirtan, chanting, and music outside that house. They were so happy, they would request of everybody, "Please, if you really love us, please join with us. Praise the Lord, praise the Lord!" That is called *pratyahar*: Under any time, space, and circumstance, under any pressure, depression, or oppression, you do not forget that Infinite One.

Pratyahar is Also Called the Science of Dedicated Devotion. It is not simple devotion. Simple devotion is, "Thank you, God." That's simple devotion. But it is also a dedication, because when anything comes, you say, "Thank you, God, for making me thank You." It is of a very high caliber. It is a very simple process for getting away from sensuality and sexuality, when they bring you to the Earth. Thank God for the Earth, and then God won't let you go down the tube. It is the power of the Word of God that you are not limited. The moment you are unlimited, you cannot fall apart. You will only fall apart because of ego. You can't fall apart because of God. Ego confines you to limits, and your spirit then gets inflated. When your spirit gets inflated in Infinity, because you are in mental Infinity, then you are divine. But when your spirit gets inflated when you are confined, then you are like a balloon.

Spiritual Ego—Devotion to Oneself Instead of God. In spirituality you will find spiritual ego. It is horrible. The majority of religious people are very miserable, because they walk on the path of spirituality with ego. They start building devotion towards themselves, develop pride, then freak out. Then they start showing off these siddhis— these powers: "I can fly; I can elevate three feet from the ground; I can do this to you." This tattva siddhi is to tell another person, "I am superior to you." They become a kind of semi-God-half-cooked, you know? Half-cooked food neither tastes raw, nor tastes cooked. I call them spiritual junkies. You'll find a lot of swamis, yogis, ministers, and rabbis are spiritual junkies. They know a lot

of junk. They know a lot of spiritual stuff, but, as humans, they are junkies. They are not grateful. They start showing you they are superior. That's why you'll find an uptight man of God is as dangerous as a cobra, a scorpion, or a lizard—these animals which give you fatal bites, or have their tongues going in and out. This is where you will go if you enter spiritual ego. A snake lives very long. All these spiritual teachers want to live very long—five hundred years—to keep that domain over other creatures of God. They want to enjoy that domain. Because if a man of God is not straightforward, is not truthful, and does not always talk about God, and rather brings his personality into the bargain, that's what he gets.

To practice *pratyahar* means one must synchronize, analyze, and totally shell out everything, and realize the praise of God out of everything. God never made anybody without sense, God never made anybody a sinner. God is not a sinner. How can you be of God and be negative, a sinner, an egomaniac or jealous? There are two hundred fifty negative qualities, which you can count, that do not belong to God and with these qualities you do not belong to God. Be careful.

There are two ways of devotion: One is divine, the other is devil. Those decorations are the features you possess. If you want to discipline yourself towards the Divine, then you have to get out of all this nonsense; and if you want to belong to the Divine, you have to master this nonsense. They don't go together. The majority of us are a hodge-podge of half divine and half devil; sometimes divine, sometimes devil. When a person who practices *pratyahar* is a devil, then he's God's devil. When he's divine, he's God's divine one. His dedication to devotion is always divine. Therefore, neither is he a devil nor is he divine. He is the Infinite divine because he can cut through the limits of Time and Space. The caliber of such people is beautiful. They don't stop at any-thing—they don't and they can't. In *Anand Sahib* the science of *pratyahar* is explained in such a beautiful manner. This is where the Guru talks to the eyes, the Guru talks to the ears, the Guru talks to the breath, the Guru talks to the life. All these similes are nothing but the science of *pratyahar*, which is further than *pranayam*. In the entire Siri Guru Granth Sahib and in *gurbani*, wherever the mind has been addressed, it is *pratyahar*:

Re man eh bidh jog kamaao. —Guru Gobind Singh
Oh, my mind, practice yoga in this way.

When a person directs his own mind analytically towards Infinity, that process is *pratyahar*.

The science of spirituality is the science of union. Technically speaking, the science of mind is the source of happiness, and when you cannot do *pratyahar*, you cannot be grateful to God, that Infinite Source which continually gives to you. Then you can never learn to enjoy that thing. A thing which does not come to you from Infinity, cannot be with you to Infinity. Remember this law of cosmic consciousness. If material things come to you because of Infinity and you have the synchronization of dedication of your consciousness to feel that it comes from Infinity, then you have grace.

The Cause of All is the Infinite. The science of *pratyahar* indicates the dedicated telescopic view of the Infinite in the presence of finite microscopic analysis. Whenever this finite microscopically looks into anything, out of that microscopic view he or she telescopically understands the cause of it as Infinity, and bows.

Namo sarab diaale, Namu sarab palay.

—Guru Gobind Singh, *Jaap Sahib*, 28
I bow to the One who is merciful to all.
I bow to the One who nourishes all.

The *namo pauree* of *Jaap Sahib* is a most beautiful creation of Guru Gobind Singh through which **pratyahar** can be totally understood. In it, there is a sentence:

Namo tantra tantrang.
—Guru Gobind Singh, *Jaap Sahib*, 57
I bow to that science which unites me to God.

The exact meaning of the word *tantra* here can be understood by looking at a woven cloth—there is a length and there is a breadth. The length is called *tana*, the breadth is called *peta*. Tantra deals with the longitude and latitude of the entire cosmos. Tantra is a science of unison which teaches from the “multison” to the unison through the longitude and latitude of the entire cosmos.

I want to educate you so that you may really understand what Guru Gobind Singh and all the Gurus gave to you as a science. I am afraid that this sweetness on the part of some Indians when they talk to you is diplomatic cleverness, and in your frankness and directness you can innocently be trapped by their approach. I remember in Amritsar, somebody started discussing with me, “Well, how do we know if they are Sikhs or not?” I said, “Well, I’ll show you whether they are Sikhs or not.” I said, “Bhai Daya Singh, come. This Sardarji is an Indian-born Sikh. Sit down with him in *padma asan* (Lotus Pose), and both chant *Wahe Guru* together for two-and-a-half hours without stopping.” I said, “OK, Sardarji, sit down with him and tune in.” After exactly forty minutes, that man fainted. At that time, Bhai Daya Singh was not very old, he was only sixteen.

Can’t a person spend one-tenth of his time praising God with a single syllable word which represents Infinity? You do not understand one thing: You do not want to relate to your consciousness. You are not going to be judged after death; you are being judged now. Your caliber, your consciousness, your behavior, your environment, your projection, your standard, your faculty of faith—everything is the totality of you. You are being computerized for everything. Therefore, it is required of you that this automatic computer screens you in every activity and totally keeps your record. Therefore, you must answer for everything you do, and answer to your own consciousness. Don’t answer to me, or anyone else. Nobody will judge you at the time of death but your own consciousness.

When Buddha was given those mushrooms, he knew they were poison. But he also knew that they came as *prasad* (a blessing) from prayer. He took it. He died. Perfect. Guru Arjan Dev could have compromised—he never compromised. Men of Infinity are men of God. No, they are God themselves in the finite shell of a human. They don’t compromise. Infinity shall never compromise, because Infinity is a living Truth experienced through finite man. That is called divine.

So the science of pratyahar is an analytical, standardized, mental state of consciousness in which you analytically understand that the very depth and source of any existence coming towards you or going away from you—the cause of all causes—is Infinity.

Can you tell me what is the greatest gift on this Earth? Breath. *Prana*. The first gift is the breath. The second gift is the spiritual teacher. But these two gifts are caused only by what? Explain it to me. The Grace of God, *gurprasad*, God’s Will. It is also **pratyahar** when you cause or intend to cause a cause. You are told what the consequences or effect will be, and so you can have total, or infinite, understanding.

I am trying to let you know that this universe is an electromagnetic field. It has longitude and latitude of magnetic wavelengths. This cosmic universe is very communicative—it talks. And

in this talking, all personalities are built or marred. Therefore always speak very carefully, consciously, knowing what that shall mean unto Infinity. Remember the Word is God and God is the Word. You are what your words are.

I THINK THIS SUBJECT IS VERY SCIENTIFIC; I should not teach you more than this at this time, except to say that Infinity produces Infinity. You cannot have any shortcomings if you meditate on Infinity. Actually it is the job of the spiritual teacher to tear you apart and show you Infinity. That is the most rational thing he does. It is like a car mechanic. He tears it apart, bangs it around, corrects it, cleans it up, and gives it to you. How you use it is your problem. A spiritual teacher is a workshop of creative Infinity. When you come in that garage that's what happens to you. That is why you sometimes are not happy to come, because all you know is the mechanic's workshop, uniform, language, and tools—chisels, hammers, screwdrivers, and everything—get all over you and you do not know why in the world you came. You know what I mean? Some come only for tuning; some come because of a serious accident.

The Language of Pratyahar. The dialogue of the finite and Infinite becomes one when you merge with Infinity. It changes the language, it changes the scope, it changes the desire field, it changes every electromagnetic approach and frequency right away. I have met some people who have that frequency. I have talked to them and they don't talk scriptures.

I'll tell you something. Once I came home from college and I met my grandpa. He received me, and all he said was, "Blessed is this blessed time. God must be very present that He has given me the opportunity to see my grandson in a very joyful and divine way." I looked around. I said, "Have I turned into an angel?" I moved my hands and arms up and down as if they were wings. He knew that I am very humorous, so he asked, "You are finding your wings?" I said, "Yes, Grandpa, I am just trying to look at myself. Perhaps my wings have grown and you might have seen them." He said, "Yes, your radiance is so excellent. I am seeing the very excellence of His Grace through you and your presence. Come on, sit down, let us talk."

Can you believe this language? Just an ordinary meeting with a grandchild, that's all. It is not that you have to sing *slokas*, take out the Rig Vedas, or always quote the Bible to prove you are very religious. If you can talk like Infinity, live like Infinity, feel like Infinity, and deal like Infinity, then you become a living Infinity.

But first you have to totally synchronize—***pratyahar***.

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