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Real Spiritual Path is Love and Devotion

Barrington, Illinois, USA — April 24, 2015

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=geCf4I5Xk9I>)

Welcome, friends, back to our one-day satsang meeting.

In the morning I mentioned who is a guru and who is a Sat Guru, who is a Sadh Guru, and different types of gurus that we can find. Today, it appears there are more gurus in the world than disciples. So, it's a big business today. The True Guru with that awareness of totality does not come to make this work a business. He does not come to make a profit out of this teaching. All Perfect Living Masters, who we call *Sant Satgurus*, do their work free for their disciples. There is no charge ever for delivering anything spiritual. To survive they have to work like anybody else. Some of the very well-known gurus in India were all working on small jobs.

There was one guru, Ravidas, he was a cobbler. He used to repair shoes. One of his disciples was King Pipa. He was a ruler of the state where this disciple lived. In fact, the disciple lived in a little hut just outside the palace of this King Pipa. Several times the king said to Ravidas: "Why are you living in a little hut outside? Please come. You are my guru. You are my Master. Come and stay with me. I'll have a royal suite reserved for you and you'll get all the attention and you'll get all the facilities of a palace." He said: "No, King. I have come with the destiny of a cobbler, and I enjoy it and I still want to be a cobbler and make and repair shoes." Pipa was quite a keen seeker. He realized that some people go to this man and get so much happiness out of their meeting. "I am a disciple of his for so long. I don't seem to have taken advantage of the presence of a Perfect Living Master outside my palace. I should go and get something special. I should go like a beggar, not like a king."

One day, early morning at three o'clock, the king wakes up and he goes to the hut outside where Ravidas the cobbler was repairing shoes. To repair the shoes, he was putting his pieces of leather in a cup of water to soften the leather, which he would then use in repairing shoes. The king appeared there and Ravidas was surprised. He got up. He said: "King, what brings you here early morning?" And the King Pipa said: "I've not come as the king. I've come as a beggar. I beg for your grace. I have not taken advantage of your presence. I see other people come. They

go with their eyes full of tears of joy, with their hearts beaming, their faces smiling. They are getting something, and I live next to you and I am missing something. Please pour that grace on me also.” Ravidas said: “King, you have come with that kind of a request for me.” He dipped his hand in that water—it was a little dirty water because of the leather in it—took a little water and said: “Drink this.” And the king put his hands up like this, realized this is dirty water he is giving me. He said: “Boy, I didn’t come for that. I came for pure grace. This looks like a dirty water grace.” So, he tried to do like this—did not drink the water—allowed it to go down his sleeve and ran from there. He says: “What a mistake. I thought I’ll get something real from him. He just put his hand in that dirty water in which he was dipping his leather, and he’s just given it to me to drink. Is that the kind of grace?” And he felt sorry for going and disturbing the Master and being disturbed himself.

He went home, took his shirt off and found a stain of the leather on the sleeve. He said: “This looks horrible. Anybody will ask king, how did you get that and I can’t tell them what a foolish mistake I made this morning.” So, he took off his shirt, and there was a laundry family—laundry man and his family—living on the premises for washing the king’s clothes. He called them early morning and said to the laundry man: “Take this shirt. Wash it instantly, right now, and make it completely okay and bring it back before the morning. I don’t want anybody to see it.” The laundry man took the shirt home and tried to wash it, but the stain was deep. He told his daughter, young girl, nine years old girl, “Can you remove the stain and just put something on it and take it off?” She began to put a chew on it to make the saliva work, if that will take the stain off. As she was chewing on that, her inner eyes opened up, suddenly got enlightened. By the morning she was giving discourses to her own parents. People heard the laundry man’s daughter got enlightened at nine years. Everybody came and began to bow to her that she is enlightened woman at such a young age.

The king also heard, and he said: “What happened? In my own campus, firstly a guru sits outside, now my own laundry man’s daughter got enlightened. I am getting nothing. This time I am going to take whatever she will give.” So, he ran to the laundry man’s quarters and there he met the daughter with all disciples sitting around her, and the daughter got up. “Your Majesty, what brings you here?” “I have not come as the king. You don’t have to get up for me. Please sit down. I have come as a beggar.” She said: “I didn’t get up because you are the king. I got up because everything I have it came from you.” He says: “How could it be from me?” She says: “Don’t you remember sending that shirt of yours? All my enlightenment is from that shirt. You sent the shirt to clean up. My dad couldn’t clean it. I just chewed on that little stain and my eyes opened up. I don’t know what those stains were, but they were miraculous.” The king heard that is the same shirt. He ran back to Ravidas. He said: “Master, this time give me any drink, any dirty water, I’ll drink it.” And Master said: “Ravidas, there’re only few moments like that, that when a person’s seeking becomes so strong, he’s willing to forget that he’s a king. He’s willing to forget his status, willing to forget the world in order to get enlightenment. Masters do give that kind of a quick solution to their spiritual quest. But once you’ve seen somebody else getting, then you want to come in, you have to go through the normal course. You are initiated already. Work on it. Do meditation regularly. Work hard. One day you will get it.” So, the Master explained, these are rare moments that come in our life when the seeking

becomes so strong, and Master pours that kind of grace into us which opens our eyes much faster than all the effort we can ever make to get that. These are stories illustrating the power of these Masters, when they are pleased that we are real seekers, then they give us whatever they want.

There was another story equally popular in India, the story of King Janak. He was also a ruler in India, and he had no master, but he was a seeker. He sought for a long time, the truth, wanted to go and find any mystic who could give him the truth. He wanted instant knowledge. (In parenthesis I am telling you that he must have been an American in his past life.) He wanted instant knowledge. He told his courtiers, he told his ministers, his cabinet advisors, that he wants instant knowledge. Where can he get it? He wants true knowledge. They said: "Master/king, you're living in a very nice country full of gurus. There are so many gurus here. They can all give you instant knowledge. All you have to do is hold a big feast, burn some incense, have some sandalwood logs burning, because these things attract these holy people. And if the food is good, you'll get many people. So, carry a *yajna*, carry a feast, a holy feast.

So, the king organized a holy feast and many yogis, *yogishwars*, gurus, saints, holy men came on the invitation of the king, and he had a big feast in the compound of his palace. Then the king disguised himself like an ordinary tourist that nobody should know he's the king. And he walked over from one camp to another where those holy people were sitting with a few of their disciples each to listen to what they were saying. And he was shocked that they were not only not knowing anything, but so proud, so haughty about remembering the verses of the scriptures. They just quoted books and thought that was knowledge. And they came to blows with each other, got so angry, they came to fight with each other. "This is not the interpretation of these words, this scripture means this, does not mean this." And the king said, "What is this? What kind of knowledge do they have? They have not even lost their anger. They're so proud and haughty. Their haughtiness has not gone anywhere. And they have read so much, it has increased their ego to such an extent. What will I get from them?"

He went back disappointed into his palace and told his advisors and courtiers. "I am very disappointed. These people are learned. They have read books, memorized them. They can repeat the whole book, all scriptures they can repeat again. None of them has any knowledge. I don't want learned people. In fact, I don't want learning. I want the true knowledge, the truth. Who are we? What is our purpose in life? Why are we here? What can we get from here? I want answers to basic inner questions. I want real knowledge, not this kind of learning." And the courtiers said, advisors said: "King, you only had a one-day event. This country's vast. There are many gurus who are living far away, and you have not invited them. Hold a seven-day event and many more will come." He said: "All right. Let's have a seven-day event, seven-day feast." And by beat of drum message was sent throughout the country that all the holy men come, the king wants instant knowledge, and many more people came. The king set up small tents for them to live for seven days, provided all the food to them and lot of food. So, they all came in their own camps, in their own tents. And the king again disguised himself and every day he would go around listening to what these people were saying. It was a seven-fold repetition of the same thing. He found they are learned people. They have no real knowledge. They have no real experience. They were talking what they had learned from books. These are repeated

words. They just kept on repeating the same words they have read in the books without even knowing what they mean.

He was very disappointed, came back. Told his advisors: "This was a sad experience for me. I thought they'll give me some knowledge. They don't have the knowledge. They are learned people, lot of education and learning, no knowledge. I want true knowledge." Then the advisors said: "King, if you want that kind of knowledge, these people don't have that. And the man who has that knowledge will not come to your feast." He said: "Is there such a man?" They said: "Yes, there's a Perfect Living Master. He lives in the village near the river and his name is Ashtavakra. 'Ashta' means eight, 'vakra' means waves. He has got... He is a hunchback with eight waves on his back. His body is deformed but his eyes are sharp, and he has true knowledge." The king said: "Why didn't you tell me first? I'll go right now and request him to come and give me true knowledge." So, the king went to Ashtavakra's little hut. And he met Ashtavakra and he said: "I have come as a beggar of knowledge." Ashtavakra got up. He said: "King, you had to come yourself? I can come to your place." He said: "I will come." "I invite you to come and give instant knowledge to me, and I'll invite all my friends and fellow princes and kings from other neighboring states."

So, one day the time was fixed. On the stage in the auditorium of the palace, the king put two chairs, one for himself, one for the Master, and the Master arrived. The auditorium was full of noble people, nobility, princes, princesses, their families, all sitting in the auditorium. Ashtavakra entered the room along with seven or eight of his followers. He took off his shoes, which are customary. They all took off their shoes, and he walked up to the stage. The king welcomed him and put him on one of the chairs. As he was coming, the people in the audience looked at Ashtavakra, that this deformed guy, whose body is not even straight, has been invited to give us knowledge? What kind of knowledge will this deformed body guy do for us? So, they were murmuring amongst themselves looking at him. So, when Ashtavakra sat down, he asked the king: "King, what is the price of leather today?" The king said: "Master, I invited you to give us real knowledge. What has the price of leather to do with it?" He said: "Aren't these all leather merchants sitting here?" "No, no, no. Master, these are nobility, royalty. These are my neighboring princes, my own family. There're all royal people here and no merchants here." Ashtavakra said: "The way they looked at my body and my skin, maybe I thought they are dealing in skin and leather." Then the whole audience said: "This guy has some sense of humor." So, they quietened down to listen to him. Then Ashtavakra said: "King Janak, what kind of knowledge do you want?" He said: "I want true knowledge. I want instant knowledge." Ashtavakra said: "Even an instant is some time. How much is an instant?" King said: "Instant is when I get up in the morning to go for a ride, from the time I put my foot in the stirrup on the horse and jump on the saddle, that's one instant." He says, Ashtavakra says: "To get knowledge of that kind, you have to pay a price." King says: "All my coffers are open to you. Whatever price you quote, I will pay you. No limit."

Ashtavakra said: "I want three things." The king said: "I can give you ten, twenty, whatever you want." "No, I only want three things," Ashtavakra says. "Give me your body, give me your wealth, and give me your mind. When you've given these three things to me, I'll give you instant knowledge." Now this was a very strange price tag. The king never expected that, but he

was a real keen seeker. He said: "Yes, Master. My body is yours. All my wealth is yours, and even my mind is yours. Now give me knowledge." Ashtavakra said: "Are you sure you have given these to me?" "Yes, Master." He said: "If the body is mine now, I can keep it where I like?" "Yes, Master." "Take this body of yours and place it on the shoes I left at the entrance when I came in here." It was a very strange order. He said: "I've given my body to him. He can keep where he likes." So, the king got up and walked towards the shoes. The whole hall was pitying the king, he's lost his mind. What kind of man has he invited to give knowledge, and he's giving knowledge by telling the king to move to the shoes? They were murmuring and the king thought to himself, "These people don't know what I'm seeking. They are looking at my palaces, and my wealth and thinking, "With such a wealthy person what is he seeking?" At that time Ashtavakra shouted from the stage: "King, you have no business to think about your wealth. You've already given it to me." King said: "Oh, my God, I forgot that I had given everything to the Master and thinking it's still mine. No, I can't even think like that." Ashtavakra shouted from the stage: "You can't even think about these things. You've given me your mind." "Can't even think?" So, he put his hands like this and said: "I can't even think." And he got enlightened at that moment. The Master called him back: "Don't have to sit on the shoes. Come back and sit on the stage." The king came back. Master said: "Did you get true knowledge?" "Yes, sir." "Are you sure?" "Yes, sir." "Any questions?" "No." "Did I give it to you in an instant?" "Yes, Master, it was less than an instant when I got it." He said: "This was just a sampling of true knowledge. Now you meditate and do this work which are required of disciples. In twenty years, you'll get it back again."

This story of instant knowledge by King Janak by surrendering these things is well known. The Master told King Janak: "Now that you had an experience of what is instant knowledge, I don't want to keep your body. I've got a bad one myself. I'm trying to take care of it. I don't need your wealth. I am very happy in the hut where I live. And certainly, I don't want your mind. My mind, my own mind, is plenty of trouble for me. Keep these back, take them back. But remember one thing, whenever you use your body, remember it belongs to Ashtavakra. Whenever you use your wealth, remember it belongs to Ashtavakra. Whenever you use your thinking machine, remember it belongs to Ashtavakra. If you can remember these three things, it's as good as if you've surrendered them to your Master." So, he gave a little tip to him. If we can always regard everything that we have as belonging to our Master and be given to us for use only, and use wisely, use our body wisely, use our wealth wisely, use our mind wisely, we have accomplished what no meditation can accomplish. This is better than meditation because the instant knowledge came when the surrender of these things took place.

This always a question of surrender because our mind, by possessing these things, by making ownership, by trying to be owner of these things, it's creating all the problems for himself. How many things we try to seek and make our own. Look at the life we are leading. *I want to buy my car. I want to buy a house now. I want to buy this thing. I want to buy some more things.* I want to make those things my own which will never be our own. Everybody dies. Nobody has ever carried their car, nor their house, nor their furniture, nor their jewelry, nor their wealth with them when they die, and yet we're trying to make them our own as if we own them. How can you own something that you can't even carry with you? You have to leave everything behind.

And if death was an exception to the rule that people live forever, then I could understand people trying to make these things their own. Everybody dies. Great masters have come and died. Great people taught philosophy to us about the ever afterlife, who told us about the permanence of the soul, the immortality of the soul, they also died. Everybody died. How can we be not learning any lesson from that, that we are trying to acquire things? Then the worst is not only we acquire things, we are trying to acquire people. Trying to make people our own in relationships. *He's my own. She's my own.* Nobody's your own. Nobody ever has been. It's a temporary relationship while you happen to be in the physical body. Take it like that. Take it like these are things given to me while I'm here on a very short trip. They will not go with me. Have a good ride. Have a good enjoyment while you are having them. Don't try to make them your own. If we go to an amusement park, we see a big Ferris wheel going round and round. People are having a thrill by going there. You buy a ticket, you go on the Ferris wheel, and you enjoy the ride, and you come back. You never say I want to make it my own, because it was only temporary. You had to come back home. You can't carry those things that are giving you amusement and joy and thrill, sometimes dangerous thrill, sometimes up and down rollercoasters. Our life is a rollercoaster. It goes up and down. And in that life, we should get the thrill out of life and not try to think these things are ours, people are ours. None of them has ever become our own.

There was a great king, Alexander the Great. He went about conquering country after country, even went to India from Egypt. And there, in order to collect the wealth, which was in abundance in the temples there, he looted that wealth and loaded his camels and horses all with that wealth on it, and was marching back towards Egypt/Alexandria, where he eventually was buried. On the way he got sick. He got very sick and the attending physicians on him said: "Alexander, your last moment has come. You cannot go home anymore." He said: "I am willing to give all the wealth I've collected to anybody who can give me a few days more of travel time so I can reach my own country, Egypt." And the doctor said: "Sorry, your last moment has come. Nobody can help you." He said: "I cannot die. A gypsy told me. When I was very young, a gypsy told me unless this earth turns into silver and the sky turns into gold, you will not die. I got a boon of immortality. So why are you saying that I am going to die now?" Then, because he was too sick to sit up on a horse, they spread his silver armor that they were carrying on the ground and lay him down on that and there was a golden canopy, an umbrella, they put on top of him. When he saw silver on his floor below him and gold on top, he knew his end had come. The gypsy had prophesied correctly. The earth for him had become silver, and the sky which he could see was gold. Then he told the physicians and all the other courtiers accompanying him, he said: "When I die and you put me in the coffin, and before burial, keep my hand outside of the coffin so the whole world should know that even Alexander the Great, the great conqueror, who created so much misery for so many people by his conquest, who made so many children orphans, who made so many women widows, even Alexander the Great went empty handed when he died, that nobody carries anything." And he was buried like that with his hand outside his coffin.

Here are stories telling us that these things can never become our own. Where are we putting our attention? Don't we know there is something that will never be dying with us, we will never

leave behind? What is it that can go with us when we die? What is the afterlife that we expect and what can we carry with us? We cannot carry anything from this physical world, neither people, nor objects, nor things. What we can carry is a great memory. What we can carry is the experience of love. We can carry the experience of love. And if love is for someone who is beyond this physical—if the love is for, from and to someone beyond the physical, beyond the mind, into immortality—then that love that we get here will stay with us forever till immortality. So that is why we are wasting our time trying to put all our attention on things outside, and not bothering about having the wonderful experience of love, unconditional love of a Perfect Living Master, who is going to be with us right till immortality, right till our true home. That is why these stories illustrate how important it is that we realize the real path, spiritual path, which is a path of love and devotion that takes us above the mind. All other things end at the mental level.

So, I am very happy that you came here. I shared this information with you, and because we have to leave this auditorium in five minutes I am winding up. I could keep on telling you more stories, but you know, stories never end. So, I can tell you a couple of jokes. Would you like that? Because I notice every time I am drawn into the serious talk, everybody becomes so serious and if I talk a little more, they'll go to sleep. So, to keep you awakened, I sometimes bring in a comic relief by telling the stories. Now I have plenty of stories thanks to a few friends who send me daily smiles stories. And sometimes they send me now what is called random stories and I store them in my iPhone. I got a new one, because... I got a new one because I have more stories to carry. It's bigger, I mean. I am really surprised that we don't need too big a phone to put more stories in. We need something different. Anyway, let me tell you couple of stories before we go home.

A minister told his congregation: "Next week I plan to preach about the sin of lying, of not telling the truth. To help you understand my sermon, I want you all to read Mark 17. Come prepared." The following Sunday as he prepared to deliver the sermon, the minister asked for a show of hands. He wanted to know how many had read Mark 17. Every hand went up. The minister smiled and said: "Mark has only 16 chapters. Now I talk about sinning and lying."

A little boy was waiting for his mother to come out of a grocery store. And as he waited, a man approached him, and he said: "Son, do you know where is the post office?" The son pointed out: "Yes, you go down the street two blocks, turn right—that's where the post office is." Then the man thanked the boy very kindly and said: "I am the new pastor in town, and I'd like for you to come to church on Sunday. I'll show you how to go to heaven." The little boy replied: "Oh, come on. You don't even know the way to the post office!"

It was about a month ago when a man in Amsterdam felt that he needed to confess. So, he went to the priest: "Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned. During World War II I hid a refugee in my attic." "Well," answered the priest, "that's not a sin." "But I made him agree to pay me twenty gulden for every week he stayed." A gulden is a...it's equivalent of a dollar. "I made him pay this money every week that he is staying in my attic." "I admit that wasn't good, but you

did it for a good cause," says the priest. "Oh, thank you Father, that eases my mind. But I have one more question." "What is that, my son?" "Do I have to tell him that the war is over?"

A man... this might be an old one. You might have heard. A man was wandering around in a field, thinking about how good his wife had been to him and how fortunate he was to have her. A rare occurrence, I know. He asked God: "Why did you make her so kind-hearted?" The Lord responded: "So, you could love her, my son." "Why did you make her so good looking?" "So you could love her, my son." "Why did you make her such a good cook?" "So you could love her, my son." The man thought about this, he said: "I don't mean to be ungrateful for anything, but why did you make her so stupid?" "So she could love you, my son."

An engineer was unemployed, and he couldn't find a job. So, he opened a medical clinic. The doctors were making money. An engineer, he could not do anything. So, he said: "Let me become a fake doctor." He put up a board outside his clinic: *Get your treatment for \$500. If not treated, I'll give you \$1,000 back.* A real doctor saw that. He said: "He is obviously a quack. I'll get some money out of him." So, he walks in. He says: "Doctor, I have lost my taste in the mouth. Do you have any treatment for it?" Engineer, who was becoming a doctor, says: "Nurse, please bring medicine from box number 22. Put three drops in the patient's mouth." So, nurse brings, puts three drops there, and doctor said: "Oh, this is gasoline!" "Your taste has come back, give me \$500." He said: "This guy was too clever. I'm going to get my \$500 back." After few days he comes back. He says: "I have lost my memory. I cannot remember anything. Do you have any remedy for that? I think I'm getting Alzheimer's. I can't remember anything." Engineer says: "Yes, I have a treatment for that. Nurse, please bring medicine from box number 22. Put three drops in his mouth." So, the nurse puts three drops. "This is gasoline again!" "Your memory has come back, \$500 more." He said: "I lost \$1,000. I must get it back somehow." So, after few days he comes back. He says: "Doctor, my eyesight has become so weak I can hardly see. Any treatment for that?" The engineer says: "Sorry, I don't have any treatment for that if your eyesight is weak. Here is \$1,000 dollars for you." "But this is \$500!" "Your eyesight has come back, \$500."

Okay, last one. A Jewish lawyer/attorney, Jewish lawyer was troubled. The way I say *lawyer*, some people think I'm saying *liar*. Anyway, a Jewish lawyer was troubled by the way his son turned out and he went to his rabbi and said: "I brought him up in faith, gave him a very expensive Bar Mitzvah, cost him a fortune to get him the best education. Then he tells me last week, he had decided to become a Christian. Rabbi, where did I go wrong?" Rabbi says: "Funny you should come to me. Like you, I too brought my boy up in the faith, put him through university, cost me a fortune. One day he comes and tells me he had decided to become a Christian." "What did you do?" asked the lawyer. "I turned to God for the answer." "And what did God say?" God said: "Funny you should come to me!"

Thank you. See you next month.