

Sense Pleasures - Poisoned Honey

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Strange for the piece just played, reminds us of the fact that this is near Washington's birthday, the Father of our country, and we should always remember the debt we owe to him, and, of course, the main thing to remember is that he was a man of prayer. Meditation and prayer. Otherwise, he could not have led the country as he did.

The subject this morning, "Sense Pleasures - Poisoned Honey."

Don't like that word "poisoned" honey¹. It certainly cannot be much value in sense pleasures. And, of course, there is not. Because the pleasure that we derive from the object of sense, this pleasure must pass away. And so, it can end only one way, if we could but realize, that in poisoned honey, or in pain, because all objects pass away. They are not in permanent consciousness of God. And, therefore, when we allow ourselves to become attached to those things, that's where the trouble comes in. We are in this world. We have to deal with sensation, whether we like it or not. If somehow we could perhaps deal with the object of senses in a different way than we do, we would escape the pain, which comes from attachment to the objects of senses.

And so, all pleasurable things, or pleasure, which are sought by mankind are a delusion - because it ends in pain. Realize that. Really, we have pain before the pleasure, because when we want the thing we're in pain. And when we get the thing, we have to give it up. And so there's pain before, and after, when you follow those things of the senses, or when you follow pleasure.

We were coming down this morning, and we were talking about a cherry pie. Isn't that a ridiculous thing to think about coming to church? But that's what we were doing. Something to do with Washington's birthday. Isn't it? Or something. But, if you remember that cherry pie - a little later I'll tell you about it

¹ Autobiography Of A Yogi, Paramhansa Yogananda, Chapter 40, "Evil may be compared to poisoned honey, tempting but laden with death."

- and perhaps it'll keep you from being attached to cherry pies. Because therein, lies the trouble - the attachment.

And so, this pleasure, pleasure is a contrast consciousness. That is, it is like this - how I felt pain when I didn't have that thing, and now I have it, is a lack pain. That's all it is. It is not in the object of sense. It's in the mind. And so, realize that pleasure is a contrast consciousness. And those things of the senses, which you follow, must pass away.

Now, if objects were pleasurable in themselves, then the same kind of dress and food would always please everyone. Would it not? But that's not so. You get a new hat, you know. "Oh, this is it. This is the hat." Pretty soon, "I wouldn't wear that thing anymore." So you see, it isn't in the hat. The pleasure's not in the hat. It's in the mind. And we must understand those things. And, of course, the thing we must do is to change from pleasure, which is impermanent, to bliss, or cosmic peace, which is permanent. For the simple reason that, if we keep attached to pleasurable things, we're going to suffer in the end, and, if we search those things of the permanent presence of God within us as Bliss, then we'll be permanently happy. We'll have true happiness, rather than transient pleasure. We should understand those things.

Master has written something very nice in the Science of Religion, which I'd like to read to you at this time. I'll give you the gist of it. "The more a thing is thought to excite pleasurable consciousness, and the more the desire for it is harbored in the mind. . ." - it is the desire which we must watch - ". . .the more that desire is harbored in your mind for that thing, the greater the possibility of hankering after the thing itself, the presence of which is thought to bring pleasurable consciousness, and its absence the sense of want." That's all the point of pleasure is. In that one sentence. "The presence of which is thought to bring pleasurable consciousness." If I get that hat, I'm gonna feel good. And, if I do not get it. I'm gonna feel a sense of want. Both of these states of consciousness ultimately lead to pain.

So, if we are really to lessen pain, what do we have to do? We have to, as far as possible, free the mind gradually from all desire, and sense of want. It's that sense of want that causes all the trouble. But, if you have the presence of God within you, even if you have no desires, and having Him, there'll be no sense of want at all. Because when you have the presence of God within you, you desire nothing else, except to be, and to have, that one desire to be with Him. And how can there be any sense of want when you feel the love of the one eternal Father

flowing through you? That loving Father. So there is the answer to sense pleasure, right there.

We have a few more things to say, but remember that one point. If you *feel* the presence of God within you, there'll be no desires. Because desire is our greatest enemy. It is desire that keeps us in this battle of getting this, and getting that. And then we get it. Then we lose it - and pain. It can end only in pain. So desire is our greatest enemy. But in God, there is no desire. In Him there is no want. His Bliss, which passeth all understanding, is sufficient unto all our needs.

And so, for every earthly joy, there is an earthly grief. Pleasure must end sooner, or later in pain. Because of its transient nature. That is, the object of senses are transient. They must pass away. And, if you derive pleasure from those, how can there be anything but pain in the end? There cannot be. So let us remember that.

Now one thing we can do as we live in this world filled with desires, and the lure of the objects of senses. We're in it. The second commandment says, you've got to be in it, and still love your neighbor. So we're in it. Now this is the point to remember. And here is where the cherry pie comes in. If when you see that cherry pie, if you can realize that the satisfaction from eating that cherry pie is not in the cherry pie at all, but it is in your own soul consciousness. If when you enjoy that cherry pie you *feel* in your heart, or in your soul, thankfulness to God that He gave you the cherry pie. There is no attachment to that cherry pie. There will not be any pain afterward. Now remember that. Now that will not lessen the taste of that cherry pie. It will enhance it. Because we must take God with us in every action. Even in eating a cherry pie. And these are truths.

So, whatever you do. That new hat you get, the new automobile, everything you do. Realize. Do not let your fulfillment be in the object of sense - as the hat or whatever you get. But let it be, where? In the soul within. Because you do not enjoy through the object of sense. You do not enjoy the various things which you attain through those objects. You enjoy them through the presence of God in you. No other way. As you look at those flowers. You feel pleasure. But, if you go within. You will feel the presence of God in those flowers. And you will not feel, if you lose those flowers, or never see them again, you will not feel any pain.

But think of something else. Something dear to you. And you think, "I've got to give it up sometime." How do you feel? You feel pain. But, if you realize, "Father, you gave me that which I have to give up sometime. And whether it is

there or not, there I feel Thy Bliss and Thy Love." Then you have overcome sense pleasures. And there'll be no poisoned honey for you. Because you realize the one eternal principle behind all things, including sense pleasures.

Now going on just a little bit about desire. Desire is our greatest enemy. Master sings a little chant about that, which is very good to sing. Desire is our greatest enemy because it is desire that has to be fulfilled. Whatever desire you have, the Master used to say, "Watch your desires." I remember telling you I came up, and he had a nice big Cadillac, and I was kind of looking at it. Ya know. He says, "Watch your desires," he says, "or you'll have to get one of those." And I wasn't in any position to get one. So, every desire you have has to be fulfilled.

So, if you desire anything, it will have to be carried out. That cause, which you have set in motion, will have to be fulfilled. There'll have to be a reaction. That's why it's very important to watch our desires, and have only those desires for those things that are necessary, and give us permanent happiness. But, if we have to live in this world, as I have said, it is necessary to have desires. We've got to do our part. And, therefore, when you do find fulfillment in your desires, do it the way we have discussed. That is, not in the object of sense, but in your own soul within. And instead of losing, you will gain. Instead of having less pleasure, you'll have true happiness, and the presence of God.

I want to give you once more a few words from the Master's Science of Religion about desire. Remember, it is that desire, which is the "will-o-the-wisp," as he says, which lures people away from finding the true happiness. They try to find it in the pleasurable things, and they miss the *real* thing. And so he has written these words, and it has to do with identification, and attachment. It's the identification of the soul to the body and mind that causes the trouble. Just like, if you can view those flowers without identification of your soul to the body, there'll be no poisoned honey, so to speak.

And this is what the Master has to say. "Lest we see that desire is the root of all misery, which arises out of the sense of identification of the self with the mind and the body." So, what we should do is to kill attachment. How? By doing away with identification with the object of sense. That's the whole key. Do away with the identification to the flowers. That means your soul is identified to the mind, which receives the sense of those flowers. Do away with that. Do away with that, and then the attachment will not be there. It's the attachment that makes us feel sorrowful. Think of your own children. They get sick. How do you feel? Terrible. Somebody else's children are sick. You don't feel so badly.

Why? Because of attachment. So the Master's words are most wonderful. He says things so beautifully, and so much to the point, that I like to use them.

And so going on. In seeking true happiness, we must watch our desires. And he has these final words to say on desire, "Every human being is seeking to attain bliss by fulfillment of desire, but he mistakenly stops at pleasure, and so his desires never end, and he is swept away into the whirlpool of pain."

And so at this time I might tell you a little story about. . . I hope it will relieve your pain, at least for a few minutes. And this, this clergyman, traveling clergyman, going from place to place, he stopped at this home. . . and, and came time to retire, and the hostess says to him, "Reverend, wouldn't you like to read a little from the Bible, and say a few prayers?" He said, "Yes, I'd be very happy to." And so the mother said to her boy, she says, "Bobby, " she says, "You run in and get that big book which daddy and mother read so often." So the little boy ran in next door, next room, and he came back with Sears Roebuck catalog. So, that's that.

Now that we got rid of pain of all these previous words, we'll go on just a little more. And that is, the question of bliss. That is. . . wasn't that a pretty good story? But my trouble is I sometimes get them mixed up, but I tried awful hard. Just like I said "bad" just a minute ago, and I was instructed never to say "bad", but "badly." So I added it quickly. So everything is alright now.

And so we come to the best part of this little talk this morning, and that is, bliss. Bliss. Then comes the question: is it possible to attain lasting happiness? Yes, it is. And that is in the form of bliss. What good would this sermon be, or this talk this morning, if we stop with "Sense Pleasures - Poisoned Honey"? No. The whole point is to show you, or help us all to realize, that we can attain that positive true lasting happiness, the Bliss of God within each and every one of us.

There is a story which the Master used to tell about the Himalayan musk deer. The Himalayan musk deer has the musk right in its navel. And yet it smelling the musk, it runs wildly here, and there, until finally falls over a crag. And then the hunters come, and take the musk from the deer. And that which the deer is trying to find was right within itself. Its own navel. And so with us. The bliss, which we are trying to find, is right within ourselves. Not in the object of senses, but in the soul within. And so, realize that. That that bliss, which you want, is right within your soul. And the satisfaction from objects of senses, is even right

within your soul, if you can avoid identification and attachment. And so realize that's what we need.

I must make a distinction now, between peace of mind. Because peace of mind is not bliss. Peace of mind means the release from the turmoil of a restless uncontrolled mind. That is good. But that's not bliss. Bliss is the positive presence of God's Love within you. It's that feeling of which we spoke, in the spiritual eye, as we look at the spiritual eye. That's that bliss we want. That's permanent. Having that, you will want nothing else. And so, this permanent thing can be realized. Or, if we remember the Master's words, he says about bliss consciousness, and God consciousness, that there is not a shadow of a doubt as to the absolute identity of Bliss consciousness and God consciousness.

Think how foolish we are. In our meditations that Bliss comes in upon us, "the breeze of Bliss" of which the Master speaks, and we pass over it. We disregard it. Why not now? From this moment on. The moment you feel a little bit of God's Love welling up within you, grasp it! Be one with it. Merge in it. There you have permanent happiness. There you have the Bliss of God's presence, and His protection.

And so finally, keep on with your spiritual discipline. Keep on. Do not give up. Because the end is oneness with God. The end is communion with God. The end is paradise to draw on eternally. Keep on with your spiritual discipline. Follow your Self-realization teaching. But more than that, follow the meditations and the techniques, which give you positive contact with God within you. Realize that. And gradually, if you do that, the lure of this sense attachment, which is very strong - this world would not stay long, if it were not strong - this lure of sense attachment will pass away, and will be superseded by the presence of God within you. His great Bliss and Peace. You could never, I could never, rise above sense attachment, if we do not, or did not, replace it by God's Love. Understand that. Don't think you can do it by your own will. You cannot. You have to replace it by the presence of God's Love.

And so, no matter how low you have fallen in any walk of life. No matter how deeply you are attached to senses, and the object of senses. Realize you need one thing. Everybody needs one thing, and that one thing is God. God's Love is supreme. And that will offset, supersede, any worldly consciousness, which you have. But only that will do it. God alone.

And in closing, I'll read just one or two more words from the Master's writing when he says, "In the teachings of all religions, Christianity, Hinduism, Mohammedanism, one truth is stressed, that until man knows himself as Spirit. . . " - until following the techniques of Self-realization you know you are not this body, but that you are the infinite Spirit of God within, until that time comes, ". . . the fountainhead of bliss, until you realize that he is limited by mortal concepts and subject to the nature of the laws of nature, knowledge of his true freedom brings him eternal bliss, eternal freedom.

Now remember. We have the ways, and the means to do that. God came to us through Self-realization to give us the ways, and the means. God has come through other teachers, and saints for certain reasons. To give the theory, so to speak, of the Ultimate. But He came through *our* Master to give us the ways, and the means whereby we could have the *realization* of the Ultimate. Not just the theory. We want to know God. We want to know His Bliss. Not in theory.