

Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale's Spiritual Workshops in 1992

Preface

Workshops on Spirituality conducted by Parātpar Guru (Dr) Jayant Athavale : A beacon of Chaitanya-enriched guidance on Spirituality

1. Importance of studying Spirituality : Happiness is a pleasant feeling obtained through the five sense organs (Eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin), mind and intellect. For example, eating ice-cream, topping an exam, etc. Such happiness is temporary and of inferior quality. True happiness is inner peace or Ānand (Bliss). Ānand is eternal and is of the highest quality. Ānand can be experienced only through spiritual practice. For performing spiritual practice appropriately, it is necessary to understand Spirituality. The study of Spirituality impresses upon our mind the importance of performing spiritual practice. Understanding the science underlying various actions associated with spiritual practice enhances faith in spiritual practice and one also understands ways of progressing spiritually to higher levels.

2. Importance of Workshops when compared to the pravachans (Spiritual discourses) and satsangs (A gathering for spiritual purposes)

2A. Pravachan : A discourse is delivered by the speaker. The speaker is not concerned whether the audience understands the subject or not.

2B. Satsang : The satsang conductors are attentive to some extent whether the attendees are able to understand the subject. In a satsang, the conductor speaks and the rest listen to him.

2C. Workshops : A Workshop is mostly interactive, attendees ask questions and the speaker answers them; hence, Workshops have more importance. The speaker focusses on whether the attendees understand the subject. Through the Workshops conducted at various places, Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale clarified the doubts of spiritually curious individuals. This enhanced the spiritual practice of many curious individuals who attended the Workshops and they progressed to the next levels in spiritual practice.

3. Period during which Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale conducted Workshops : Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale conducted His first Workshop on Spirituality on Saturday 17.5.1986 and Sunday, 18.5.1986 in His clinic at Mumbai. From the Year 1987 to 1994, He travelled extensively and conducted Workshops at various places in local temples, auditoriums, etc.

4. Outline of the Workshops : During the Workshops, Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale would discuss various topics such as chanting the Name of the Kuladēvatā, chants advised by Saints, stages of spiritual progress in chanting, importance of Holy company of Saints and obeying the Guru, different Paths of spiritual practice (For example, Bhaktiyoga [Path of Devotion], Jñānyoga [Path of Knowledge], Gurukrupāyoga [Path of Guru's grace]), importance of performing spiritual practice, etc. The Workshops would have question-answer sessions pertaining to Spirituality and also subtle experiments.

5. Unique qualities of Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale observed as He conducted Workshops

5A. Conducting Workshops free-of-charge : The Hindu culture says that imparting knowledge should be done free-of-charge. This is how in the earlier times, the 'Gurukul 'system of education in India functioned. Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale too conducted His Workshops free-of-charge.

5B. Travelling to distant places by spending His personal time and money to conduct Workshops : Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale started conducting Workshops first in Mumbai, later outside Mumbai and in other States as well. He did this in His spare time after attending to His clinic. While doing this, He would not think about time and money. While travelling out of town, He had to adjust to the prevailing situations and stay at some seeker's house for 1 or 2 days. He would undertake these tours blissfully with the yearning that more spiritually curious individuals obtain knowledge of Spirituality and they commence spiritual practice.

5C. Explaining Divine knowledge of the Holy Scriptures written by Sages and Saints, in a manner that even average individuals could practice : Discourses on Spirituality were organised at some places. In most of these discourses, the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures written by Sages & Saints (such as Shrīmadbhagwadgēetā, Dāsbodha) was presented. It is difficult for average individuals to put the knowledge into practice as described in these Holy texts. Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale would present the summary of these Holy texts in the Workshops in a manner that average individuals could easily practice. As a result, seekers of any spiritual level would be able to understand Spirituality.

5D. Explaining all the aspects of Spirituality : Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale would explain the science of Spirituality while clarifying doubts of the spiritually curious attendees. It would satisfy them and they would obtain Ānand from the knowledge and their faith in Spirituality would increase.

5E. Instantly replying to the questions of the spiritually curious despite lack of extensive reading of Spiritual texts : Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale would instantly answer the questions asked by the curious on any subject in Spirituality during the Workshops despite lack of in-depth study of Holy Scriptures such as the Vēdās, Purāṇās, Darshans or Texts associated with different Paths of spiritual practice such as Jñānyoga, Dhyānyoga (Path of Meditation), Karmayoga (Path of Action), etc. When the mind and intellect of an individual dissolve, the individual obtains knowledge from the Universal mind and Universal intellect. This was the case with Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale. From this, we realise that Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale had a high spiritual level even in that period.

5F. Accurately answering questions of some seekers after obtaining the answers from the subtle dimension : Seekers would experience incidents as per the answers given by Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale that He obtained from the subtle dimension. From this, we realise Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale's immense ability to comprehend the subtle dimension and His spiritual authority even at that time.

5G. Due to closeness with Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale, without hesitation seekers could ask questions pertaining to difficulties in their personal life that were creating obstacles in their spiritual practice.

5H. Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale's Chaitanya-enriched voice would create deep impression of spiritual practice on the subconscious mind of the spiritually curious : Most of the spiritually curious who came once to the Workshops, became seekers of Sanatan Sanstha forever. This was because of Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale's Chaitanya-enriched voice. His voice would create a deep impression of spiritual practice on the subconscious minds of the spiritually curious. As a result, they would firmly decide to perform spiritual practice and commence it with intense yearning.

5I. During the Workshops, seekers would get spiritual experiences such as getting some Divine fragrance, a thoughtless state, etc.

5J. Training seekers to conduct Workshops : While going to various places for conducting Workshops, Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale would take some seekers with Him so as to train them. He would teach them and some local seekers how to conduct Workshops.

As a result, many seekers of Sanatan Sanstha became proficient in conducting Workshops and taking responsibility of propagating Spirituality. (Please see the related photo No. 8 on colour pages at the end of this Text.) Consequently, Sanatan's mission of propagating Righteousness spread rapidly.

6. The outcome of Workshops

6A. Many spiritually curious individuals became seekers and many seekers became full-time seekers.

6B. Many seekers progressed well spiritually : Many seekers who attended Workshops have crossed the spiritual level of 60% in the past few years, while some seekers have reached Sainthood.

7. Reasons for publishing the guidance of Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale during Workshops as it took place in this Holy text series, instead of publishing it subject wise : Many seekers are keen to know about how and what Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale taught during the Workshops. To understand how the Workshops were conducted, guidance of Parātpar Guru (Dr) Athavale has been published in this Holy Text series as it took place, and not subject wise. The subject wise analysis of Workshops is provided in Texts on the respective subjects published by Sanatan or it will be provided in the future Texts on specific subjects.

8. Prayer : I pray unto the Holy feet of Shrī Guru – By studying this Holy text, may the spiritually curious individuals and seekers obtain guidance for reaching the subsequent stages of spiritual practice and by performing spiritual practice accordingly, may they progress fast spiritually.

- H.H. Sandeep Alshi (7.10.2020)

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(An asterisk [*] sign has been placed alongside important points)

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