

**GOOD MORNING AND WELCOME...**

**CHANT • SONG • WELCOME • TOPIC**

Swami Shantarupanandaji: “Imagine” was his favorite song in English. He left the body in June of this year — Imagine was played, by his request, at his Memorial Service in Portland OR. John Lennon’s lyrics are Advaitic.

**TOPIC: Vivekananda's Jnana Yoga**

January is a month for study of Jnana Yoga (Advaita Vedanta). As a jnana yogi, you practice discrimination, reason, detachment, and *satyagraha* (insistence on Truth).

The goal is freedom from limitation (*mukti*). Our teachers say that all miseries in life are caused by seeing *inaccurately*. An earnest and persistent jnani may break through this misapprehension (*maya*) and see only the Divine Presence everywhere, in everything and everyone.

When we learn to see *accurately*, what will we see?

Swami Vivekananda said: “*Come up, O lions, and shake off the delusion that you are sheep; you are*

*souls immortal, spirits free, blest and eternal; ye are not matter, ye are not bodies; matter is your servant, not you the servant of matter. ...*

*“Each (one of you) is only a conduit for the infinite ocean of knowledge and power that lies behind mankind. ...*

*“(This) Knowledge of the Absolute depends on no book, upon nothing; it is absolute in itself. No amount of study will give this Knowledge. It is not theory; it is realization.*

*Cleanse the dust from the mirror, purify your own mind, and in a flash you will know you are Brahman ... In one sense Brahman is known to every human being: he knows, ‘I am.’ But man does not know himself as he is.*

*We all know that we are, but not what we are ... (Our) lower explanations are partial truths; but ... the essence of the Vedas is that the Self in each of us is Brahman ...”*

This morning we will explore each of these statements in more detail.

## **LIONS NOT SHEEP**

*“Come up, O lions, and shake off the delusion that you are sheep; you are souls immortal, spirits free, blest and eternal; ye are not matter, ye are*

*not bodies; matter is your servant, not you the servant of matter. ...”*

WHAT ARE LIONS? WHAT ARE SHEEP?

WHAT IS MATTER?

## **CONDUIT FOR INFINITE KNOWLEDGE AND POWER**

*“Each (one of you) is only a conduit for the infinite ocean of knowledge and power that lies behind mankind. ...”*

What is that Power? From the *Chandi*, Ch 4—the devas are singing to the Mother of the Universe:  
*“You are the origin of all the worlds! Though You are possessed of the three gunas, You are not known to have any of their attendant defects (like passion)! You are incomprehensible even to Vishnu, Siva and others! You are the resort of all! This entire world is composed of an infinitesimal portion of Yourself! You are verily the Supreme Primordial Prakriti untransformed ...”*

*“Tat Tvam Asi!” THAT THOU ART! Swami P:  
“The chosen ideal is you, yourself, no different.  
Learn to feel that living presence.”*

**Sri RK:** The infinite ocean of consciousness ...

**The Absolute = Nirguna Brahman**

(water of that infinite ocean in a state of stillness)

**The Relative = Saguna Brahman = Ishwari/a** = water of the infinite ocean in waves, stirred by the winds of the gunas

Sti RK says: Infinite ocean of consciousness “condenses” (by the human power of devotion) into forms of Goddess/God = the form that attracts your heart = your Chosen Ideal

**Relative is Bhuma** = Big, Infinite = “God’s” Universe

**Alpa = small, limited** = the world of your experience, at your end of the “conduit” = all that an ordinary human being can endure/experience of the infinite ocean of consciousness and power that lies behind mankind.

**Spiritual practice, turning inward**, takes you back along the conduit. Your personal awareness of your infinite consciousness grows and grows, until you finally experience God as your chosen ideal, saguna Brahman. Experience = duality!

Then — slowly and slowly, as our beloved Swami Sridharanandaji says — your meditation deepens until, “in a flash,” you realize yourself to be Brahman, the Absolute, Satchidananda. With the rishi, you exult, *Aham Brahmasmi!*

## **NOT THEORY — REALIZATION**

Vivekananda: *“Knowledge of the Absolute depends on no book, upon nothing; it is absolute in itself. No amount of study will give this Knowledge. It is not theory; it is realization.*

*Cleanse the dust from the mirror, purify your own mind, and in a flash you will know you are Brahman ... In one sense Brahman is known to every human being: he knows, ‘I am.’ But man does not know himself as he is.*

*We all know that we are, but not what we are. All lower explanations are partial truths; but the flower, the essence, of the Vedas is that the Self in each of us is Brahman ...*

*“Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this Divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal.*

*Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy -- by one, or more, or all of these -- and be free.*

***This is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms, are but secondary details.”***

Why bring the three other yogas into a discussion of Jnana?

1. Work = Karma yoga
2. Worship = Bhakti
3. Psychic control = Raja
4. Philosophy = Jnana

Vivekananda is telling us that, for many aspirants, the spiritual practice which leads to realization may require integration of these four yogas.

To repeat what he said: *“(Manifest your Divinity) either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy -- by one, or more, or all of these -- and be free.”*

You may find it practical to have a guru, a spiritual teacher to help you establish the best practice for your temperament and the “bent of your nature.”

## **DISCUSSION AND COMMENTS**

### **Regular Closing prayer**