

Message 515

Varanasi,
30th July, 2026

Why does Sakshi Bhav (the Witness State) Drop?

- A dialogue with Kriyabans -

During the Guru Purnima mini-retreat at Satyalok, Varanasi, in July 2026, participating Kriyabans took up for Swadhyay a question which had first arisen during an earlier satsang at Sarnath in January 2026. Narender ji, a Kriyaban from Delhi, had asked, ***“Why is it so difficult to remain in Sakshi Bhav, the Witness state? Why does it drop from time to time?”***

It is a simple question, but the long Swadhyay around it revealed something fundamental about the nature of mind. Perhaps hidden within the question itself is the beginning of our difficulty. Why do we want Sakshi Bhav to continue? Why do we want to hold it, preserve it and sustain it? The mind is always searching for continuity. It wants pleasure to continue, gratifying relationships to last, and pleasant experiences to be repeated. Having once tasted the tranquillity of witnessing, perhaps the same mind now says, “This is wonderful. I must remain in this state”. Sakshi Bhav has then subtly become another experience to be acquired and preserved.

Can we see this mischief of mind without condemning it? This message summarises some of the perceptions that emerged during the Swadhyay. I requested **Anant and Vartika**, a young Kriyaban couple from Jamshedpur, to summarize their understanding from the session in writing so that it may be shared as this message.

The essence of Sakshi Bhav?

In the Laya Yoga teachings of Kriya Yoga, Sakshi Bhava is the "Chit" (pure consciousness) dimension of the religion of no-mind. The analogy with a witness in a courtroom is useful for understanding Sakshi Bhava. A good court witness has one essential responsibility: to see what happened and report what was seen without altering it or taking sides. The witness is not the judge, prosecutor or defendant. Similarly, in Sakshi Bhav, one is a witness in the courtroom of consciousness. When anger arises, one does not immediately say: “I should not be angry.” - that is the judge, or “He made me angry.” - that is the prosecutor, or “I was justified in becoming angry.” - that is the defence lawyer. Sakshi simply sees: **“Anger is happening.”**

Sakshi Bhav is choiceless awareness of **“what is”**. Thoughts, emotions and sensations arise and are simply seen, without suppression or indulgence. When thought arises, it is seen. When anger arises, it is seen. When fear, jealousy, pleasure, sorrow or hurt arises, they are seen. There is neither suppression nor indulgence, neither justification nor condemnation - only the direct perception of **“what is”**.

A simple metaphor may help. The sky remains while clouds appear, change their shapes and disappear. Sometimes there are dark clouds, sometimes brilliant white ones, sometimes thunder and rain, and sometimes there is an empty blue sky. Yet the sky does not fight the clouds, nor does it cling to a beautiful cloud and ask it to remain. In the same way, thoughts and emotions (the clouds) move through consciousness (the Sky). Sakshi Bhav is to see these movements without becoming psychologically entangled in them.

But here one must be very careful. Sakshi Bhav does not ultimately mean establishing another identity which declares: **“I am not the body; I am not the mind; I am the Witness”**. The Witness identity is also an identity. The old “I”, the separative psyche, may simply have put on spiritual clothes.

The deeper understanding here is much more radical which is **“watching without a watcher”**, **“seeing without the see-er”**, where the separation between the see-er and the seen naturally ceases. In Sakshi Bhav, there is not an elevated spiritual “me” standing apart from anger and watching it. There is simply the seeing, the choiceless awareness, that “anger is happening”. There is perception without the interference of the psychological perceiver.

Why does Sakshi Bhav Drop? Why is it difficult to sustain?

Day-to-day life continuously challenges this choiceless awareness due to the baggage of conditioning of the human mind. The mind constantly makes choices in corridor of opposites: pleasant and unpleasant, success and failure, honour and humiliation, attraction and aversion, gain and loss. Someone praises us and pleasure arises. Someone criticises us and hurt appears. Another person succeeds and comparison begins. Someone does not

behave according to our expectation and anger arises. Something threatens our physical or psychological security and fear appears. The reaction is often almost instantaneous because memory, conditioning, images and previous experiences intervene before there is complete perception of the fact.

Another complication may immediately arise. Thought says: **“I should not be angry. I am a Kriyaban. I should remain in Sakshi Bhav.”** Now there appears to be a controller and something to be controlled. Yet the controller is itself thought. The entity trying to remove anger is born from the same consciousness in which anger has arisen. Mind is trying to control itself. Thus, we move away from **“what is”** - anger - into **“what should be”** - I should be peaceful. And conflict begins.

There is an even subtler difficulty. We may observe anger hoping that observation will make the anger disappear. We may watch fear hoping to become fearless. We may witness sorrow because we want peace. Observation has then acquired a motive. Seeing has secretly become seeking. Seeing gathers energy of understanding; seeking dissipates that energy. Expectation strengthens mind. Therefore, the effort to maintain Sakshi Bhav can paradoxically become the very movement that disturbs it.

Perhaps Sakshi Bhav does not really **“Drop.”** What returns is the movement of conditioning - the movement of “I-ness,” preference, memory, attachment and reaction. The cloud appears and we mistake the cloud for the whole sky.

What can one do to sustain Sakshi Bhav?

Perhaps nothing - if by “doing” we mean another effort of the “I” to achieve a desired psychological state.

What is possible is Swadhyay. In the session, Gopi ji pointed out that instead of asking, **“Why Sakshi Bhav drops?”**, can we enquire: **“What is happening when Sakshi Bhav drops?”** See the expectation. See the hurt. See comparison. See fear. See attachment. See the craving for recognition. See the desire for continuity. See even the desire to become a perfect Sakshi.

And, most importantly, when witnessing appears to have broken, **see that too.** Suppose anger has taken over and suddenly after some time there is the awareness, **“Anger is happening.”** At that very moment, something has changed. Anger need not disappear; there is no need to suppress or force it away. As awareness deepens, anger may increasingly be seen as it arises. Eventually, the arising of anger and the seeing of it may become almost one movement. In that space where previously there was only unconscious reaction, a different quality of action becomes possible. The **reaction of mind** may then give way to the **response of Life.**

When “what is not Sakshi” is completely seen, without condemnation or escape, that very seeing is Sakshi.

A beautiful verse in summary

At the conclusion of the Swadhyay, a beautiful verse in Hindi prepared by Shubham, a young Kriyaban from Sultanpur near Varanasi, was shared. It captures wonderfully the paradox of trying to possess that which can flower only in freedom:

तुम्हें चाहना तो तुम्हें खोना है
तुम्हें लाना चाहूँ जब, तुम्हें आने से रोकना है।

तुम्हारे आने पर तुम्हारे जाने का डर
यही तो बस तुम्हें रहने से रोकना है।

To desire Sakshi is to lose it. To invite it through effort is to prevent its coming. And when it flowers, the fear that it may disappear itself disturbs it.

So perhaps there is no need to seek Sakshi, **See the seeking.** There is no need to sustain Sakshi, **See the desire to sustain.** There is no need to become the Witness, **let there be witnessing.** And when the watcher is absent, there is perhaps only the wonder, innocence and intelligence of seeing.

Jai Sakshi. Jai Guru.