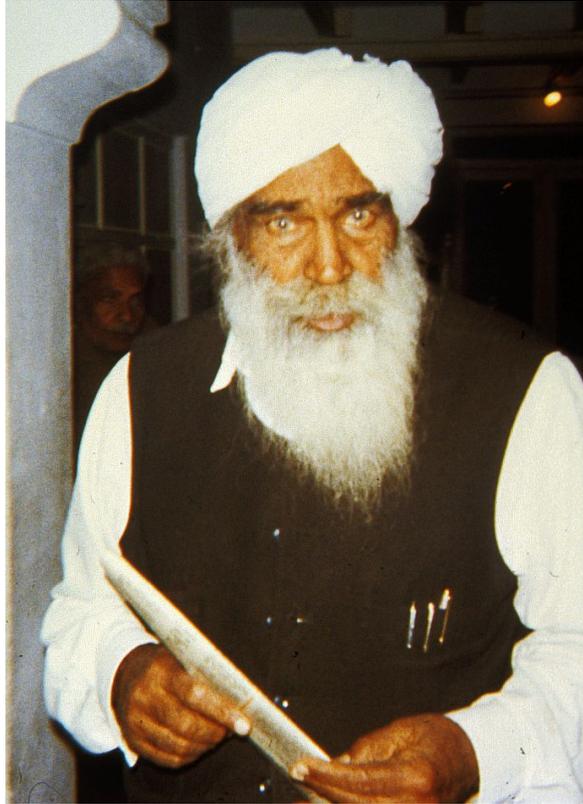


# Inn of Madness

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Man spends his whole life exploring the so-called wonders of the world in outer things and places, but few ever dream of exploring the inner depths of this wonderful house in which we live — the physical form. Throughout history, few have solved the mystifying riddle of life.



When regarding the body, what do we see? Do we see but a five to six foot statue of matter? Do we not realize that some power sustains this human form, and is, in fact, imprisoned within it? Even though the body has nine outlets, yet the prisoner within cannot get out through any of them. Why? — Because it is being controlled. Breathing goes on incessantly, and when the breath goes out, it does not stay out; some power is drawing it back into the body. Sometimes a man is shot — perhaps ten or twenty times — yet he does not die. On the other hand, he might slip when walking and break his neck — what a grand enigma! We have no knowledge of this power within; we never give a thought to it, or to that source from which it draws life and sustenance.

Masters have said that those people, who do not believe in God, even though they may always be near the holy places, are atheists. However, those who do not know who they truly are, realistically speaking, are more atheistic. Excuse me, but where God is concerned, are we not all atheists? For no one has seen Him. A

small child is more conscious of his true self than an adult, but as he grows he becomes more and more aware of the body. When you ask him who he is, he will open his eyes and mouth wide in an endeavor to express what he truly is; but when fully grown he will tell you, "I am Ram Das" or "I am Ram Singh," for he cannot differentiate between his body and his real self.

When you say, "This is my body," have you ever taken it off as you remove your coat or shoes? We say, "This is my body," but, in fact, we have become the body. We do not know who 'I' is, or who it is that says, "This is mine." So, it is a more damaging ignorance not to know one's true self — that self which must eventually experience the Overself. The self or soul is the conscious entity which enlivens the body, and which depends upon something even greater for its very existence. As long as it is not conscious of its true nature, it cannot experience that Greater Nature; so in the true sense there are very few theists in the world, for a theist is one who has realized himself and has realized the Lord also. Intellectually, the whole world can say, "I am not the mind, I am not the senses, I am not the intellect, I am not the pranas," and so on; but has anyone ever separated himself from these things? We can take off our coat and hat, but can we step out of the body and see who the indweller is?

Self-realized people say that the greatest book of knowledge is the physical form, through which all written scriptures have come. The explorers of the body, the Rishis, Munis, and Mahatmas, realized the truth of the mystery and found the power that controls the human being — and that is one's true self. That, in turn, is sustained by the Overself. Scriptures came through such men who were in tune from within, who, by analyzing themselves and rising above body consciousness, got into higher touch and became the mouthpiece of the Greater Power. Whatever they said came direct from that power; they did not speak at the level of mind or senses, and this is the big difference between words that come from a realized person and words that come from the intellect, for the intellectual can speak only from that level, whereas the realized soul speaks as inspired from above.

Emerson said, *Those thoughts which come without thinking are always perfect.* A Muslim fakir says, *Actually you are the mother of all books;* and he also says, *When your outer self finds your real*

*self, then you will see that something is within you and that God is speaking within you. Guru Nanak says, Whatever comes from the Beloved, I give out. He does not speak from his own thoughts.*

*Christ said, I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. When Philip asked to be shown the Father, Christ reminded him, Have I been so long with you and yet thou hast not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father. . . . I am in the Father and the Father in me. The words I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works.*

For example, if one listens to a radio that is tuned in, one hears the sound. From what place does the radio catch the sound? From whatever station it is attuned to. A God-realized person is in tune with the Lord, and in him the Lord speaks: — *Brahm speaks through the physical form: If there were no physical form, how would Brahm speak?* — That Divine Link is in each human being: not more in one and less in another, but the same in all. However, only those who have come into realization and are the mouthpiece of God can see that *I and my Father are one*. This is because they rose above the mind, senses, and the net of illusion and saw that the Sustainer of all life is the one Lord.

During the life of the Rishi Bhardwaj, a householder by the name of Shonak went to him one day and said, "Maharaj, what is that thing, knowing which all else is known?" The Rishi looked at him and saw that he was a householder. You should understand that householders are very different today. In those days a man would become a householder after twenty-five years of *brahmcharya* [chastity in thought, word, and deed], during which time he gained extensive knowledge of the *Vedas* and *Shastras*, the ancient Hindu scriptures. After twenty-five years of leading a householder's life according to the teachings of the *Shastras*, he would enter the *Vanprastha ashram* [secluded life, devoted solely to the realization of the Lord], cut off from worldly life and worldly people. You might say that, in this day and age, the latter phase has become more like a business. A man reads one or two books and then starts giving lectures, but pays little attention to the inner self. If a man's eye is not open, what can he say on the subject?

Kabir Sahib once had a conversation with a learned pundit, and eventually remarked to him, *Oh brother, your mind and my mind can never agree; I say what I see and you say what has been written.* It is entirely different to speak from experience. One can never be fully convinced by reading someone else's statements, for seeing is believing. God gave equal privileges to all human beings, and the only difference between a Master-soul and an ordinary man is that one is in tune and the other is not.

The embodied soul has got consciousness, for while living in this physical form, yet it is of the same essence as God, who is All Consciousness. He is the Ocean and we are the drops, but unfortunately we are under the influence of the mind; the mind, in turn, is being dragged by the senses, and the senses are dragged by worldly enjoyments. In this way, the *jiva* [embodied soul; soul in creation] has become the image of the body and the world, identified so much so with these that it has forgotten its true identity. For he who has forgotten his own self, the matter of knowing the Lord is very far away. For this reason nearly all Masters have advised, — *Man, know thyself.* — Nanak says, *Without knowing oneself, this illusion will not go.* And, when does one see what the soul is? — *When the senses are stilled, the mind is stilled, and the intellect at rest, then only will one know the soul.* — It is for the soul to experience the Lord — *He cannot be known by senses, mind, intellect, or pranas.* — It is very clear-cut.

Knowledge is like a child of all books. Love is the mother of all books, for God is love, and the soul, being of the same essence as the Lord, is also love. But, what do we do with this love? At the sense-level we scatter it in hundreds and thousands of places. — *One heart and millions of desires; on top of that more desires; Then where is the place for Him to sit?* — If one withdraws from everything else and concentrates in one place, great power will spring forth. If a pipe has ten holes and you close up nine of them, the water will simply gush out of the tenth. Up to now our soul has been under the mind's control; but by withdrawing from the outer influences and receiving strength, it can gain control of the whole being. Remember that God is All-Attention, and the soul, having the same nature, is also all-attention in miniature. When that All-Attention wished to become from one to many, the whole of

creation came into being. The soul also has great power; but under the mind's influence it has scattered its attention hither and thither, thereby weakening itself. If only it would withdraw from the outer attractions, it could create a town, at least. It is with much sorrow that I say that the soul's strength has been divided into so many avenues.

So all True Masters say that realizing God is a simple matter — *What is there to realizing the Lord? Just uproot the attention from here and plant it there.* — It is simply a matter of withdrawing and gathering together the scattered attention. As you know, the rays of the sun under normal conditions will not ignite anything; but if you pass them through a convex lens and thereby concentrate them, anything they settle upon will burst into flames. The whole of this life's purpose is to become still — to withdraw from outer environments, and to concentrate. — You have great strength in you; you are the child of a Lion.

So, when Bhardwaj Rishi answered the householder Shonak's question, he sought to reply in such a way as to be of help to Shonak in his household duties. Knowing he was a literate man, the Rishi said, "There are two kinds of teachings. One is called *apra vidya* and the other *para vidya*. *Apra vidya* comes from books, scriptures, etc., and creates some interest in the seeker, which leads to some devotion too. For this, customs, rites, pilgrimages, saying prayers and singing hymns, giving alms, fasting, performing austerities, etc. will help to create the *bhakti* [devotion to God]. However, this is all preparation of the ground and there is no real satisfaction in it because it will not give salvation or realization. All these things come under the category of good actions, and one may gain a heavenly place through them; but again and again the soul will have to return to earth, for they are all at the level of the senses."

These are the first steps to be taken toward the Lord, just as a child goes to school and first learns how to use a pencil; but you can see just how much value these actions hold. You all have taken these steps at some time or other, but now go ahead. Make the best use of the foundation you have built; the foundation alone cannot take you to the ultimate goal, without your knowing the self. Brothers, withdraw, become conscious of your self, and get the contact with

the Overself. As Bhardwaj Rishi told Shonak the householder, when you know yourself, you will know everything. Now you can see that this teaching is for all true seekers of God.

God made man, but He did not stick any label on him. The purpose of all religions is to realize God and to spend this life's journey in peace, contentment, and usefulness to each other. These were the true aims, but what was the outcome? — *He started to realize God, but in between, the mind turned turtle.* — You may ask, "Have we lost ourselves?" Yes, most decidedly, yes.

One Muslim fakir says that the atrocities man has committed against himself could not have been done by even the blindest of all; and the biggest atrocity? Living in this house, we lost contact with the One who runs it. The mystery of life must be solved, no matter to which religion a person belongs. The Masters who solved this mystery were born into various religions, just as were those who contacted them and who, in turn, were taught the solution. Ravidas was a cobbler, Kabir Sahib was a weaver, and Tulsi Sahib was a Brahmin. Man made castes, but God made the soul and embodied it within the human form. First rise above the senses, and then tell what you are and what is your religion. No matter which Master's hymns you take, the subject will remain the same, even though language and expression may vary.

Masters do not consider men from their religious labels, but rather they see everyone as soul in the body, and regard all from the level of soul. They are not Gurus or any particular religion, but are Gurus of mankind. — *Satguru is one who brings all peoples together.* — For the Satguru there is no conflict of caste or creed—no thought of breaking old traditions or making new ones. In fact, they do say that there are already more than sufficient religions and sects in existence. Our Hazur would remark that there is no point in digging new wells when there are already more than enough to serve the people. Man must either live up to his religion, or make a new one. Is it not better, then, to remain in your present formation? But, while living according to its aims and precepts, seek for one who has already solved the mystery of life and who can help you to fulfill the same. You may find such a personality in any religion, and you may call him by any name you wish.

To become proficient in any certain subject, one must go to an expert in that study. If a person has a sincere desire to learn about the soul, he or she should approach a competent teacher of Spirituality — one who has realized himself and the Overself. This is a matter of common sense and needs no philosophy. All great teachers of this subject say that we are all embodied souls, living in the house of the physical form from which we can derive the greatest benefit, if we but make the best use of the situation. The human form is the king of all the species and is the highest rung in the ladder of creation, for in this form God has placed the power of differentiation through which one can define truth from untruth and so achieve that which can be done in no other form. There is a prayer in the Ved Bhagwan which says, *O Lord, take us from the untruth to the Truth*. But, of course, if a man has no interest in either, what is the use?

Swami Ji Maharaj says, *Hansni* [a mythical swan-like bird] *separates the milk from the water*. You are *hansni*, O soul. *Hansni* is said to have the ability in her beak to separate milk from water, and drinks only the milk. O soul, you are like that *hansni* and you can differentiate the Truth from the untruth. Drink only milk, and leave the water. — *Think of this body as matter; God resides therein, and only He is the Truth*. — The body and all things connected are in constant flux, for it is the nature of matter to be ever changing. Only the soul is true, permanent and unchanging; try to recognize the soul. Atheist or devotee—*manmukh* or *Gurumukh*—what is the difference between them? — *To know the atheist—he is lost in the world; To know the devotee—the world is lost in him*. — The *manmukh* is lost—lost in the whirl of mind and senses. For the true devotee the world does not really exist, for he has the Lord's intoxication and is awakened to the truth within himself, and has thereby forgotten both the world and the after-world.

Great is man. Do not think of him as merely a form — just a five or six foot puppet. If the gods and goddesses desire to gain salvation, they also must inherit this human form. The Upanishads say, *Soul is riding in the chariot of the body; Intellect is the charioteer, mind is the reins, senses are the horses dragging it into the fields of enjoyments*. So, it means that the sole barrier between us and the Lord is the mind. If we could only cast aside the mind and the senses, we would realize our true selves and the Lord. If this aim

which has been founded in all religions is not achieved, a man's life is wasted. When Zoroaster was asked for advice, He said, "Join the Army of God." When he was asked what qualifications a person required to join this army, he replied, "Good thoughts, good words, good deeds." This means, live a righteous life in every way, and this has been advised by all Masters. — *Of all dharmas, which is supreme? Take the Name of God and live righteously.* — In the Sikh religion it is said, *Repeat the Naam and share your food with others.* The teachings are all the same, and we want to enter the army of God; but we enter only the army of religion. And, the result of this is that men are fighting among themselves. We put God aside and start saying, "I am a Sikh," or "I am a Muslim," and so on. Kabir Sahib says, *No one is Hindu or Muslim; Think of us as one.* God made the human being; and man is older than all philosophies and religions, which were formed long after man's advent for the noble purpose of realizing the soul. If this aim is not achieved; where then is the purpose?

I can only say that if the leaders of the religions were to give the correct teaching, the world would be enjoying peace. Is it not the aim of all religions to pass one's sojourn of worldly life in peace, to be of helpful use to each other, to realize God? Surely this is the true aim of all, and if all are devotees of the one God, then why all the conflict and strife? — *Hundreds of lovers, but one Beloved for all.* — Customs and religions may be separate, but the aim is the same. But, as things stand, brother is fighting brother, and both declare that their own sect is better. Is it not clear that all are the same?

*Do not say that the books are all lies; Liar is he who does not absorb.* — The holy scriptures record the words of realized people who have walked the path of Spirituality. However many steps they took along this path, so accordingly they taught others. We have respect for all. Just consider how the Masters regard life. They are not bound by any special affiliation, and they are not dictated to by any politics. They are cosmic beings. — *Peace be unto all the world, under Thy will, O Lord.* — Guru Nanak also said, *O Nanak, the Naam is ever-ascending; Through Thy will the whole world benefits.*

The hearts of the Masters are so abounding, everyone can have a place therein. When they come, they come for the upliftment of all

peoples: all sects are theirs, all religions, all countries. When I was visiting the West, one place held a meeting for East and West, and I was invited to represent the East. To represent the West they invited a certain Frenchman, but at the last minute he could not attend the meeting; so the organizers said to me, "Well, we will leave both East and West to you." I replied, "There is no doubt that the saying is *East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet*, but some man has said that — not God. The whole creation is the house of the Lord, and there is no East or West in it. All these countries are but so many rooms in the one house of our Father."

Airplanes have eliminated the vast distances between countries. Today one may be in India and tomorrow in England — and the day after in America. But man is a man, no matter where he is and regardless of outer garb or custom; all are devotees of the one Lord. When I was asked in America if I had come to found some Ashram, I told them that I had come to uplift the very ashrams that people carry around with them (the physical form). "People have forgotten these things; I have come to awaken them. There is no need for introduction of anything new, for the thing already exists within; but I have come to revive what you have forgotten." Masters regard situations with a very open outlook, but those whose outlook is confined to their own closed sect do not give the true teachings.

Just before the partition of India and Pakistan [in 1947] fighting between Hindus and Muslims was going on, and our Hazur went to many such disturbed areas. People repeatedly told him, "If only you had come before, there would have been no fighting here." I am trying to explain very clear and straightforward facts. Because of earning food for the stomach through the name of religion, so much misunderstanding has been born. — If four drunkards can sit together and enjoy each other's company, then why not four devotees from different religions, for the purpose of love and understanding? — It might be said here that the former have some kind of intoxication, but the latter have none.

Kabir Sahib explains it this way: that a *hans* [mythical swan-like bird] once sat in a field of *kodraj* (kodraj is a rather inferior grain). The farmer saw the hans and started to chase him with his stick. So Kabir Sahib observes: *This poor ignorant farmer does not know that*

*the hans never eats grain, but lives on pearls.* So Masters never come to take from worldly people. Now listen carefully to Kabir Sahib's hymn:

*In the inn of the body, the jiva-traveler is staying;  
But why so enrapt in this madness?*

The body is like an inn; and we are travelers in this world for but a few days. The senses or outgoing faculties through which the worldly impressions enter are firmly attached to this inn or house. The eyes alone absorb 83 percent of all impressions. The ears take in 14 percent, and the remaining three percent is distributed among the other senses. When we sleep, we dream of the impressions we have received in our every-day awakened state. As can be seen, our lives are very superficial; we have never taken a dip into our real self.

What is the purpose then of this inn-like body? Its purpose is to enable us to know our true self, and to realize God. If the soul does not do this, then? — *If the life fades away without gaining the benefit, the advent of birth is wasted.* — Lord Buddha said the same thing: that within human life the Truth can be realized. Who knows when one will again receive the blessing of human birth? It was given for a definite use — so why get intoxicated with sense-pleasures? What will be gained this way? You go on seeing the world's play, but the craving for more and more is never satisfied. The ears are always listening to the world's tune but are never contented with it. One thinks one is enjoying these sensual pleasures, but it is not so. The sense-pleasures are enjoying you.

In the *Puranas* [ancient Hindu scriptures] it is related that the god of food complained to Lord Vishnu that he was tired of the people eating him mercilessly. Lord Vishnu advised him, "Those people who eat you more than they need, well, you eat them up." Over-indulgence in food leads to degeneration of the physical organs. Indulge the senses only as much as necessity demands; do not create gluttony as a habit. If everything is used in a controlled manner, all things will be helping factors instead of doing harm. For instance, there is a certain poison which when taken in infinitesimal doses builds up the physical strength like a tonic; but when taken in large doses, it kills. All the pleasures of the senses were given for

man to work through — but in perfect control. This house or inn was given for only a few days so that it should be put to the utmost advantage, but we are destroying it fast.

There are five senses of knowledge and five senses of karmas; and if only one sense gains control, what happens? A moth, for example, is governed by the eyesight, to the extent of burning himself to death in the heat of a flame or bright light. Fish, on the other hand, are governed by the sense of taste; and although happily swimming about in the water, yet they will rise to the angler's bait — only to be caught on the hook and die in agonies of torment, flapping around on the earth. The large black bumblebee has a very strong sense of smell, and through this easily loses his life to a certain tropical flower that has the ability to close its petals over any insect entering within it. The sense of hearing is overpowering in the deer.

I do not know if you have spent any time in the forests, but I have seen a deer jump forward as much as twenty yards. Even the fastest horse cannot catch this fleet-footed animal, and yet he is easily caught. Deer hunters play a certain tune on a special drum, hearing which the deer is drawn helplessly toward it in ecstasy of that sound, until he quietly lays his head down upon the drum and, of course, is captured. He spends the rest of his life imprisoned in captivity. In the male elephant, the sense of touch is very strong, even though he has the strength to uproot huge trees with his trunk. I once lived in the jungle for four or five months, and saw how they prepared to catch the elephant by digging a large pit and covering it with leaves, and then placing a female elephant nearby. When the male scents the female, he loses all caution and rushes toward her, and falls into the pit which lies in his path. He is then starved for many days until it is possible for men to handle him and remove him. He then spends his life in captivity. So, you can see that when even a single sense out the five is ruling, it can bring death or slavery. What then is the condition of a being who is slave to all five senses?

Your whole life is being wasted and finally you will be withdrawn from the world — you have to leave this body — even if you have no knowledge of when that time will come. The great emperors, the learned intellectuals, famous philosophers, and even God-realized people — where are the bodies of all these persons now? They have

all left the scene of action, and we must also leave sometime; there is no exception to the rule. If only the thought remained uppermost in mind: "Who am I? Where am I going?" This could change the very pattern of our life. Just think for a moment: if you received a notice to tell you that you had to leave town tomorrow, how would you spend today? Would you not prepare yourself to leave? The time for leaving the body may already be fixed, but it is not known to you. It may come at any time. Kabir Sahib says, *Become virtuous, repeat the Naam; tomorrow may never come.* What to speak of tomorrow; we have no guarantee of the very next minute! The breath continues to return to the body and the man remains there — but if it does not come back? Try to see what is sustaining it, for alone it is just a mound of matter that we carry everywhere. — *The friend [body] is enlivened as long as the companion [soul] is there; When the companion leaves, it is worthless matter.*

When the soul leaves the body, four brothers pick up the inert form in a hurry and rush it to the cremation ground. No one wants to keep it for long. But, those with right understanding see the facts in true perspective. It is no new philosophy. Those who made the best use of the human birth and freed the soul from the rule of mind and senses gained knowledge of the self and also experienced the Lord, and for them there is no return to this world of action. But, coming and going is not finished for those who live only and always at the sense-level, whether their actions be good or bad.

Lord Krishna says in the Gita that there are only two paths; *pitriyan panth* and *deviyan panth*. Pitriyan panth is the path of the karmic wheel, and the soul which travels it cannot get off this wheel. But, the soul which travels the *deviyan panth* — the Path of Light — never returns. It is the custom in the Sanatan sect of the Hindu religion to light a lamp and put it in the hand of a dying person, for it is believed that the soul will not otherwise gain salvation. But, in fact, this light should be lit while living — the Inner Light — for only then can the soul become free from births and deaths. Where is this Light? — *The Light is effulgent in he who controls the ten senses.* — The Light is already within all men, but one must separate from the senses to see it. There is no need to create it, therefore; just invert. You can say to turn the face inwardly, or by self-analysis, rise above the senses.

Kabir Sahib says, *Why remain intoxicated in this inn of the body?* It is common sense to see that for the soul, who is at the level of mind and senses, and has become the image of the body, and therefore is doing all practices at the same level, how can it be possible to rise above the body, mind, and senses? If anyone thinks he can do it, he is welcome to try. After all, what does a blind man desire? — Just two eyes. But, if you cannot do it, admit the fact and go to seek help from someone who knows the science of rising above body consciousness. Such a Master-soul may give a sitting to ten people, or fifty, or one hundred or more; but by his single fraction of attention everyone will receive Light. The proof of Light will be seen with one's own vision. So, the path of the Saints is called the reverse path, for they teach the seeker how to invert the senses. — *When you meet the Satguru, inversion starts; Dying while living will unravel it.*

When the soul inverts, the body becomes lifeless; he who dies while living becomes the one who experiences the Lord. Learn to die so that you may begin to live. Maulana Rumi says that if you desire to have everlasting life, then learn to die while living. Dadu Sahib says, *Dadu, die before; Everyone dies when the time comes.* All Masters have made similar statements on the same subject. That person who has unraveled the mystery of life has no fear of death. — *Die you must, so why not now? Stand aloof from the world. Such a death one can die a hundred times a day.* — To be able to rise above at will erases all fear of death. You are a guest in this inn of the body for a few days only — do not lose yourself in the madness of the senses and the sense-enjoyments. Do not forget yourself entirely in this outer madness, but try to reach the aim for which the human birth was given. If this opportunity to do the real work is wasted, then who knows when you will be given another?

*Rest for the night, leave in the morning.*

It is a place where you can spend the night; but when daylight comes, you have to leave. Who stays permanently at an inn? — *Return to your own place, brother; why live in a strange country? Do your own work and ignore alien affairs.* — This is not your country. You merely have connection with the physical form for a few days, and will soon have to leave. It can never be your permanent place, but where will you go? Have you ever thought

about that? — *The house you must leave is tied in your mind; There is never a thought for your permanent home.* — You have imprisoned yourself in its environments and you have given it the status of a god. The true home has been completely forgotten. Who can say you are intelligent? Perhaps you are learned through books, but the Masters say that one who does not realize his transient condition and has no knowledge of his real destination is either a fool or an ignorant child.

When a spiritual person is also learned in outer knowledge, he wears this like a garland of flowers and uses it to explain the truth in a variety of ways. For instance, when Keshab Chander Sen went to Sri Ramakrishna, the latter said, "If you want to understand this teaching in one word then listen to me; if you would prefer to learn it through many words, then go to Vivekananda." It is important that the mind should fully understand and be satisfied, for true spiritual experience can be had only when the senses, mind, and intellect are perfectly stilled. Nothing can be experienced while one is scattered at the sense-level, whether it be in enjoyments or in intellectual expansion. We should make the best use of the intellect for our own or another's understanding; but remember that reasoning can be a help and it can also be a bar. Through reason we can come to the point of accepting that God does exist; but having done that, why not realize Him? And, for that, the intellect then must be stilled.

Everyone must leave the physical form — and that includes you. One Master says, *Where have the parents gone who gave you birth? You have no knowledge of their whereabouts.* The facts are clearly evident, but the world's grease has covered you like a greasy cloth which does not retain water on its surface. We read books and scriptures, listen to numerous lectures; but the truth penetrates neither mind nor heart: that we must also leave the world.

*Those who know they must go, why worry and scheme?*

Why increase the worries and troubles more than necessary when we must all leave this place one day? If you knew you had to leave the world at the end of this day, how would you spend it? A certain Master advises, *Spend each day thinking it is your last on earth.* If this advice was rigidly followed, a person's life would be

transformed. We go deeper into the forgetfulness because we do not remember death. Death is no bugbear, but is the name given to a change; or, you can call it a transfer. That person can truly be termed intelligent who prepares for this event. How wisely we start preparing ahead of time for some worldly event, like a marriage or an examination, etc. The change of death can also be called an examination which lies ahead of us, but we do not know the date. We do nothing to prepare for this. — *Wherever the attention is, so do we go and reside.*

If one comes up above the sense-enjoyments and rises above the body-consciousness, our coming and going in births and deaths will cease. Otherwise, — *Good and bad karmas are both binding, like gold and iron shackles.* — This is written in the Gita. On the path of pitriyan the coming and going continues, but the path of Light starts above the senses. Inside there are only two guides — Light and Sound — and they start when one rises above the senses. Where the world philosophies end, there religion starts. You can also say that the ABC of Spirituality starts from here. You will meet very few Masters who have knowledge of this. If only, those who teach customs and ritual, would also teach the true meaning or basis behind them, there would be love and harmony among men. We must love God, and as God is in each being, we must love all. If all men sincerely took this up as a principle, where would be the conflict? If each one had first-hand knowledge of the soul, and that the soul is the same in all, would we not respect each other?

Tulsi Sahib says, *The Guru who bows down to the disciple is called a Sadhu.* The Guru whose eye is open sees the Lord in each individual. However, he whose eye is not open cannot be blamed for not paying his respects to the Lord in others. But, what is happening today? Gurus stand proud and erect, and the disciples go on bowing down, bowing down, in all faith.

The Master is trying to help us understand that the time is now. It is night and we are staying at the inn; in the morning we must leave, and what have we accomplished up to the present? Man has achieved so much intellectually and physically, but what has he done for himself spiritually? We know little or nothing about the Truth or about our true self. After all, material success is achieved and sustained through you, and you will have to leave it all one day. If

you leave the body without solving the mystery of life, it will result only in paying the karmic debts of ignorance. The worldly people will only help and respect you out of their own selfish desires. Even if one person may have all sincere sympathies and fine qualities, what can he do to help you when you have to leave? He can only stand and pray, "O Lord, have mercy on this soul." At such a time only a God-realized soul can be of help to you.

*O Nanak, break from undeveloped company and seek the realized soul; They will leave you while living, but even after death He will never leave.*

Worldly companions cannot be with you always; so why not seek one who will be a constant companion? And who is that? He is what is known as a Master, *Sant*, etc. A Sant is not necessarily he who is seen in a particular garb, but rather is he who has realized the Truth and has become the mouthpiece of the Truth. Whoever goes to such a soul will, on the first day, gain some experience in the science of rising above body consciousness, and will learn how to increase this daily so that the soul might leave the body at will — even one hundred times daily. All fear of death will be removed. And, remember this: the truly realized person will never teach you outer practices, but recommends that whatever you have been doing up to now should be made full use of by going ahead.

Salvation can only be achieved by rising above. — *Put your attention on that Higher Place, where even Shiva is meditating.* — That higher place lies above the senses, where it is said that Lord Shiva is meditating. This is why the inner or third eye is sometimes called the *Shiv Netra* — Shiva's Eye. Its position in the body is behind and between the physical eyes, but is above the senses. If one's full attention can be concentrated there while living, then the soul becomes free from the wheel of life. With a little right understanding one can soon see that this life was not meant merely for eating, drinking, and gratifying all desires and passions. It has a far nobler purpose, and those who do nothing to accomplish this purpose, in truth, waste their lives.

*This pure, priceless, bodily gown you have dirtied, spot upon spot.*

It is a priceless gift, this human form — king of all the species. It is written in the Koran that when the human being was made, the angels were ordered to bow before that form. It is the temple of the Lord: keep it pure and clean. — *This body is the temple of God, wherein dwells the Light of Truth.* — We keep the outer temples in spotless condition, but what happens to the inner temple? We may spend thousands on toilet requisites and beauty treatments, but inwardly the human form is filled with filthy passions of the senses. Even a dog sweeps the ground with his tail before sitting, and even for an insignificant caller one will quickly tidy up the home; and yet we want the Emperor of all existence to manifest in our heart. Can He manifest in a dirty heart?

*Inside we are black with deeds, outwardly fair and attractive;  
Yet we wish to copy the pure and chaste One.*

The enjoyments and passions have blackened our hearts — we are filled with jealousy, greed, anger, lust, backbiting, and more. To all outer appearances, however, we are pure and clean and make a grand show by copying the God-realized person. If you cover a dung-hill with silk, will it then issue forth a sweet fragrance? Nature says no. If you cover a block of ice with a thick blanket, it will still give off its coolness. We have the human form in which we can realize God, but we are daily soiling our lives with more and more spots. Even the dirt alone will eat away the texture. An ethical life is the most important stepping stone toward Spirituality. Certain disciplines of the Hindus called *yama* and *niyama* were made for this, as was also the eightfold path of the Buddha, the four fasts of the Jains, and Christ's Sermon on the Mount.

*O Nanak, take the Name of the Lord when the heart is pure;  
You are trying to absorb the lies of the world.*

His Name should not be on your tongue if you have a dagger in your pocket with which to kill someone. You may deceive the whole world, but can you deceive the Lord? Even for the world, the cat will be out of the bag sooner or later, for one cannot hide a lie forever; and in the end it will come out into the open.

*Why light this worldly fire for only two days of life?*

Why waste the only two days of life in the fire of enjoyments? Soon you must leave it all behind. And, why were you given this life? Life is duty; Life is love; Life is the holy gift of God.

*Anger, envy, arose in the heart of man, like a serpent.*

These ugly things reside in the heart, but the soul is the image of love; for God is love, and He can be realized only through love. The purpose of all outer practices is to develop devotion, to incite interest, and to establish regularity. It is part of the soul's innate nature to attach itself to something, but unfortunately wherever it attaches itself results in misfit. The soul is consciousness; and if consciousness is to enjoy peace and happiness, it must attach itself to some higher consciousness. If it gains some brief enjoyment through attaching itself to matter, it does not mean that the matter is responsible for that; it is but a reflection of the soul's own happy nature, a reflection of consciousness. While the attention is focused on a certain thing, it will go on enjoying; but when the attention is withdrawn the enjoyment ceases; is this not true? If this conscious entity, the soul, would rejoin the Greater Consciousness, the Oversoul, become fully charged and come into expression, all happiness would manifest in the whole being. But, we do not enter that place where the happiness lies. Instead we spend all our lives searching in every other direction — North, South, East, West. Our Hazur used to say that we are like the weaver's shuttle which goes back and forth.

We should have respect for all holy places, but why were they made? They are there for the health of the soul. If one's physical body is sick, people say, "Go to the hills and recuperate." A few months' carefree relaxation in the high altitude and fresh clean air is very beneficial and health-giving. So, the holy places had an ideal purpose: to strengthen the soul by allowing it to withdraw from all the worldly affairs, leaving all worries behind, and sitting at the feet of some realized soul. This was the true purpose of the holy place, but today we have made them into holiday resorts and have started our worldly enjoyments there also.

I have been to Hardwar [a famous place of pilgrimage on the River Ganges] many times. Once a large number of Satsangis gathered and requested a Satsang be held. When the Satsang started, I said,

"Brothers, this place is very precious because many great Rishis, Munis, and Mahatmas have visited here at one time or another. Guru Nanak came; also Guru Amar Das visited here off and on over a period of seventy years. It is, therefore, a most auspicious site — but what have we done to it? When one travels toward town from the railway station, one sees two cinema halls." A man stood up and corrected me: "No, Maharaj, there are now three!" Now tell me, is it the fault of the holy place? Consider why they were built: was it due to thousands of the country's population flocking there? No, the holy places became holy because a certain one or more realized souls placed their holy feet there. Millions of people have been born in Jerusalem, but today it is held holy by the whole of Christendom due to one man — Jesus Christ. The greatness of each place of pilgrimage can be accredited to at least some realized soul. Now, what has more value? — The realized soul or the place that became known because of him?

We do become devotees of the holy books, but we do not want that which the books recommend. We decorate our houses with photographs or pictures of certain Masters, and surround them with artificial flowers, etc., but we have no respect for a living Master. When the Masters come to the world, we call them atheists or madmen. Many Masters have been treated like this during their lifetime, but after they leave the world we start worshipping the very ground they placed their feet upon.

So, very lovingly the Master is helping us to understand that the body is ours for a few days only, and eventually we must leave it behind. God is love. The soul is of the same essence as He, and is, therefore, also love. A true human being is one in whom love exists and is expressed. How can a man be truly human if he does not express love? He should have been the very epitome of love; he should have loved the Lord and the Lord in all beings; but instead he became like a black cobra. Do you know what happens when the cobra strikes? The place that he strikes upon starts burning; it is very poisonous. A wound from a sword, for instance, can heal within ten or fifteen days; but the wound from the human tongue never heals. When I visited the West, some people asked, "How can we stem the danger of atomic war?" I told them, "By living up to what your scriptures say." And, what do the scriptures tell us? They tell us to love the Lord, and as the Lord is in each being, to love everyone.