

*Sat*

*sandesh*

*the  
message of the Masters*

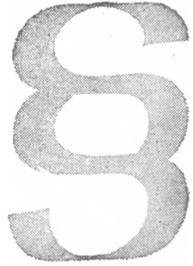
*November 1968*

## Surat Shabd Yoga

Listening to the *Dhun*, the mind gets stilled,  
None of the myriad of ways can work this miracle.  
The *yogin* practises yogic exercises,  
The *Jnani* is immersed in *Jnana*.  
The hermit tires himself out in lone solitude,  
The anchorite does endless austerities.  
Those who meditate on the mental patterns,  
They too suffer from a great delusion.  
Learning and knowledge are of not much avail,  
For the wise in the end have to rue their wisdom.  
The Pandit engages in the recitation of the Vedas,  
But all his sacred lore fails to take him any the nearer to  
God  
No other means are of any consequence whatever,  
The only beneficial way is that of Shabd.  
When a Master of the Sound-current appears on the  
scene,  
The disciple too begins to feel the yearning of the new  
birth.  
With the practice of *Surat Shabd Yoga*,  
The mind stuff gradually gets to sink within itself till  
nothing remains.

—Swamiji

# Sat sandesh



November 1968

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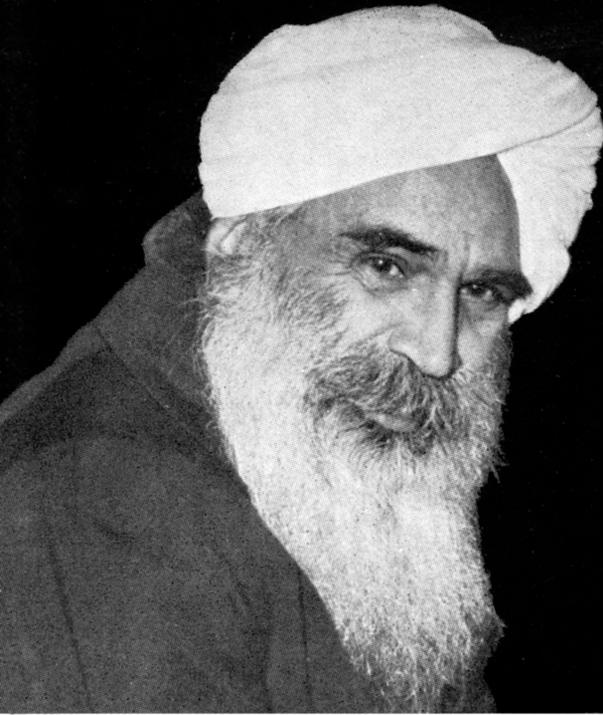
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# THE MASTER SPEAKS

## *Gurmukh and manmukh*

THE Vedas and scriptures of all the religions have glorified the spiritually great who came into the world from time to time. Some have even gone to the extent of exalting the position of Guru above that of God. This is just a way of expression for who can be above God? The term 'Guru' is not something new. It is as old as the creation itself. Whenever practical teachers of *pravidya*, knowledge of the Beyond, come into the world, they give correct understanding and right lead to the people. After the departure of such teachers, deterioration sets in. Guru Nanak<sup>1</sup> was once questioned as to who his Guru was? He replied : "Shabd is the true Guru and Surat is the disciple," meaning that the

Sound-current was his teacher and his attention was the disciple. What is this Sound-current ? God is wordless and nameless. He is absolute in Himself. When that Absolute God comes into expression, He becomes God-into-expression Power. This Power is described as Shabd or Naam. The Power of God in its fullness is called Shabd or Sound-current. Christ called it the Word.

Similar questions were put to Kabir<sup>2</sup> as well: "Where does your Guru dwell and where does the disciple? How are the two related together?" He simply said : "My God dwells in the *Gagan* (sky) within me and the disciple too resides therein. When Surat (attention) gets united with

the Shabd, there can be no separation thereafter.” What does it mean? When we say that Guru resides in the *Gagan*, it means that he is the indweller of the body and not the body itself. This human frame then is a wonderful house in which we—the God-power and the spirit in man—live. He who has created such a wonderful house must be a Master-architect. Let us for a moment examine this house. It has a number of outlets—eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth and the two openings below. Despite all these outlets, we cannot run away from this house (body). Everything is going on with a certain rhythm and order. The exhaled breath cannot remain out for long. There is some Power which pushes it back and we are alive with the breath of life going in and out. The beauty of this house remains so long as that Power is in it. Man is man so long as the Father is in man. It is said :

“The body lives so long as the God-power is in it,  
The moment the God-power  
departs, the body becomes a  
heap of dust.”

We are in the body but not the body itself and yet we are not free to escape from it. There is something which is keeping us a prisoner in the body and is controlling this relationship. When that something departs, we have to leave the body. It is this Power which is controlling and sustaining the various planes and sub-planes in the creation. All these innumerable regions are moving rhythmically without colliding with each other. When this Power withdraws, there follows dissolution and grand-dissolution. As said before, this Power in the terminology of saints is called God-into-expression Power or God-into-action Power. It is this very Power which is called Naam or Shabd: ‘O Nanak, the entire creation is the result of Naam; one can contact it

only when He wills.’ Again, ‘They alone come to it who have the Father’s name writ in their foreheads.’

“The universe comes into being  
through the Word and dissolves  
by its withdrawal;  
And it is through the Word that it  
again comes into being.”

We have now to find ways and means of contacting this Power within us. It can be contacted only at the place where the soul-currents withdraw at the time of death. We have to locate the seat of the soul in the body. You might have seen a dying person. The death process begins when the lower *Chakras* (ganglions) give way because of withdrawal of the soul-currents therefrom. Beginning from below this process continues on and on until the throat-centre gets involved. It is then that the eye-balls turn upwards. This happens when these currents get collected at the eye-focus. It is from here that the soul sitting in the body keeps the body in control. This then is the *Gagan* and here lives that God-power together with the soul and when the soul and the God-power become one, they live eternally. This is called the union of the disciple and the Master. Speaking of the Guru-power, Guru Gobind Singh<sup>3</sup> tells us: “From end to end the God-power remains with us; consider that God-power as our Guru.” It is this God-power within us which is the connecting link between the material body and the immaterial soul, quite disparate in essence. This Power is all-pervading and immanent in each one of us:

“My Lord is enthroned in all and  
there is not a place where He is  
naught;

Blessed indeed is the human pole  
from where it shines in full efful-  
gence.”

We all live by this God-power, but we are unaware of it. The God-power is manifest in the Guru. We adore the human-pole from where this Power works. Who then can contact us with this God-power? God-power is complete in itself and has no relationship in the earthly sense of the word. Who then can do this job? None, but this manifested God in man. It is the lighted human-pole that can contact us with the Light of God. A Guru never claims any perfection for himself. He always says that the contact is given by the God-power and not by him. He lives in His Will, and has no will of his own. 'Let Thy will be done and not what I will.' Again, Kabir, speaking of himself, says :

“Kabir is just a dog of his Master and is known Mutia.

He moves about wheresoever he is led by the nose-string.”

Those who consciously dwell in God become in course of time conscious co-worker of the divine plan and such personages are known as disciplined souls and saints. Thus we see that the Word is the God-power in the Guru—the Word made flesh—for man alone can be the teacher of man. He dwells amongst us to instruct and guide us. This is what the Gurbani<sup>4</sup> says : “God Himself in the Guru doles out the gift of Shabd.” Guru then is the human-pole on which the God-power manifests and carries on the work of redemption. ‘He lives among the people but his soul dwells in Him.’ In the world, he acts as the mouth-piece of God. Nanak explaining to his friend Lalo said : “I only express that what comes within me from above.” “While living on the earth His spirit dwelleth in heaven,” said a Muslim saint. Outwardly we see him busy in the work of the world as any one of us is. For his livelihood he may be working in the field or carrying on some business or be enga-

ged in service. He too, like us, may lead a family life. But he can rise above the body and bodily relations the moment he may so like. In the human frame he is nothing but a manifested God-in-man or a veritable man living in God.

On the other hand, we are a slave of the mind and senses and are entrapped in the maze of the world, so much so that we are identified with them and have forgotten our real nature—the soul behind the mind and sense, giving life and light to all that is. It is the flow of our attention outside that is sustaining the world around for us. Sometimes it so happens that by seeing we do not perceive and by hearing we do not understand. What is the reason for this absent-mindedness ? It is because our attention is somewhere else and we are not our own at that moment. It is just like removing the belt from the fly-wheel of a machine and the entire work comes to a standstill. The various departments in our body carry on their functions in the light and life of the spirit. It is the spirit that gives strength and power to the mind and the various sense-organs connected therewith. It is the spirit that has to be controlled and manipulated and made the director of the body and the bodily functions. We must strengthen our spiritual power and be able to use it at our will rather than allow it to flow along with the mind. With the spiritual power well developed, one can do what he likes, as a Master of the house in which one lives. One who can do this is a Sadhu, a saint or a Mahatma. Bhai Gurdas<sup>5</sup> says : “He who has disciplined his outgoing faculties is called a Sadh (a disciplined soul).” Again Kabir tells us : “One who is lost in the nine portals of the body cannot get to the Reality.” A person who has acquired this gift, becomes the mouthpiece of God. Of him it is said : ‘His words are the words of God, though seemingly coming out of a human being.’ Speak-

ing of himself Nanak says :

“The humble Nanak opens his mouth when he is bidden to do so.”

This is what is called right understanding and each one of us has capacity to understand things rightly provided one has his attention under control. The attention of the worldly-wise is flowing out into the world. If one could by self-analysis separate his attention from the mind, he can become the knower of himself and the knower of God. Hence the aphorism : ‘Know thyself’. ‘O Nanak, without self-analysis one cannot get out of the grand delusion.’

One who knows the Self or the human in him, knows everything. In his company others too can become the mouth-piece of God as he himself is. He does not inject anything from without. He makes us understand what is what : ‘He alone is our friend by whose instructions, we are reformed and transformed.’ A friend like him tells us in detail of the great wonders that lie in the wonderful house we live in. Human body is the temple of God and God verily dwells in it. All the scriptures sing highly of it. It is called *Brahmpuri* because *Brahman* can be made manifest in it. It is a place with nine portals and six ganglionic centres and is described as *Ajudhya* or the Kingdom of Lord Rama. All the gods and goddesses reside in it. Hence it is called *Nar-Naraini Deh*, or the abode of man and God. Even the celestial beings aspire for the human form because it in this deiform that they can hope to attain salvation. In brief, man is next to God. He may be said to be even a micro-god.

With the gift of the human body we can meet the Power-of-God within. What do the enlightened souls tell us in this context ? Of Guru Amar Das<sup>6</sup> it is

said that for full seven decades and over he went from place to place in search of God and tried to find Him in all possible ways. It was after this long search that he came to the feet of Guru Angad<sup>7</sup> and found the Reality within himself. Now we are taking one of his hymns for discussion. Let us see what he has to say :

“Blessed indeed is the human body in which God manifests Himself.”

It is said that when God made man He commanded the angels to do obeisance to him. In *Tritiya* (third) *Upanishad* we read that the Rishis and the Munis prayed for a human habitation for themselves. Fortunately we have got this advantage and we must make the best use of it, and try to make manifest within us the Power-of-God—the Self-luminous Power—which is already there. But where that Power is already manifest, we have a veritable temple of God. How can we know that ?

“It is only by the grace of some Master saint that one realises this”

By ourselves, we cannot understand the truth of what is said. It is only a God-realised soul who can make us understand the Truth. We may consider this body as something full of filth. We do not realise that in this human frame God Himself resides and as such it is a beautiful temple. We, in our own way try to beautify it with cosmetics on which we spend a lot of money. If we begin to live consciously in the God-power within us, there would hardly be any need for cosmetics. The outer application of toiletry cannot do the trick that we wish to play. It is our thoughts which give colour and scent to our body. If our thoughts are pure, we hardly need these outer aids. One who has developed his psychic eye, can at a glance see through

the inner working of any person who comes before him. The real nature of a person comes out in bold relief.

The physical body is a mere covering. The beauty beneath this covering lies in contentment, equipoise and inner quiet, all of which come when one is inwardly united with God. The soul feels restless until it rests in the Oversoul. He who is in tune with God will have a rhythmic blood circulation and will emit forth radiant rays. It is on spiritual health that the life of both body and mind depends. Everything needs its own food—body, mind and intellect. The spirit too needs its own food : the bread of and water of life. As you think, so you become and likewise create a personal aura of your own. A loving soul will have eyes full of love while one who is obsessed with lusts of the flesh will send forth rays of envy, jealousy and anger. Eyes are the windows of soul and they reflect outside the colour of the mind within.

Every thought has its peculiar smell and its own colour. Should you like to have experience of this, you should stand in the sunshine with your back to the sun so that you are able to see your shadow on the ground or on some wall in front of you. Now try to see the colour of this shadow. A lustful person will cast a shadow with a black tinge in it while one in whom anger predominates will cast a shadow tainted with redness. Similarly, there is a peculiar smell in the body of each. The former emits foul smell as coming from a flock of sheep and later as that of a half-burnt rope. One who is settled in God has peace of mind and thinks well of the whole world. He may not use any toilet and still you would have sweet fragrance as if coming from a lily; provided one has love in him for love beautifies everything.

I remember to have read long ago of a girl who was not comely in appearance and no one would therefore like to marry her. Like one disgusted with herself, she went out of the town and began to frequent a church where she would get lost in the love of God. After a year or so a person accosted her saying “I want to marry you. What do you think of my proposal ?” The girl could hardly believe her ears. “Who would like to marry one who is ugly?”, she said. The young man said : “You are not what you say. I see a kindly light in your eyes”. So, beauty emits from beautiful thoughts. Have you ever seen the eyes and forehead of high souled persons ? There is always a kind of radiance in their eyes. Their bodies have a personal aura which is quite different from those of ordinary persons.

Everyone emits a peculiar light from his body. But we do not perceive it, because we have not developed the single eye that is capable of seeing this radiation. Theosophy tells us that everyone has his own radiation, the length of which depends from person to person. In some cases, it extends to just a few inches and in other to a few feet. The enlightened persons radiate their light to a considerable distance and whosoever comes into the field of their radiation, he becomes magnetized.

Guru Amar Das solved the enigma of life when he came to the feet of Guru Angad. His contact with his Guru transformed him altogether. He got a kind of new light from his Master who was nothing but God personified. He now became, in his own right, the Master of his body and bodily senses. One who is a manifested God in man can give you contact with God. God is not something outside you. He is the soul of our very soul. Some say that there is hardly any need for a Guru, while others say that

there is such a need. Who is a Guru after all ? Not the human-pole that you see. He is God in man or if you like you may call Him man in God. One in whom the God-power is manifest in fullness, he alone can collect our wandering wits at one focus. He has a soul-force in him, and with its help he can lift you above body-consciousness and open your inner eye wherewith you will be able to see inwardly. This inner perception is in each one of us but we never had an opportunity to use it. This power cannot come overnight. Every saint has his past and every sinner a future. What a man has done, another can do, of course, with proper help and guidance. Under the Guru's loving care and attention we too can become a saint. He casts you in his own mould and gradually you will be able to channelise your thoughts in one direction—Godwards. The more you will practise concentration, the more you would develop your likeness on the pattern on your teacher. With inner peace and steady contemplation, there would come a change in you. The secret of success lies in his company. The breeze that blows from a mountain will be cold and fresh, while the desert winds are hot. Similarly, the words of a Master saint are charged with the divine power in him. So the human-pole that has the divine manifestation in him, will manifest the divinity in you. It is the thoughts that make the man. You have to change your thoughts for the better. With this change, you will have inner peace for yourself and whosoever will come in touch with you, will also have serenity.

“Blessed indeed is one in whom the God-power manifests through the grace of the Guru.”

God alone is our eternal consort. We are so constituted that we cannot rest until we rest in Him. Atman and Para-

matman (soul and Oversoul) must be linked together, and consciously learn to live together. All the souls are but sparks from the same fire. When once the soul is linked with the Oversoul, there comes about an eternal union.

The pleasures of the world are short-lived—may be for 10 years or 100 years. We meet but to part. This too is a necessary phase in one's life. We should live happily with those among whom we are born, and discharge our worldly duties and obligations. But above all the soul is to get united with the Oversoul. Such a union will give us eternal happiness. How can this union be effected ? It is possible only through Guru-Shabd, the Word made manifest within. There is no other way besides this. Without this inner manifestation the human life goes in vain. So long as we are in company with the Power-of-God in us, we are sentient beings. And when one comes in contact with that Power itself, one becomes a God-man. It is, therefore, said that without the life-principle in us, we have no value whatsoever. The enlightened persons generally address themselves rather than addressing others :

“O man what hast thou gained by coming into the world,  
Alas ! thou hast not gained anything while thou art here.”

The human birth is a great blessing. God verily resides in the human body. It is an opportunity for us to realise Him so that we could get out of the cycle of births and deaths. This is eternal union. Mira Bai<sup>s</sup> speaking of herself has said : “Mira is eternally happy with her eternal Lord.” Gurbani also tells us : “One may go the world over but without a perfect Master one cannot achieve this.” It comes as a gift from a theocentric saint, a person centred in God. One who is in tune with God, alone can make us attune

to Him. We have advanced a lot in the field of science and technology, but we have not done that which is so very necessary in life. We must make hay while the sun shines. Although much time has been lost, we still have some time left. We must, therefore, make most of the time that is still with us: 'Once we slip from the top rung of the ladder in life, the life goes in vain. Human body is the temple of God and its sanctity must be preserved at all costs. It is a vehicle of great importance and must be kept in good trim:

“Always remember the Lord within and his name must be on the lips;  
O Nanak the body is to be preserved only for this purpose and nothing else.”

The Power-of-God is within you. Perceive that Power with your own eyes and having perceived it sing His praises. Take care of the God-given body. Maintain it as best as you can. Protect it from heat and cold. Give it enough so that it lasts as long as possible. But for what purpose ? For self-realisation and God-realisation. This is the summum bonum of life. If it is not done then :

“Accursed are all the activities of life: eating, drinking, sleeping and clothing,  
And accursed also is the body and bodily relations, if one does not get unto the Lord.”

Married life is no bar to spirituality. It is just a first step in life. It provides one with a life-companion in weal and woe, but it is not something that is lasting. One of the two has to depart before the other. On the other hand, the companionship of the Lord is of a permanent nature. God is the Lord of all. And God resides in each one of us. We live because of Him. All that we need

is a Godman who is the chosen vessel of God. To be in company with such a Godman is real Satsang. To be a disciplined soul is a great thing. In the Sukhmani, Guru Arjan<sup>9</sup> speaking of the greatness of a Sadh or Sadhu tells us of the advantages that one gets in his company:

“In the company of a Sadh one is washed of all impurities;  
In the company of a Sadh, one becomes a true devotee;  
In the company of a Sadh, one is transformed completely;  
In the company of a Sadh, one gets to the indescribable.”

A Sadhu gives us inner perception. To start with, he gives us some capital, to carry on the spiritual business. The soul by being constantly associated with the senses and the sense-organs becomes identified with them. It is because of this identification that we try to find God on the sense level. Little do we know that the Power-of-God dwells above the plane of the senses. How then can we find God in the field of the senses (world)? It is only the spirit in man that can approach and realise God, Who too is Spirit and can be worshipped in spirit. So long as this knot between the spirit and the senses is not snapped, there is no possibility for the spirit to turn upwards. We, therefore, before everything else, have to become spirit. To become spirit is called self-realisation. The moment one realizes the Self in him, he becomes capable of knowing the Overself. Self-realisation then precedes God-realisation. Light alone knows the light. And blessed is the body wherein the spirit having extricated itself has an experience of the Great Soul or God within. This is called eternal friendship, the union between the soul and the Oversoul. Be ye ever blessed in the love of the Lord and gain eternal communion. This

communion can be established only by the grace of some Godman.

Thrice blessed is man. He has in him untold possibilities of which he is not aware at the moment. What these possibilities are we shall see presently:

“One who revels in the love of the Lord loses his egotism”

Love unites two souls, the lover and the beloved, so much so that one loses his own existence and becomes one with the beloved. God is love and human soul is a spark of that love. The whole is in every part of its own and every part is in the whole. One immersed in the love of the Lord is truly an undivided individual and is wholly detached from the affairs of the world. While living in the world, he is not of the world. His soul is ever in a state of divine intoxication. Nanak speaking of himself says: “Nanak is eternally in a state of divine inebriation.” When Guru Nanak met Emperor Babar, the latter offered him a cup of hemp. Nanak, with a twinkle in his eyes, politely said: “O King this cup gives you a momentary forgetfulness. You have to help yourself again and again to hemp for maintaining this continuity. I have within me a cup of divine elixir which keeps me in a state of continuous bliss.” When one forgets himself in holy ecstasy, one automatically rises above body-consciousness, leaving all thoughts of duality far behind. A disciple ceases to be a disciple when he loses himself in the love of the Godman. A Muslim saint said : “My being is so filled with the love of the Lord that I have lost all thoughts of my ‘self’ and I have become dead to my ‘self.’” Saint Paul says: “It is I not now I, it is Christ that lives in me.”

We have not seen God. How can we love what we have not seen. We

have, therefore, to contact the manifested power of God in us. But who can manifest the God-power? Only the Godman in whom the God-power is working in fullness. To come near a Godman is essentially to come near God. To be away from Godman is to be away from God. It is the God-in-man or Godman who brings us to the Power-of-God within us. He is the human-pole that guides us to the power in us. There is no other way to the God-power except through a Godman. All the philosophies of the world have not been able to solve the riddle of God.

The greatness of God is beyond measure and human imagination fails to have any conception of Him. Still in the realm of relativity it is said: ‘When God and the Guru both manifest themselves, one wonders to whom he should pay his obeisance. Blessed indeed is the Guru who led me to Satguru or God.’ It is just a way of explaining things on an intellectual level. When one is lost to himself, he escapes from the bondage of I-ness and becomes for ever free. So long as one feels that he is the doer, he continues in the cycle of births and deaths.

The question is one of right understanding. All mankind is one. All men are embodied souls. Soul is of the same essence as that of Oversoul or God. And God is the mainstay of all creatures. When this knowledge dawns, we would think good of the entire creation and love all mankind This state comes only when one is dyed in the colour of God : ‘Strait is path of the Guru ; none can pass through it without merging in the Guru.’

“Wondrous is the Word of the perfect Master; A perfect Master makes it manifest and it leads unto Truth.”

What is truth ? Nanak says : “O Nanak know ye the Truth as true.” This, of course, refers to Absolute Truth or Truth in abstraction. When the Formless Absolute manifests Himself, then it is said : “Truth was in the beginning (of time), Truth was in the beginning of each age, Truth is and Truth shall remain for ever O Nanak.” We have here two phrases that need to be distinguished ; Gurbani and Guru-ki-bani. By Gurbani we mean the scriptures coming to us from the Gurus. This hymn, for instance, is from the Gurbani as it is recorded in the scriptures. Guru-ki-bani is something different from Gurbani. It is defined as : The word of the Guru is in fullness in each one of us ; God Himself has placed it and Himself makes it manifest.

In the Gospels we have : “In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God and Word was God.” As to the antiquity of this *Bani* (the holy Word), it is said: “The holy Word has been resounding from age to age. It is true in itself and leads to Truth.” Thus we see that Guru-ki-bani is nothing but a sound principle. It has music in it—Music of the other world (*Udgit*). Gurbani tells us that one should contact a Word-personified—saint a teacher in whom the Word is fully manifested—for he alone is capable of manifesting the Word in others, and that Word becomes instrumental in leading us Godwards. The holy Word has two phases—Light and Sound. “By communion with the Word one comes to testify the effulgence of millions of suns.” And again: “The All-pervading Word is resounding everywhere.” So we see that the holy Word is Sound-in-light or Light-in-sound and this is an axiomatic truth. The Gurbani serves as a pointer to Guru-ki-bani (the holy Word) which the Master manifests as a means of contacting the soul with the Oversoul.

“In the human body are all the grand

divisions, planes and sub-planes (though on a smaller scale).”

Macrocosm is in the microcosm. This body is the wonderful house in which we live in.

“The human body is on the model of Brahmand (cosmos),  
Whosoever searches in himself, gets a veritable of it.”

In the cosmos there are three planes—physical, astral and causal. God has also provided man with three bodies— the physical (the tabernacle of flesh), and within it the subtle (or feelings, emotions and thoughts) and lastly, the causal or the seed body. And what for ? So that we may be able to work in any of these three worlds as we may like. The pity is that we have forgotten to transcend the human in us. At the time of death, the physical covering goes off. This is the very experiment of rising above body-consciousness which the Master gives to those who are initiated into the mysteries of the beyond. This experience is exactly akin to actual experience of death. With this difference that it is voluntary and leads to awakening in higher consciousness while living in the body. With the experience of death-in-life, one mocks at death and by daily practice one goes to and comes back everyday from the valley of death. But this is not the end. There lies the infinite before us. It is after crossing the astral and causal planes that we reach the threshold of the Kingdom of God. All this and much more is to be unravelled in the laboratory of mind in the body.

“In the body is the Life-principle of the entire universe;  
And that Life-principle is sustaining everyone.”

We are not separate from the life in

us. We in fact are the very life which is the life of the universe. In the holy Quran it is said : '*Kanzan Mahphian*' (I am in you like a secret treasure). This is just what all the saints (tell) us in their own way. We have to rise above the body to get to this hidden treasure (life eternal). "Learn to die so that you may begin to live," the Gospels ask us. Without traversing the body we cannot enter into the beyond, where each plane is vaster, richer and more beautiful than the one preceding. Beyond these three planes lies the real world of the spirit, where there is all beauty and all glory.

The God-in-man is competent to give this experience at the time of initiation. It is a practical process of inversion by gradual self-analysis. This he does by transferring his own life-impulse into the initiates. His greatness lies in giving a practical demonstration of what he teaches on the physical plane. His Light-form then guides the soul from plane to plane where there are worlds greater than the universe in which we live. Even of this universe, we know nothing. There are numberless stars and spheres, whirling round and round of which human imagination cannot have any conception. Now you can well understand what would be the expanse and magnitude of the astral and the mental worlds. The more one rises above body-consciousness, the more he knows of the secrets of the higher worlds within him. But how many of us are prepared to die while living. We want to live on and on even if it be a few hours beyond the allotted time. Why ? Firstly, we are afraid to leave the body. Secondly, we do not know what is beyond this body. But if we once know the grandeur that lies ahead of us, we would not like even to come back in the physical world :

"He who can, by the grace of the Master, learn to die while living can

know the divine will,  
O Nanak, one who begins to understand the divine will, loses all thought of himself."

A conscious co-worker of the divine plan always visibly sees the invisible hand of God working in and around him and he becomes eternally free. It is, therefore, said : "O Nanak ! a death like this is a gateway to life eternal". This is called re-birth or resurrection of the soul, *Dwijanma*, of which all the great souls have spoken in glorious terms.

"Blessed is the person who is in constant touch with the Word made manifest in him".

God is nameless. But God-in-action-power is called the Word or Naam. Most of us are always in communion with our mind and as such have become the mouth-piece of mind (*manmukh*), In contrast to this there is '*Gurmukh-Naam*' to which one gets an access through the grace of the Guru. While the mind works in numberless diverse ways, the holy Word or the *Gurmukh Naam* is of one pattern : 'O mind be thou in communion with the holy Naam. A treasure of Naam comes only through a perfect Master.' There is no greater name than the holy Word. It is the power that is sustaining the whole creation. This Sound-principle is reverberating in the entire universe. It has to be explained in so many words. We have to understand the theory on the level of the intellect. Having once understood the basic truth, we have to go ahead to get to the Truth and hold it on. As this Sound-principle is very rhythmic in itself, it makes those who come in touch with it rhythmic ; it gives them equipoise and frees them from all ailments and lusts of the flesh.

"He Himself resides in the human

body but it is so subtle that one get to it.”

In this temple of God (human body), God verily dwells. One cannot comprehend Him with the aid of the senses and sense-organs, though it is the vary life of them. Unless one rises to the level of God-power, one cannot apprehend the said Power. The finite cannot get to the infinite. What then is the remedy ? The scriptures tell us : ‘A saint who lives in the Kingdom of God may in His grace put us on the path Godwards.’

“The unwise do not understand the secrets and go in search of Him without.”

Guru Amar Das has defined Gurmukh as : “Gurmukh is one who has been duly initiated by the Guru and practices the spiritual Sadhana as is enjoined by the Guru.” Again it is further explained : “When one meets the perfect Master and gets a practical demonstration of the inner science, he comes to know the secret of the divine science and begins to explore within.”

Now about Manmukh : “All those who are ignorant of the Sound-principle fall into this category ; and those who have no idea of the love and fear of the Master.” The inner Sound-principle is working in its fullness. We cannot apprehend it, on an intellectual level. Even after meeting a perfect Master, we still remain for the most part a Manmukh since we do not develop love and fear for the Master. As such we still wander in the wilderness.

“When the Reality lies elsewhere and we search in the wrong place, how can one get to it ?

Kabir saith, we can get to it only when one who knows the secret of it assists us.”

We usually search for the Truth in the holy scriptures. The study of the scriptures has its own value, but the scriptures cannot by themselves deliver the goods. The books, at the most, can give us an idea of the subject. But for practical demonstration we will have to go to one who can demonstrate the Truth to us. He too helps us to understand the theory with the help of scriptures : ‘The scriptures are handy aids with the Master and with their help he enables us to ferry across the sea of life (Samsar). Without the perfect Master we cannot possibly understand their true import for he is the veritable human-pole from where God-power works.’ Spirituality is both a science and an art of life. Like the medical science, there is the need in spirituality to demonstrate what is given in the books. The manifested God-in-man who has unravelled this mystery can help us to unravel it for ourselves. It is he who can give us a practical experience : ‘O Bhika<sup>10</sup>, it is something mysterious and cannot be explained in so many words. He who knows cannot speak and he who speaks does not know.’ Similarly a Chinese saint has also said : ‘He who speaks sees not and he who sees speaks not.’

“He who follows the commandments of the perfect Master basks in his sunshine,

To him the perfect Master manifests the unmanifest in him.”

Christ also laid emphasis on strict obedience by his followers. ‘If ye love me, keep my commandments.’ Again it is said : ‘Blessed are they who have implicit faith in the perfect Master, for they become hearers of the Word made manifest in them’. Here the question arises how to judge a perfect Master ? Kabir tells us : “He who can bring down the celestial harmony from above is the real Master.”

All the great souls, more or less, speak in much the same strain. The term 'Guru' stands for one who brings light in darkness or, in other words makes light visible in the enshrouding darkness within. 'Light shineth in darkness and darkness comprehendeth it not.' What does the Guru do ? He by making the holy light visible within, makes one apprehend the same. He makes one the seer of the invisible Light which is the mother of all lights in the world without. This is the touchstone of a Sadhu, saint or Mahatma. Search for such a one. You would undoubtedly come across many who would talk to you of *Jnana* and *Vijanana* and give you lectures on the performance of rites and rituals, formulas and formularies and enjoin reading of scriptures and epics. This anybody and everybody can do with a little training. They cannot unravel the mysteries of the beyond and give a demonstration of the Truth in you.

Who on earth has the power to pull up the sensory currents to the seat of the soul ? Who can open the all-seeing inner eye ? It can be done only by a perfect Master. It is, therefore, said: 'By meeting the perfect Master, one is rid of the darkness within. By meeting the perfect Master, one sees the holy light with his own eyes.' Again, it is said; 'It is only a Sant Satguru who can make the invisible visible.' The scriptures are so very clear on this subject. If, in spite of this, we go astray and search for God outside, it is our ill-luck. 'If blind leads the blind, both shall fall into ditch', is a common saying. 'Those whose Master sees things darkly, cannot but do deeds of darkness.' Again, it is said: 'A blind cannot put you on the path when he himself does not know it. One who has his eyes would not lead people astray.' Further, in this context we have:

"One who has not enough for

himself,  
What can he spare for those who depend on him?"

This is the experience of Guru Amar Das who came by the spiritual riches after a long quest of no less than 70 years. But when he came to realise the Truth through the grace of his Master, Guru Angad, he then tried to expound and elucidate things in a proper perspective.

"In the human body there are countless riches of inestimable value,  
It is by devotion alone that one gets to these riches."

Spirituality is the path of devotion-devotion to one who has solved the mystery of life for himself and can help us to solve it for ourselves. He gives us some inner experience to start with and guides us inwardly until the end. He does not rest so long he does not lead the disciple soul into the Kingdom of God. All the scriptures are full of praise for the Guru. It is a pity that Gurus nowadays are looked down with disfavour. The reason for this is very clear. A real teacher is difficult to find these days. But, at the same time, world is not without enlightened souls. God, Godway and Godman are interlinked with one another. Without a Godman to put us on the Godpath, we cannot move Godwards. There is not much in the repetition of the formula unless the formula is delivered to the initiate with the charged-impulse from the Master. It is this life-impulse that opens the inner eye of the initiate :

"The human body is on the pattern of the universe and abounds in spiritual riches,  
In the human body is the power of God and untold treasures which one can get by communion with the Word."

We are all fortunate enough as we have got the means wherewith we can get into contact with the God-power in us. But alas! we have not known the value of the human body and are wasting our life in vain. It is long since that we are in the world as a human being. We, no doubt, have for quite a long time been in one or other social order. But we have never for a moment tried to understand as to where we are and what we are? All social orders have undoubtedly God as the highest common factor. The basic teachings are the same in all religions, irrespective of the different modes of expression :

“Within man there is Light and therefrom is coming the eternal Sound-principle,  
By attuning to this Sound-principle one gets a contact with Truth.”

The scriptures tell us of this Sound-principle. They constitute the record of the valuable experience of the enlightened souls and as such are very precious for us. But, we have to experience the inner Light and Sound of which the scriptures speak of. The *Upanishads* tell us that the sage Ingris unfolded this secret doctrine to Lord Krishna. Zoroaster, Pythagoras, Plato and Aristotle taught the same thing each in his own time. The Hindu scriptures also lay emphasis on ‘*Sruti*’, that which is heard. The Muslim divines call it *Noor* and *Kalam-e-kadeem*.

“In the human body sits the Balance-holder, balancing every one aright, The mind within is a mine of diamonds, rubies and jaspers of inestimable value.”

The God-power within sees to the needs of all of us and knows them before we do. Accordingly, He looks to them, and gives whatever is just and necessary.

The said Power has also provided us with a valuable instrument called *Mana* or the mind. As at present it is working into the world without. All that one has to do is to change its direction. It is a connecting link between the material body and the immaterial soul which are two disparate things : ‘Thou art consciousness and thy body is a lump of clay—how are two linked together ?’ Mind is a great force that stands between the two and takes on the colour of both. When connected with the sense-organs it works through the senses. But if it could be introverted, it follows the spirit. Like fire it is a good servant, but a bad master. When under control it moves inwards. It has, of course, to be put on the path Godwards. The Master-soul helps in linking it with the God-power within. When it gets a taste of the Light and Life of God, it loses all charms for the world. Such a Master-soul with a competency to manifest the saving life-line within is a great gift of God.

It is said : ‘Mind follows the world while a disciplined soul follows the teacher. We are slaves of the mind. We follow the mind, wherever it drags us into the fields of senses. We follow the Master only to the extent which is acceptable to the mind. An enlightened soul has an all-seeing eye. He sees where we are and how we are helplessly drifting along the current of time. He knows that human spirit is of the essence of God, and that the Power of God also works in us. He pities us in our sad predicament. It is out of pure compassion that he tries to take us out of the wilderness of the world. He tells us to make friends with the mind. When the mind is yoked from day to day, it becomes a matter of habit to do a thing. We have simply, like a good pointsman, to turn the point inwards, and give it a new direction. Who would give this direction? It is we who have to do it. When can we give this

direction ? Only when we become conscious of the Reality within us. The enlightened soul gives us a living touch with the consciousness already in us. Besides this he imparts inner direction and help. We must, therefore, take the words of the Master as Gospel truth and follow them to the very letter : “Let my words abide in you and you abide in me,” is the exhortation of Christ.

“Take a firm hold of the words of the Guru and keep them firmly tied in the closet of your heart.”

—Gurbani

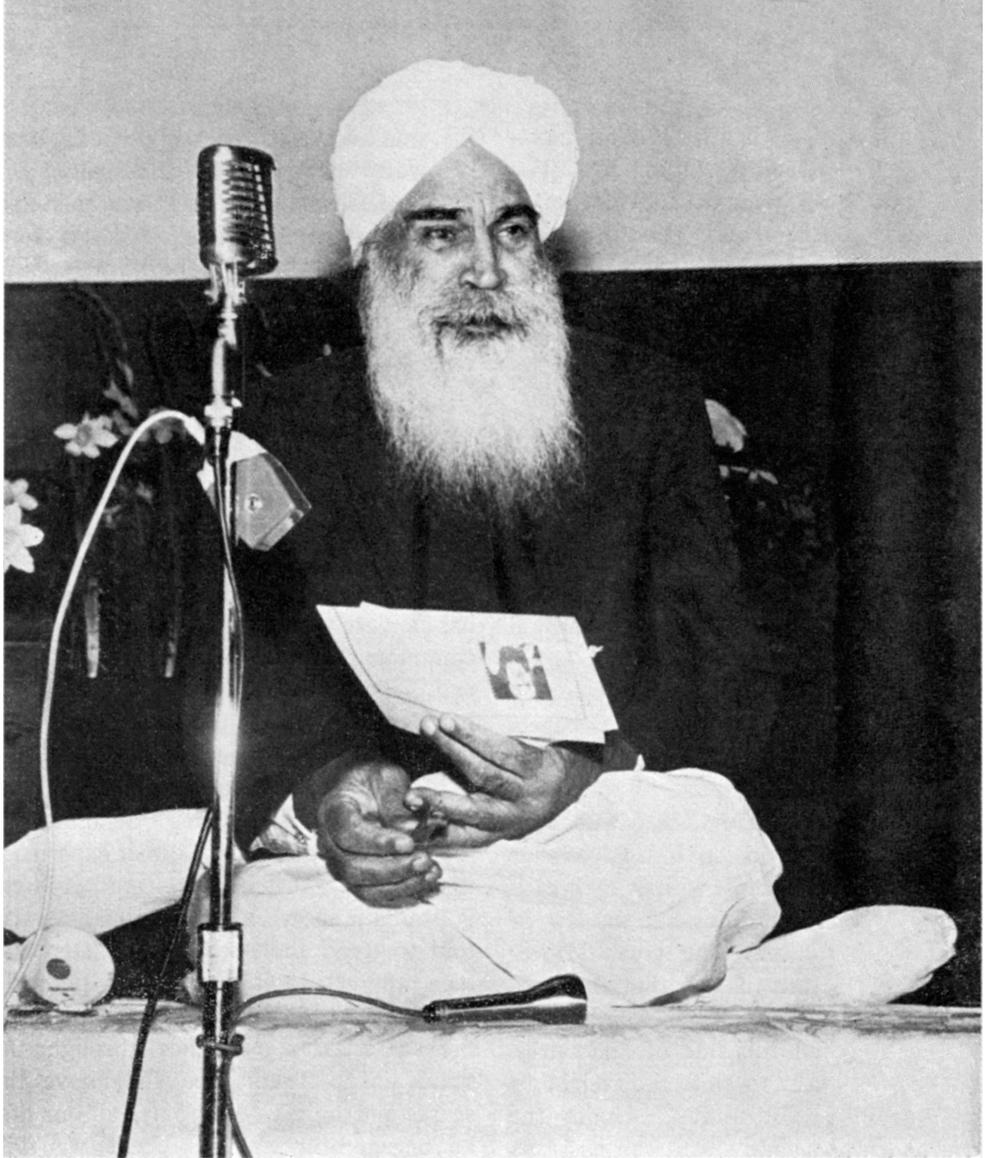
There is just one way to live in the heart of another person: ‘Love begets love.’ When you love a person, it is but natural that he will respond to your love. If the disciple remembers the Master, the latter in turn, attends to him : ‘Master takes care of the disciple with every breath of his life.’ It is nothing but the law of action and reaction. The great Master very lovingly tells us of the Balance-holder within. Now all our weight is in the pan that is on this side of the world. We have gradually to shift the weight to the other pan. But how ? Under the guidance of somebody who can assist us in shifting the balance. Mind, no doubt, is like a wild elephant but it can be controlled with the help of piked iron rod with the Master : ‘Mind runs after the pleasure of the world, but the Word of the Master attracts him the other way.’ The holy Word has a great attraction in it. It works like a magnet and pulls the mind round: ‘The field of sense-pleasures lose all their charm when one once tastes the elixir divine.’ Engrossed in the world, the mind is now not aware of the happiness that lies in the world. It is just a matter of contrast. We have to weigh the one against the other. The music of the world works this miracle: ‘So long one does not taste the elixir of

life, one does not get any peace.’ How can we have this taste for the divine? The Gurbani tells us : “The power, pelf and intellect are of no avail. A Sadhu alone may help you to it.” The term ‘Sadhu’ is difficult to define. The scriptures tells us: “Sadhu is just a human pole on which God-power works.”

“How can we evaluate Naam or the holy Word,

When we cannot get to it without the help of the Guru.”

Naam is something inestimable, and has a vast potency in it. ‘Those who commune with the Word, all their labours end.’ The societies and scriptures cannot help us to Naam. If the Guru wills then alone we can get to it. Guru gives us correct understanding and actual experience of it : ‘Guru demonstrates the truth to us.’ It is a direct experience that counts. It is *Aham Brahm*, or ‘here is Brahm’, so to say. Generally we are told to tread the path step by step and then we get to it. But what path do we really tread ? Sitting at the plane of the senses, our path lies through the senses. The Truth lies far above the senses and mind. We may, all our life, be engaged in virtuous deeds we will reap the fruits thereof. Good deeds too are enough to bind the *jivas* as the bad deeds are. We have, therefore, to rise above the field of karmas. This ascension becomes a possibility in the company of a saint, for he gives an experience of it. It is through the instructions of the Guru that we begin to commune with the Word. This experience forms the basis or stock-in-trade with which we have to proceed further. It is so to say our subscribed capital to carry on the business in the practice of the World. Without such initial capital no business can be started. It is not enough to know merely the formula without actually making a preliminary attempt to work



*The Master addressing a Satsang Congregation.*

it out. The words given for repetition are but words to help in the withdrawal of the sensory currents but beyond that they cannot help in opening the inner eye. This is done by the transmission of the life-impulse from the living Master. This is why it is said : 'Do not attempt to commune with the Word without the help of the Guru.' Similarly, we have it in the Gospels : 'Take not God's Name in vain.' It is the Son of God who can reveal God and His power in man. 'No one knows the Father but the son and they to whom the son may

reveal.' So it is a question of revelation and not mere instruction. Nanak in Japji tells us :

"You have no power to speak or to be silent,

No power to ask or to give,

You have not power over life or death,

No power over wealth or state for which you are ever restless.

You have no power over spiritual awakening,

No power to know the Truth, or to  
achieve own salvation,  
Let him who thinks he has the power,  
try.”

Thus we see that salvation depends  
on His Will alone. One has to surrender  
himself to His Will and then wait and  
watch.

“Only those who are ordained, they  
alone can take to communion with  
the Word.”

Similarly, in the Revelation it is said :  
‘Those see the Power-of-God who have  
Father’s name written in their foreheads.’  
It is the inner Light that makes one  
Khalsa, or the pure one. When does a  
man become pure? The scriptures  
tell us in this context : “When one  
gets into contact with the inner light in  
its fullness, then alone one becomes pure  
otherwise not.’ Guru Gobind Singh  
speaking of himself says :

“Khalsa is my own form and I reside  
in the Khalsa, and my Satguru too  
is Khalsa.”

True devotion consists in the mani-  
festation of the Light within and of the  
inner music. And whosoever succeeds  
in this process is true to himself no  
matter he is a Hindu, a Muslim, a  
Christian or a Sikh, or anything else.  
The secret lies in becoming a Gurmukh  
or a chosen vessel of the Guru in which  
his grace may descend. The right to  
approach the Father is the birth-right of  
each one us. It is not reserved for any  
particular community or sect as most of  
us think and believe. In preparing the  
Sikh scriptures, Guru Arjan tried to  
collect the spiritual experiences of all  
the past sages and seers that he could  
lay his hands upon. In them we have the  
sayings of Ravi Das<sup>11</sup>, the cobbler saint,  
Kabir, the weaver saint, Dhanna Jat<sup>12</sup> and  
even Sadhana<sup>13</sup>, the butcher by profession

at one time. We have, therefore, to search  
for a person who has manifested in him-  
self the Power-of-God. Such an enlight-  
ened soul would naturally give both oral  
instructions and inner experience. He  
tells us : ‘Man is man first and man last—  
recognise this as a fact.’ This is the  
fundamental principle. The religious  
labels come afterwards. The main pur-  
pose of these labels is to keep societies  
free from corruption. And next, he makes  
us Gurmukh. Now, who is a Gurmukh?  
Gurmukh is one who penetrates in him-  
self (for the Light of God). This then is  
the mission of a perfect Master—to  
demonstrate Truth in us and to make us  
consciously aware of Truth.

“In the human body one must  
cultivate fear and love,

And then one sees the Reality  
through the Grace of the Guru.”

We can certainly know, understand  
and contact the God-power with the help  
and guidance of a Godman. Where there  
is love, there is fear also. With faith in  
the perfect Master—one who is omni-  
potent, omniscient and omnipresent—who  
would dare do anything wrong? And  
then the love for him would give an  
added strength to one’s faith. ‘Listen ye to  
the instructions of a perfect Master. And  
you will see *Par Brahm* within your  
reach.’ This love and faith also come  
with the grace of a perfect Master. It is  
he who can help us to get both love and  
faith.

“It is in the human body that all the  
gods and goddesses abide,

And all the creation is being sustained  
by them.”

The whole world worships the three  
powers of god—the creative-principle  
(*Brahma*), the sustaining-principle  
(*Vishnu*) and the destroying-principle  
(*Mahesh*). All these three principles are

working in the body. *Brahma*, sitting in the regenerative organ, is carrying on the work of procreation. *Vishnu*, at the navel (ganglion), keeps the body in well trim by digesting food and converting it into life giving energy to the body. *Mahesh* or *Siva* at the heart centre winds up the life-processes by etherealising the lower elements into a vaporous form. When the sensory currents get to the eye focus at the seat of the soul, the three powers have already taken leave by winding their respective affairs. You will thus realise that the seat of the soul at the eye focus is much higher than the elemental centres below. Why is it so? Because soul is of the essence of God. Nanak, in this context, says :

“The Great Mother, conceiving,  
brought forth three regents;  
The first creating, the second sustain-  
ing, and the last destroying.  
What He desires, they perform,  
They work under His Will  
But great the wonder, though He  
watches over them, they behold  
Him not.”

It, therefore, behoves us to worship the Supreme Being. We should have respect and regard for the various God-powers, but, God Himself is alone worthy of our adoration and worship. These God-powers can take their devotees after death to their own respective regions or spheres but they cannot free us from bondage.

“The True One has set up the stage  
of the world on which the actors  
come and go.”

It is with the help of these three powers born of the Great Mother that God is carrying on His plan and purpose of creation, and we are playing the fact that we occupy a much higher

position in the scale of creation than these powers themselves.

“The perfect Master himself manifests  
the Word;  
And this Word becomes the means of  
liberation.”

It is the perfect Master who shows us, while living, the planes and sub-planes in the *Brahmand* (universe). A real teacher does not ask us to accept things on faith or credit. He wants us to see with our own eyes and to hear with our own ears—of course, inner eyes and ears—while we are yet living in the world. How can one trust the uncertain future which may or may not give anything at all. Seeing is believing. A direct perception is greater than all theories or dogmas. Now we have to work out the initial experience as far as we can by following the instructions of the teacher. He gives us the inner eye without which we are all blind. Defining blindness it is said : “They are not blind who have no eyes on their faces. A blind is one, O Nanak, who does not see the Lord.” When the inner eye is developed one begins to see the Light of God in him and understand the working of the divine Will. The audible life-stream is the stream of life and an experience of it gives us all wisdom.

“That human body is really human  
that worships the Satguru,  
Such a human body is verily the  
handiwork of God Himself.”

We build temples, mosques, churches and Gurudwaras with our human hand. But this temple of the human body is raised by God Himself and His Power works in fullness in it. When in this bodily temple we are able to manifest the Power of God in us through the help of a Master-soul, we become really blessed.

“Without the holy Word there is no place of refuge;  
And we cannot escape the cycle of births and deaths.”

We, all of us, are sitting in the giant wheel which is carrying us up and down in the mighty maze of the creation. And there is no peace for the soul. Among the Hindus, when the last moments of life draw nigh, it is customary to light an earthen lamp and place it near the head of the dying person and he is asked to look straight into the flame, meaning thereby that the flame may take his soul upward along with it. This is just an outward ritual of the real light which alone helps the soul on the onward journey, of this Light it is said : ‘This lamp burneth eternally.’ An enlightened soul gives us a touch with this Life to start with on the spiritual path. To ferry across the sea of life, one needs both the inner Light and the inner Sound-principle. These inner manifestations are possible in the company of one who himself has manifested them in himself. One who has not yet got this inner contact he still remains in the sphere of Time and is to render account of all his deeds :

“With the revelation of the Power of God inside, the book of deeds is wound up ;

O Nanak ! such a one is not to render any account to the just King.”

Satguru settles all the accounts of his disciples. He pulls the soul up out of the world. ‘It is only the Guru-power that can pull the sensory currents out of the body.’

“It is only a fortunate one who meets a perfect Master ;

And he links the soul with the Sound-current.”

A real saint gives an actual inner experience. He says :

“Never take the words of a Master on their face value ;

Unless you see for yourself the truth of what he says.”

A personal experience works for conviction. The study of the scriptures creates in us some interest and prepares us for an experimental test.

“O Nanak ! one understands the greatness of God ;

When God Himself so wills in His grace.”

It is the grace of the God that one meets a Truth-personified saint. And such a saint gives us a way-in. Then he gives us an actual demonstration of what he says. Last but not the least, he in his radiant form guides the soul within from eye-focus upwards. A company of such a saint is a really blessing.

“O Nanak ! snap all thy ties with the people of the world and search thou the eternal friendship of some saint;

While the people of the world shall leave thee in the world at one stage or another while he shall stand by thee to the end both here and in the hereafter.”

All this and much more is the work of a theocentric saint. It is he who can grant you salvation through the power of the Word made manifest. We have had this sermon from Guru Amar Das. His appeal is not to this or that sect but to the humanity in general. ‘Enlightened souls give out Truth which is common to all.’

*(English version of one of the Master’s—Sant Kirpal Singh Ji’s—Satsang talk in Hindi at Sawan Ashram, Delhi).*

*(See explanatory notes on page 24)*

# The perfect living Master

Master is the greatest person in the entire world, and yet the most humble.

Master is the most beautiful person in the world.

Master is the most loving of all persons. He has infinite love for everyone, even unworthy ones such as myself.

Master is supremely competent on all levels : physical, mental, and spiritual.

Master is the best friend I have; he is the only one who will not desert me, even unto the end of the world and beyond.

Master is the only one who bestows life's most precious gift, the gift of Naam.

Master never fails me, regardless of how often I fail him.

Master is completely unselfish; I know that he has my best interests at heart.

Master is infallible; I can follow his advice without question.

Master is perfect, without sin and without fault. His life is a perfect example for me to follow.

However much I try to praise Master, I know that my words fall far short of the mark. He is everything and I am nothing.

—William M. Cairns

Dear Reader,

Sat Sandesh (English) will be completing its first year next month. We are happy that the magazine has been able to carry month after month the Master's soul-stirring message to you. However, this could not have been possible except for the Master's grace as also your kind cooperation.

We are sure you will continue to extend your patronage and would like to get your copies of Sat Sandesh regularly in 1969. With this issue you will find a subscription renewal / new subscription slip. Kindly fill in the renewal form and post it to us immediately to enable us to plan accordingly. If you are not yet a regular subscriber and if you would like to have a copy of Sat Sandesh each month, please fill in the new subscription form and let us have your annual subscription at an early date. Thanks.

—Editor

# Meditation and self-reform

*Gerald Boyce*

THE present wave of popular interest in meditation in the west may be, to some extent, a matter of idle curiosity. Some desire to use it as a means to escape from the confusion and pressures of daily life ; some hope to use it to fill the emptiness of boredom ; some want something new, strange, thrilling—a safer or cheaper substitute for drugs or alcohol.

Their souls may really be searching seriously for real inner food and drink ; but when the superficial mind—which has been fed, indeed, on trivialities, piled up and multiplied indefinitely, only to make a bigger pile of trivialities—dominates life, even the approach to serious subjects is superficial, academic, verbal unless some rather vital direct experience (perhaps shocking or tragic experience) forces a deeper examination of life. Idlers who wish to take up meditation as a popular fad will not derive much benefit with their superficial approach to life. Until one is willing to look at life directly and in depth, life has no reality for such a person, except as an “intellectual” pastime to amuse or to profit him if he is generally comfortable, or to build dream castles and substitutes for him, if he is unsatisfied. Fortunately, even the generally shallow do have moments of clarity, and may then pay some attention to statements of fundamental fact.

The real cries of the soul of real aspirants do not permit wasting energy in unnecessary dealings with the flippant and self-satisfied when they insist on remaining that way. Unless the Master-power moves them from within or until life itself shocks them into seriousness our words are unlikely to reach them.

Our usefulness in meeting inquiries concerning meditation is limited by two factors: our own understanding of the matter and by the seriousness (or lack of it) on the part of the questioners. The temptation is strong to try to lead others, especially if they ask for help or information from us for we can then easily convince ourselves that we are thereby helping them. But help for the soul is essentially different from treating a diseased body, or changing a particular part of outer circumstances. The soul in itself is not really diseased; its state is more like that of a prisoner who is bound by captors who may be consciously brutal, or merely indifferent to the welfare of the prisoner. The soul, its needs, its life are totally alien to the nature of its captors ; the captors cannot help the prisoner. The mind and senses, with their rigid forms, their desires, their lust for thrills, gain and power—that total outer expression of the mind (and its desires and cravings)—that mind : when in a position of dominance, is the world’s worst master. The soul needs a Master of its own essential nature, a spark of the Creator, an active expression of the All Light, the Master-power, a very ocean of all harmony and love.

And it is freedom that is needed, rather than a change in the soul’s nature, brought about by the mind. The mind is essentially unfit to improve the soul. It could conceivably be a useful expression of the soul (and of God) if it would be strictly, wholly, accurately, constantly, at the service of the soul—subordinate to it. Otherwise, it can only make mischief.

The recent wars of clever weapons,

(designed and made by the clever, the cunning, the crafty)—under the control and direction of those with pretensions to intellectual supremacy—these wars serve the ambitions, the craving for ostentatious comforts, the smugness of ideological assertiveness, the lust for class and factional and national dominance—this usage of the mind constitutes a clear record of the mind's nature when not subordinate to the universal wisdom of God. That mind, separate from God, out of the context of God, using God,—that mind cannot possibly “improve”. When the mind functions as an independent power without regard for the needs of the soul, and therefore, often at war with the needs of the soul—that relation of mind—and soul constitutes a sort of cancer of the entity ; a state which cannot possibly be good while it remains uncontrolled. To speak of the mind improving the situation is like expecting a cancer to cure itself by continuing to exist. In a sense neither the mind nor the soul is at fault. It is their relationship of un-relatedness, so to speak, which causes the mischief. The mind can be vary useful in its proper field as a servant of the soul. The thinking mind is essentially symbolic, representational, derivative, limited; and therefore, its products are inherently shallow; it cannot function usefully in the world of ultimates.

The practical usefulness of the mind is obvious—in dealing with daily tasks, or when it contributes to social recognition or economic rewards. There is no danger that it will be undervalued. But there is a very real danger that those who crave a reputation for learning will be satisfied to read about all the techniques of meditation, attend all the lectures on the subject, and then give talks and lectures themselves, and write essays on what they have read and heard, while all this learned activity is carried on without once seriously trying and doing any real

inner practice themselves. Such teaching may be economically valuable to them, but not otherwise significant.

We may say that it is possible to meditate without ethical life, or that it is possible to live ethically without meditation; but it is doubtful if either possibility can really exist in practice. What is easily separable in thought and as a matter of grammatical expression is often not separable in the world of reality. Some temperaments do lean in the direction of “contemplation without sufficient outer action”, and others do lean toward “outer-action without thought of consequences” or “outer-action without considering the full implications of action”. These divergent tendencies do exist, but they are balanced in the fullest expression of human life.

The activities roughly grouped together and classed as “meditative” in the popular speech of the West comprise systems of affirmations, self-hypnosis, visualising, contemplation (sometimes in a “thinking things over” sense), prayer, (especially prayer of a repetitive kind), some physical exercises adapted from Hatha Yoga etc, or just sitting quietly (as among the early Quakers)—nearly all these methods (except the last) stress the personal will and intellect, both being used as tools to advance what the personal will considers “good”—or what the class, party, faction, religion or social group considers “good”.

The emphasis is on using meditation by the will for personal ends or “for others” (but such others as we wish, to the extent that we wish, and in the forms that we wish). In such cases the personal will and self-hood is paramount.

It is quite possible (but not directly known to me) that these various self-

oriented attitudes also exist in the East. It's not really a matter of geography, but of the prevalence of self-will and fixity of thought patterns and of our commitment to customs of action and thought, which we adopt without, examination.

Adding another meditative technique to existing ones, if it is to be used in that way, with that attitude and approach, may do little good to people in general even though some persons may find it advantageous.

Initiates of Sant Kirpal Singh have been given accurate instructions concerning inner practices ; and they should be engaged in daily meditation. But even initiates—who have an obligation to carry on such practices—often approach them through the screen of their past experiences, and are sometimes under the influence of faulty theories and popular misconceptions surrounding the subject.

Some who have a naturally loving temperament and an intense desire to please the Master or God, may be able to press on without conscious analysis of mental obstacles, by rising above the mental chattering into a state of adoration. In such a state and to such temperaments, neither the mental obstacles nor the mental “explanations” apply. But most others find the mental and the emotional aspects of their nature less happily balanced.

Our less balanced natures can scarcely approach meditation without preconceptions, without the adult's faulty habits of thought, without some false (or unexamined) assumptions. Such approaches can be major obstacles to accurate practice. The harm of faulty assumptions is indirect but quite real and basic. Because the effect is to block or to disrupt (and therefore to distort) fullness of attention.

This is especially far-reaching in the case of the Surat Shabd Yoga because that is essentially the yoga of the attention.

But in our concern for accuracy in meditation, we must not overlook the fact that initiates of Sant Kirpal Singh Ji have also been given instructions to watch closely what they do, what they say and think, and to keep a record of such matters, to send a report to him, to weed out wrong practices wherever possible, and to keep attentive to the Master-power to avoid being drawn into wrong practices and situations.

It may be well to keep it firmly in mind that the path of the Masters as exemplified in the lives of Kirpal, Sawan, Jaimal, Swamiji was and is more than a theory, more than a body of dogmas or a collection of wise sayings and also more than a means to see pleasant sights and to hear pleasant sounds. The path of the saints may be all these things, but it is more than all these.

The seekers of intellectual certainty and of academic distinction, may be quite scornful of the seekers for sense thrills, but both are far from the deep inner polarization which held the saints so steadfast that they not only thought about God, and derived joy from God, but they became one with Him. And that one-ness was not merely a claim that they saw a vision of God telling them that they were one with Him. But their one-ness was objectively manifest in their outer life and in their inner life of consciousness so they could and can actually express love, freedom from fear, power to transform life, etc. The scriptural command is clear : “Be ye perfect even as your heavenly Father.” But who obeys ? Only a few saints, out of millions of talkers !!

We must first attend to our own need

for accurate and long-continued meditation, and for deeper self-understanding—for this is our duty—to reform ourselves (so far as personal effort can go) for only so can be hope for any success in really helping others. Not that we should neglect others until we become perfect, but the emphasis must be on self-reform as the only reform that is directly related to our own immediate efforts.

## *Infant cry*

Ever since my lonely birth  
I've searched for love upon this earth  
Yet souls all seem to feel the need  
Of anger, lust, attachment, greed  
And ego seems the strongest drive  
Of every soul that is alive  
And so I think that I will try  
To give all love until I die

—A. Ibn Gabirol

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## *The Master speaks : explanatory notes*

1. *Nanak* : (1469-1539) : Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh religion.
2. *Kabir* : (1440-1518) : A well-known Indian saint who practised and preached Surat Shabd Yoga.
3. *Guru Gobind Singh* : (1660-1708) : The tenth and last Sikh Guru.
4. *Gurbani* : The sacred writings of the Sikh Masters.
5. *Bhai Gurdas* : A contemporary of Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan the fourth and fifth Sikh Gurus. His *vars* (Ballad poems) are considered to be the key to Guru Granth Sahib.
6. *Guru Amar Das* : (1479-1574) : The third Sikh Guru.
7. *Guru Angad* : (1504-1552) : Guru Angad Dev, the second Sikh Guru. He was the founder of Gurmukhi script in which Gurbani is written.
8. *Mira Bai* : A great fifteenth century Indian poetess saint who is famous for her devotional songs.
9. *Guru Arjan* : (1563-1606) : Guru Arjan Dev, the fifth Sikh Guru who compiled the *Adi Granth*.
10. *Bhikha* : A sixteenth century Indian saint. His writings are included in the *Adi Granth*.
11. *Ravi Das* : An Indian mystic poet. His 41 hymns are included in the *Adi Granth*. He was a cobbler by profession and a disciple of Ramanand. He resembles in every respect St. Boehme, the cobbler mystic of the West.
12. *Dhanna Jat* : A fifteenth century north Indian saint. His four hymns are included in the *Adi Granth*.
13. *Sadhana* : A late thirteenth century saint. Earlier, a butcher, he used to sell meat by weighing with an idol.

# The law of karma-IV

Kirpal Singh

IN the scriptural texts, we have an apt story of Raja Prikshat who had heard that whosoever heard the *Bhagwat* recited by a Pandit became *jivan mukta*—a man freed from all bondage. One day he called his court-priest and asked him to recite to him the elevating text of the *Bhagwat* so that he might escape from the bondage of mind and matter, and commanded that if his recitation did not prove the truth of the sacred teachings, the priest would be put to the gallows. He (priest) felt dismayed for he saw death staring him in the face, as he knew full well that he could not help the king in attaining salvation. When he reached his home, he was down-cast and extremely worried over his impending doom. On the eve of the day fixed for the recitation of the *Bhagwat* the priest was half-dead with fear. Fortunately for him he had a talented daughter. On her solicitations, he revealed to her the cause of his miserable plight. The daughter consoled him and assured him that she would save him from the gallows, if he permitted her to accompany him on the following day to the king's presence. The next day she went to the royal court along with her father. She enquired if the king wanted freedom from bondage of the world and the king replied in the affirmative. She told the king that she could help him in his much-cherished desire if he followed her advice and permitted her to do what she liked. She took the king and her father to the jungle with two stout ropes, and she tightly tied each one of them to a separate tree. She then asked the king to untie and free his priest. The king expressed his helplessness to do so as he

was tied down himself. Thereupon the girl explained to him that one who was himself in the bondage of *maya* (illusion), could not take another out of the similar bondage. The recitation of the *Bhagwat* could certainly break the magic shell of delusion if it were done by a freed person who had for himself broken through the delusion, and as such the king should not expect salvation from his royal priest who was as much in fetters as the king himself. It is only *neh-karma*, or one not in the cobweb of karmas, who is competent to make others like himself and extricate them from the deadly karmic cycle.

This in a way also illustrates that a mere study of the scriptures does not help much in giving *moksha* or salvation, which is purely a practical theme and can be learned correctly and perfected by practice under the able guidance of an adept in the line. The *Murshid-i-Kamal* or the perfect Master has first of all to piece together the broken tablet of the mind torn by countless desires and aspirations, and make it into a perfect whole and then to burnish it clean through and through so as to make it capable of reflecting the light and glory of God which no amount of book-learning would do.

One cannot, of course, know and understand the true import of the scriptures unless the same are explained by some Master-soul who has himself experienced within the laboratory of his own mind what the scriptures say. Thus, he can, from personal experience of his own, teach and guide the disciple in the highly esoteric teachings contained in

terse epigrams which baffle the intellect, limited as it is in its scope and instruments of learning. This is why it is said : "God comes handy in the company of a *Sadh*" (a disciplined soul). One who is a freed soul can free another and none else can. In this context it is said.

The study of the *Vedas*, the *Puranas* and Etymology leads to naught, Without the practice of the holy Word, one ever remains in utter darkness.

A practical man of realisation is at once all the scriptures combined besides something much more than the scriptures, which, at best, contain the theory in subtle language but are incapable of explaining the theory itself by word of mouth, and cannot vouchsafe an actual experience of the same as the Master does.

Every one these days tries to put the blame or fault for his ills on the 'times' and this complaint is the greatest complaint of all times. The present time as well as the time to come is no more ours than the time past. This world is a huge magnetic field and the more we strive to get out of it, the more are we caught and entangled in its meshes. Man dances in the net and thinks that nobody sees him. The wise feel the net but do not know where to sit easy. Thus, silently and ceaselessly revolves the huge fly-wheel of the karmic mill, the giant Wheel of Life slowly but unmistakably pounding to pieces all alike. This mill of Nature grinds all slowly but surely. Some feel and say "It appears that Nature made man and then broke the mould."

No one, however, tries to peer through the why and wherefore of things, happenings and events for we take everything complacently as it comes along the current of time. We do not try to delve deep into them in order to trace out the

links of the chain leading up to what we see and experience. Everyone in his dealings with other forgets that he has to pay for everything in this world. Even Nature's gifts like space, light, air, etc. are not free to all alike to any appreciable extent. But each man thinks himself the sole custodian of the free gifts of God. He attempts to be as liberal as possible, comes across several ill-set diamonds (men) and is affected by the 'law of give and take'. It is after hard buffeting that we learn that scales make no distinction between gold and lead but are concerned with the dead-weight only. A person bound hand and foot in the endless chain of cause and effect, cannot free others. When every one in the world is fast asleep, who is there to waken and whom? It is only a freed man who can free others if he so chooses, for the sins of commission and omission are of the very essence of the law of Nature and sooner or later visit the doer in one form or another.

In caging birds and keeping pets collared, chained and imprisoned, one wrongly takes it for granted that these poor dumb creatures have no court of law where they can lodge their complaint. He thinks that he has a right to deal with them as he pleases. He neither dreads to kill nor pays any heed to the common truth : 'As you sow, so shall you reap.' Ignorance of the law is no excuse. Every wrong has to be avenged. He that slays, shall be slain. He who lives by the sword, perishes by the sword. One has to pay with 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth' which is as true today as it was in the time of Moses. One has to pay a very heavy toll for killing, blood-sucking and the like. Those who live and thrive on the blood of others cannot have a pure heart, much less access to the kingdom of heaven. 'Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.'

Saints say that man occupies the

highest place in God's creation and is endowed with superb intellect and must not, therefore, pass his limited span of time blindfolded like other creatures. The golden opportunity thus provided of returning and reverting to God's embrace and to his original Home should not be lost. Such a sublime opportunity comes only after one has completely seen through the 'World Exhibition' and has successfully concluded his part in the grand drama of life. Man is usually lost in the attractions here below. In doing so, he loses the solitary chance given to him under the overbearing influence of karmic reaction, after myriads of incarnations, for his abiding region of the pure spirit. He is given one body after another in an endless series. He begins to feel, the weight of all kinds of laws—social, physical, natural—which like heavy blocks bar his way at every step. He has no alternative left but to wait for his next turn as man, and who knows when it may come ?

Saints give a very simple definition of sin as 'forgetting one's origin' (or God-head). Every thought, word or deed that keeps a man away from God is a veritable sin, and on the other hand whatever brings man nearer to Him, is pious and holy. A Persian Divine while self-commenting on the nature of the world said, "World comes into play only when one forgets the Lord. By constant remembrance of God, one while living in the world among friends and relations is yet not of the world."

Most of the sins, whether coarse or fine, are purely the invention of man under the sway of the mind. Finer ones are regarded as 'pardonable weaknesses' by saints who are the living and moving images of God's law of love and mercy on this earth. So long as a person acts as a self-willed creature, he subjects himself to all the laws and their rigours.

But when he surrenders his self-will to that of a Godman, he comes under the sway of God's mercy and love.

Karmas are the most contagious form of invisible diseases to which a man is ever exposed. They are even more galloping, wasting and destructive than the deadliest and most poisonous germs transmitted into the innermost cells of the human system and worm their way most surreptitiously into the blood-system. In society, karmas take a firm hold first in the shape of a change in view and thought of the so-called moulders of public opinion. Then they affect the disposition and temper, and afterwards take deep roots in the shape of habits which become 'second nature' in man. The ancients and the elders were, therefore, always on the alert to advise us to refrain from bad company. 'A good company breeds goodness, while the bad one breeds ill.' A man is certainly known by the company he keeps.

To crown all such difficulties, one has to share unwittingly the karmic reactions, even in his own family where he is born and brought up. Thus virtues and vices play an integral role in the formation of culture. In this way, we daily and hourly contract karmas from our surroundings. The only way to escape the karmic influence is to stick to the path of God through godly saints who being embedded in the Most High, are far above the reach of karmas and are in fact *neh-karma* and *Jivan-mukta*. It is said that in the kingdom of a real *Darvesh* (Godman), one has not to render account of one's karmas. A person takes a turn for the better when he takes to the company of a *Sadhu*. However, man is naturally prone to accept evil easily rather than the illimitable goodness of saints. The company of saint has marvellous effect in removing all traces of evil. The atmospheric range of a Master-saint is a vast immensity which

man can hardly imagine. The saints come not for the good of human beings only but for the benefit of all active and inactive creation in the world at all levels, visible and invisible as well. The poor creature called man has no true friend. Even the mind with the three *gunas* (qualities of *Satva* or purity, *Rajas* or activity, and *Tamas* or inertia) ever working as man's accomplice, looks on him just as a cat casts a restless glance over a rat. Those who follow the dictates of the mind are invariably caught in its wiles, and are subjected to untold misery and harrowing terrors. 'Mind', however, fears those to whom God is kind through His medium, the *Satguru* (Godman). Mind dares not intrude on the privileges and rights accorded to His Own loved ones and rather helps them as an obedient assistant does under orders from his superior. Like fire, it is a good servant but a bad master.

This is why Guru Nanak emphatically declared :

“O Nanak ! snap asunder all thy ephemeral ties of the world and go in search of the True Ones.

While all shall forsake thee in thy life-time, the True One shall accompany thee even up to the Beyond.”

Again,—

“Be sure, O soul, that a Godman shall stand by thee before the judgment seat of God.”

Baba Farid, Muslim Divine, said in almost the same strain :

“O Farid ! he in search of a freed-Man for such a One would free thee (from the bondage of the world).”

In *Gurbani*, we have :

“The wandering wits come to a halt in the company of a *Sadh*,

The stilled mind alone reflects the Light of the Lord.”

Every man is tied physically and mentally in the invisible bonds of karmas. So long as one is under the sway of mind and matter, and has not sought the protection of a saint, he is governed by all the laws of the various planes and is meted out justice pure and simple, untempered with mercy. He is liable to punishment for all his sins—unheeded, unnamed and subtle. A friend, in a court of law, may be able to curtail the long and tortuous legal process, but before the judgment seat of the Most High, a Master-saint alone is the true friend at the time of trial. In the *Jap Ji*, Guru Nanak declares,—

“The saint is acceptable at His Court, and is the chief elect therein ;

The Saint adorns the threshold of God and is honoured even by Kings.”

“*Satguru* has given me the gift of insight and I see all doubts dispelled,

The angel of death can do unto me no more wrong when the very account of my deeds has been blotted out.”

The path of the saints leads in quite another direction. There is no court of trial for the initiated ones. The saint is present everywhere and his sway extends to realms undreamed of. He never leaves nor forsakes his disciples till the end of the World. His solemn assurance is :

Everyman, I will go with thee, and be thy guide in thy most need to go by thy side.

—Everyman

Like a kindly and gracious father, he himself may administer a remonstrance to the erring child but would never send him to the police for correction.

No one is in more bondage than the one who wrongly thinks himself to be free. The trap of the high-born spirit is ambition. Those who are well-to-do, in the worldly sense of the word, appear to us in comfort. They may have sown some good seeds in the past and are apparently reaping a rich harvest in the present ; or they may now be acting upon the policy of 'snatch, grab and hoard' and are thus building for themselves a hornet's nest for the future. All such people in affluence, unfortunately, forget that they in either case are wearing the 'unseen fetters of gold,' and are unknowingly heading for trouble.

The common saying goes : 'The walls and mansions of the mighty are built with the sweat and tears of the poor'. Unless one has sown good in the past, he cannot reap a rich harvest in the living present. He may also be carrying imperceptibly the burden of some guilt right under his sleeves. If he does not sow good seeds now, how can he expect to enjoy seemingly good fruits in the future and for how long ?

Moreover, good deeds by themselves cannot absolve a person from the reaction of bad deeds, just as dirty water cannot and does not wash clean. With all our righteousness we are but filthy rags, says a Christian saint. None is clean, no, not one. Man is always subject to the law of give and take or compensation and retribution. Following the path of good work is decidedly something desirable and better than the path of evil deeds, but it is not all. A high ethical living may secure a paradise for a person for a lengthy sojourn, where he may comfortably enjoy heavenly bliss; but he is still interned therein in the astral or causal body and he has not freed himself from the cycle of births and deaths. So long as one feels that he is the doer, he cannot escape from the wheel of births and has to bear

the fruit of seeds. It is the contact with the holy Ghost, sacred *Naam* or Word that alone helps a person in his upward ascent to higher spiritual regions, far removed from the shadows of repeated births and deaths that ceaselessly move up and down in endless gyres with no way of escape therefrom.

Hell and Heaven are the regions where the disincarnate spirits have to remain for a relatively long period according to their actions on earth, bad or good, as the case may be. The stay here, however long, is not everlasting and it does not take them out of the inexorable cycle of births and deaths. Paradise (Heaven or Eden) is the El Dorado of certain faiths. It is also termed salvation by many. But the fact of the matter is that after enjoying the paradisiacal bounties for as long as is determined by good deeds, one is given a human body once again for it alone provides an opportunity to gain merit leading ultimately to liberation. Even the ministering angels of God aspire to human birth when they feel that they have done their job. Thus, in following the almost universally acknowledged, widely believed and generally accepted path of good deeds, one ultimately finds himself, once more, caught in the web of insatiable desires and ambitions and with this glittering and ever-elusive firefly in front of him, he still remains an unwitting captive in the iron grip of karmas. To achieve his objective he performs *Tapas* (various kinds of ascetic austerities) which may bring him better lives. Even when he attains the sovereignty of a kingdom, his mind runs riot, he gives himself free reins and commits mighty deeds of valour and prowess, most of which are evil enough to earn him hell. Again after taking a bitter lesson from the hell-fires in which he is plunged, he tries to seek solace in *Tapas*.

Thus he is ever caught and moves entangled in the vicious circle of temptations and lures from hell to contrition and from contrition to sovereignty and from sovereignty to hell again one after the other—in an endless cyclic order up and down the Wheel of Life. Thus, everyone for himself makes his own heaven and hell and remains through his own volitional deeds entangled in the gossamer web of life prepared by him.

These regions of hell and paradise do not come in the way of one who follows the path of the Saints, the middle course, right between the two eye-brows, for he bypasses the path of a karma Yogi. Even if a soul under the protection of a Master-saint may, for a while, go astray, it is sure to be rescued. Though Saints are living models of humility and do not speak of the great authority that is theirs' yet at times they do indirectly refer to the saving power of the Saints gone before them. The scriptures reveal that Sant Satguru Nanak rescued one of his disciples who somehow wandered astray hellward. The holy one had to visit hell for a lost sheep, and dip his thumb in the molten fires of hell, thereby cooling down the entire hellfurnace, giving relief not only to one but to many sinner souls howling piteously in great distress.

Similar instances occurred in the time of Raja Janak and others as well. Once Hazur, my Master, too, had to pull out one of his disciples who was straying downwards. How then can there be redemption from hell for the common man?

Those who are devoted to the practice of the holy Word, all their labours end.

Their faces, O Nanak ! shine with glory and many souls are saved along with them.

Another region, named *Eraf* (or purgatory) by the Muslim saints, exists and has both joys and terrors in varying degrees. Experiences of various kinds of fears and agonies of hell have been described by various Masters of different grades. This subject is not an imaginary mapped-out scheme but a serious one for reflection. Whether one believes it or not, the disciple of a Saint is not concerned with any of them. And so long as one is true to his Master-saint (*Sant Satguru*), no power on earth can injure a single hair of his head.

(Extract from "The Wheel of Life.")  
*Concluded*

O Lord ! have mercy on me,  
Thou knower of all hearts, I have no virtue in me.  
I cannot get rid of my evil, not even momentarily,  
I have on my head a heavy load of cunning and deceit.  
Entangled amongst wife, son and riches, I have lost my very self,  
O, come to the rescue of 'Sur,' as his barque is about to sink.

—Surdas

# Questions answered

*The Master receives from devotees queries on various aspects of spirituality. These may be personal or academic, but the Master's answers have universal appeal for spiritual aspirants. We reproduce here some of the questions and answers from the Master's book, "Spiritual Elixir", for the benefit of our readers.*

Q. *How can we be truthful in thought ?*

A. Truthfulness in thought means sincerity of purpose in various spheres of non-violence, chastity, truth, humility, etc. Untruthful thoughts would naturally mean the entertaining of opposite ideas which usually haunt the human mind through sense perception. Human eye is usually inclined to look at other's beauty and wealth with an unchaste attitude, and this should be considered as blemish and shunned.

Q. *Can we be ever sure of God-realisation intellectually ?*

A. No. God-realisation is not a subject of intellect. It is a question of actual experience, beyond the pale of knowledge. All our talk of God is but inferential and at the most a matter of feelings and emotions all of which are subject to error. But seeing the inscape (with the inner eye opened) is believing, and admits of no uncertainty and scepticism.

Q. *Does mind retain impressions of past karma ?*

A. Yes, mind is nothing but a storehouse of *karmic* impressions coming down from the beginning of time in an

endless series of incarnations. The body cannot but perform *karmas*, and *karmas* fashion the body and all that is of body and bodily relations. The entire world is a play of *karmic* impressions stored in the mind by the people of the world. This is why the world is termed as *mano mai srishti* or creation of the mind.

Q. *Is mind conscious ?*

A. No, the mind by itself, is not conscious. It is the consciousness of the soul that the mind reflects.

Q. *What are the teachings of the Masters regarding hell and purgatory ?*

A. The Masters do not contradict the scriptures which describe these places meant for the reformation of human souls in accordance with the Law of *Karma*.

Q. *What is the difference between individuality and personality and which one is involved in our karma ?*

A. There is no difference between individuality and personality so far *karma* is involved. The divine pen writes in accordance with our *karma* and does not make any difference for one or the other.

# From the editor's desk

WE often hear of salvage operations, but perhaps have never had an opportunity to undertake them ourselves.

Salvage is an act of saving—saving a person or a thing from utter destruction or loss. It is an art that requires patience, skill and intrepidity in its execution. Those alone are fitted for this work who are endowed with pathos or feelings, with hearts bubbling over with affection and love. On the contrary, persons who lack these intrinsic qualities are either hard-hearted or self-centred and too indifferent to regard the distress of others as their own.

As human affairs are varied, so are varied the salvage operations. The vagaries of nature and of man are often responsible for large-scale destructions. Earth-quakes and famines, sea-storms and floods, volcanic eruptions and avalanches are all due to vis major. But wars, civil commotions, arson and bloodshed are things for which human mad-caps are responsible. Whatever the cause, it is for the salvagers to minimise the horrors that result therefrom.

Again, the salvagers have varied kinds of operations. They may be diving under the deep seas, salvaging treasures or precious cargoes from sunken ships; digging deep in snows on mountain tops to salvage memorable records of mountain climbers and explorers; or extricating the wounded and the dying from under the debris of earth-quakes.

At times, they have to plunge into sky-high flames to save exquisite works of art and historical documents. Similarly, the archeologists are ever busy in salvaging relics from the ruined past from sites of ancient civilisation so as to build

up historical records and supply the missing links in the chain of events.

The work of destruction and re-building is going on side by side due to the innate nature of man. While wanton waste is brought about on one hand; on the other, there is an attempt to remedy the loss and to rescue whatever is possible.

As in individuals, so in nations, this process goes on endlessly. At the bottom of this lies the Truth of truths—the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. If this Truth were once realised, there would come on earth the kingdom of the Most High above. But this world is too much with us late and soon and we are ever engaged in getting and spending. What after all would profit a man if he were to gain the riches of the whole world but to lose his own soul? How grand would human life be and what crowning proof would it bear if one could salvage one's own living soul buried under the debris of the mind and matter, lying heap upon heap from age to age. The world and the worldly possessions are now over-shadowing the Self to the utmost. But every cloud, however thick and threatening, has a silver lining and if one could apprehend the lost strands of life providing the silver lining, one can yet be saved and saved truly from the murky darkness enveloping the Sun of the Spirit or Soul behind it. This, in fact, is the Salvage of all salvages.

The sages and seers come down to help us in salvaging our souls. The God-power working in theocentric saints can certainly help us to save our soul and to regain the Kingdom of God now a lost province to us. Hence the need for a perfect Master of the age.

# Wisdom of the ages

Here are some of the verities of life which are eternally true. Let us take one for cogitation each day and try to reflect the truth of it in our life. We have, of course, to guard against making an alloy of it by a subtle admixture, traducing it to suit our own commonplace convenience.

November :

- 1 Be wisely worldly, be not worldly wise.
- 2 Have mercy upon us miserable sinners.
- 3 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us.
- 4 Fear God and keep his commandments : for this is the whole duty of man.
- 5 One gives nothing freely as advice.
- 6 Close is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.
- 7 So little done, so much to do.
- 8 As food is necessary for the body, prayer is necessary for the soul.
- 9 Let thy speech be short, comprehending much in few words.
- 10 Ye cannot serve God and mammon.
- 11 Awake, arise, or be for ever fall'n.
- 12 Nature has so made us that we do not see our backs ; it is reserved for others to see them. Hence it is wise to profit by what they see.
- 13 Cheer up, the worst is yet to come.
- 14 Let the seeker realise that God is all in all.
- 15 God's name is the breaker of pride.
- 16 There is no greater grief than to recall a time of happiness when in misery.
- 17 He profits more who serves best.
- 18 Wonders are many, and none is more wonderful than man.
- 19 Arise, shine, for thy light is come.
- 20 Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord.
- 21 To err is human, to forgive divine.
- 22 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
- 23 All sins are committed in secrecy. The moment we realise that God witnesses even our thoughts we shall be free.
- 24 Nothing can harm a good man, either in life or after death.
- 25 Be not wise in your own conceits.
- 26 Teach me to live, that I may dread the grave as little as my bed.
- 27 To understand all is to forgive all.
- 28 Unto the pure all things are pure.
- 29 Read, mark and inwardly digest.
- 30 Father, forgive them : for they know not what they do.

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