GENERAL CIRCULAR NUMBER SEVEN

RUHANI SATSANG
(Science of the Soul)

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S P I R I T U A L D I S C O U R S E

By

HIS HOLINESS SATGURU KIRPAL SINGH JI
FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR

Rag Kalyan - - Mohallah Chautha

1. Rama Ham Dasan Das Karijai - Ek Rahac.
2. Jab Lag Sans Hoi Man Antar - Dhur Sadhu Pavije.
3. Shankar, Narad, Sheshnag, Muni - Dhur Sadhu Ki Lochije.
4. Bhavan Bhavan Pavet Hoi Sab - Je Sadhu Charan Dharijai.
5. Taj Laj Ahankar Sab Tajiae - Mil Sadhu Sang Rahijai.
6. Dharam Rai Ki Kan Chukave - Vish Dubha Kadh Kadijai.
7. Bharam Suke Bahu Uph Suk Kahie - Mil Sadhu Sang Harijai
8. Tante Bilamb Pal Dhil Na Kijai - Jai Sadhu Charan Lagijai
9. Ram Nam Kirtan Ratan Vat - Har Sadhu Pas Rakhijai.
10. Jo Bachan Gur Sat Sat Kar Mane - Tis Age Karh Dharijai.
11. Santo Suno Suno Jan Bhai - Gur Kadhi Banh Kokijai.
12. Je Atam Ko Sukh Sukh Nit Loro - Tan Satgur Sharan Pavijai.
13. Je Wad Bhag Hoi Ati Neka - Tan Gur Mat Nam Dharijai
14. Sab Maya Moh Bikham Jag Tarie - Sehje Har Ras Pijai.
15. Maya Maya Ke Jo Adhikai - Vich Maya Pache Pachijai.
16. Agian Andher Maha Panth Bikhra - Ahankar Bhar Lad Lijai
17. Nanak Ram Ram Ramo Ram Ram - Rame Te Gat Kijai.
18. Satgur Mile Tan Nam Drijai - Ram Name Rale Milijai.

Guru Granth Sahib
(Sikh Scriptures)

This is a hymn composed by Sri Guru Ram Dasji, and like all his other hymns this one, too, is characterized by a peculiar devotional attitude. In the talks of all the Saints can be found a tinge of 'devotion to the Master' and this devotion, too, can be found in all religious and Holy Scriptures. It does not surprise us therefore to find in all the talks given by Sri Guru Ram Dasji this loud exposition of devotion to the Master, for in him love for the Master had reached a culminating point. A simple incident in this respect is on record as under:

When Sri Guru Amar Dasji was 125 years of age, each of His disciples hoped that he would succeed to the spiritual leadership when the Guru died. Each one thought himself to be the most devoted amongst the Guru's followers. The Master, of course, knew all this; great men often employ peculiar ways to bring home the ignorant and the recalcitrants. With the object of putting them to the test, the Master called these disciples together and ordered them to build 'tharas' (small platforms or terraces). No sooner was the order given than each one of them selected a suitable spot and began building the tharas. When the tharas were completed Sri Guru Amar Dasji ordered His followers to demolish their work, and then again instructed them to build others, this time in a different place. This process of building and demolishing was repeated several times after which most of the disciples left the work. Those who always perceive things from the level of the sensual plane had never had an opportunity to introvert and witness the greatness of the Master within, made all sorts of conjectures with their limited intelligence and thus wavered on the path of the Master.

Sri Guru Ram Dasji, however, held on with steadfastness and perseverance to the work of setting up and demolishing the terraces as the Master directed. He knew that there should be no 'why and how' in carrying out the orders of the Master, for in his eye Sri Guru Amar Dasji was no ordinary person and he had himself established this during his spiritual experiences. His co-disciples, however, began speaking ill of the Master who was so fastidious in the preparation of tharas which after all were of no consequence to them at all, and felt that the Master had lost His wits owing to dotage.

These poor people could hardly realize what mystery lay at the bottom of the Master's strange request. They could not understand the greatness of that Enlightened Soul. The underlying purpose was in fact to find a real aspirant who could safely be

entrusted

entrusted with the spiritual legacy -- one who was above and beyond the range of mind and intellect. History tells us that Sri Guru Amar Dasji had the terraces built and demolished no less than 72 times, and when the people said the Master was not in His senses, Ram Dasji, with tears streaming down his cheeks, said:

> "In this wide world Master alone is a living personality. If He too is not in His wits, alas! what could happen to us who are wholly dependent upon Him for salvation?"

In the course of time spiritual leadership was duly bestowed upon Sri Guru Ram Dasji and this hymn is his composition.

Now-a-days many Mahatmas (Great Souls) are initiating people, but they little know the responsibilities which initiation carries with it. It is not child's play, nor does it depend on riches, power, knowledge or worldly grandeur to bestow initiation. As the Great God is hidden from view, even so is it with the real and perfect Saints in whom His Light manifests itself. Their greatness does not depend upon the opinions or recommendations of others; such souls are free and independent and freely bestow their spiritual riches on whomsoever deserves it. In these times they do not hold tests as Sri Guru Amar Dasji did for they are the sole judges, and the spiritual heritage is passed on to one who either deserves it through his past Sanskaras (actions), or one who is specially fitted by the Master for the purpose. They do not come to establish a new religion and they preach from no particular script; from their celestial abode they come with a law peculiar unto themselves, and this is why the worldly people often fail to understand them. As for the strict trials and tests of fitness, it is gratifying to know that these have been done away with during this Kali Yuga (Iron Age); but whenever necessary they do put sea ching questions to the aspirants. So long as these Masters remain in their physical raiments they are not limited by this as is a slave who is confined to the galleys. The worldly people, entangled as they are in the meshes of the senses and worldly pleasures, regard them also as being bound within the limitations of the body, and the body's attachments as they themselves are.

The world is not governed by blind laws, nor do the Saints talk of or do things without a pole of set principles. But the labyrinth of intricate rules and regulations is so bewildering that one feels lost in it. Often, however, we try to find a

way

way out by the study of the Holy Scriptures, or by carrying on a search, which usually proves fruitless. When all efforts fail we involuntarily raise our hands in prayer for our rescue, and as the Universal Law of Demand and Supply is in operation everywhere this cry is no sooner heard than the Master appears on the scene with his own uncommon laws and regulations which are paid no heed to by the men of the world.

The rules and conduct of the Great Souls are very simple and straightforward. Hazur used to tell of the Kazi (Kotwal, or Censor of Morals) in Persia, who by a turn of fortune was compelled to leave his country with his only daughter. On the way the caravan was attacked by robbers who killed many in the party, and in the looting that followed carried away the daughter of the Kazi with a view to selling her for money. The Kazi, though wounded, escaped with his life, and in a sorry condition reached a town where he began to eke out a bare living. The Governor of the town, on learning that the new arrival was learned in religious law, sent for him and made him the Kazi of the town.

Time is a great healing force and gradually the memories of friends and relations, of deaths and losses, fade away from the memory of a person. He either busies himself in rehabilitation and adjustment to new surroundings, or if touched deeply he turns towards God alongside his worldly pursuits. The Kazi had a heart-rending experience and sometimes he would find time in all his multifarious activities for devotion to God in solitude. Thus several years passed.

One day a few theologians appeared before the Kazi and complained that Hafiz, a great religious devotee in Persia, was guilty of blasphemy and spoke things against the Quaranic Injunctions. They asked that he should be tried and sentenced for heresy as he would lead the people astray from the path of rectitude and thereby endanger religion itself. The Kazi, after hearing the complaints, inquired as to what the accused preached, and was informed that he very often repeated a half-couplet which was nothing but un-Islamic. He would say:

"Bai mai Sajada rangin kun, garat Pire mughan goeid."
(Dye thy prayer carpet in wine should thy Master so ordain.)

As the use of wine was an act of sacrilege, a teaching to the effect that the prayer carpet be dyed in wine was nothing but a horrible crime in direct opposition to the religious tenets and tended to corrupt the morals of the people. The

Kazi

Kazi heard this with grave attention and inquired the address of the devotee. He told them that he would himself go to the man and request him to stop his pernicious teachings.

The next day, after discharging his daily religious duties, the Kazi went alone to the man he had heard of, and after formal salutations he sat before him and said:

> "O thou respected being, I, thy servant, have received a complaint against thee from people who charge thee with leading others astray from the path of religion. Wouldst thou stop all this?"

The Fakir replied that he only repeated a half-couplet before each of his visitors, which enjoined them to dye their prayer carpets in wine should a Master so direct. The Kazi requested him to change or complete the couplet by adding the second half to it so as to clarify the meaning. At this the Fakir directed him to another religious Fakir whose abode was on a hilltop, who in turn told the Kazi that he would complete the couplet if he (the Kazi) would spend the night at a particular prostitute's house.

This request came as a double-edged shock to the Kazi. He, as the saying goes, had come with a request for the abstinence from the observance of fasts (Mohammedans observed these to gain religious merit) but was asked to offer prayers as well! To die the prayer carpet in wine was in itself a sacrilegious thing, but to spend the night in a brothel was intolerable blasphemy. The Kazi was indignant and was on the verge of an outbreak of passion, when the thought of his learning and his respect for the Man of God kept him under restraint. He tried to think of a way out of the strange predicament in which he found himself. He had often heard that the mysterious utterances of holy people are filled with hidden wisdom and that they utter nothing vain. These thoughts prevented him from taking any hasty action against the man, and he therefore determined to fully investigate the position first.

Reaching his home he accordingly sent word to the prostitute that he would spend the night in her house. When she received the message she was beside herself with joy at the thought of such a renowned visitor, and that night when the Kazi appeared she presented a young girl for his entertainment. As the Kazi looked towards this girl he saw that she was weeping and asked her what the matter was. Seeing the tears stream down her rosy cheeks, he consolingly told her that he would not

lay a finger on her, but asked instead to relate, without fear, the tale of her woe. At these words the girl gathered courage, and after wiping her tears she informed him that she was a poor orphan girl from a noble family. For a long time she had been tended by prostitutes who were this very night using her as a helpless instrument in their nefarious trade. So far she was spotless and requested the Kazi to spare her the ignominy, and as she concluded her story the tears once again welled in her eyes.

The Kazi felt very sorry for her and inquired as to how she came to be with the prostitute, and where her original home was so that he could restore her to her parents. The girl then narrated her story in full and told him that when she was eight years of age she had accompanied her father on a caravan journey. The caravan had been waylaid by marauders who had killed most of the persons, wounded many others, plundered their belongings, and had carried her off and sold her to a prostitute.

In those days such incidents of people being waylaid and robbed were very common, and the Kazi had himself been such a victim some years earlier. He made up his mind to restore her to her parents and inquired of her the place of her origin, which strangely enough turned out to be his own home town. When she told him the street and the locality he was very surprised at this remarkable coincidence, but when she gave the name of her father, the Kazi, now beside himself with surprise and joy, drew the girl towards him in loving embrace, for it was his daughter who sat before him. That night they spent in relating to each other their experiences, and the following day they both went to the religious devotee to thank him. The Kazi prostrated himself before the sage and confessed that it was impossible for men of the world to understand the wisdom of the Great Souls. All worldly learning was of no consequence before such men, and it was only by implicitly following the sage's injunctions that he had been able to locate his daughter. He expressed his utter inability to show his gratitude for the great favour bestowed upon him and asked for future guidance and instruction. Thereupon the devout man directed him to go back to Hafiz and ask him to complete the couplet by adding the second half of it.

This Hafiz did as under:

"Ke Salik be khabar na buad. Ze rah-o-rasame manzalha."
(As the Master Traveller on the Path is not ignorant of the twists and turns of the Highway.)

Thus

Thus then the Kazi established his faith in that good man and from then onward became his disciple. The truth then, is that only a fortunate person can understand the meaning of their apparently stray and off-hand remarks. Every word uttered by a Saint is pregnant with unalterable truth which lies far beyond the human ken.

"Guftai O, guftai Allah buad
Gar che ez halqumi Abdullah buad."
(They are the mouthpiece of God and whatever they utter comes to them from above, though it may appear to be coming from mortal throats.)

A Hindu poet has expressed the same idea in a simple and lucid form:

"Gur agia se shish jo karia
So sab karini, bhagti phal dae."
(Whatever the disciple does in accordance with the instructions of the Master, that forms part and parcel of his devotion.)

Now we come to the hymn itself:

Couplet No. 1:

"Rama Ham Dasan Das Karijai - Ek Rahao."

In this, Guru Ram Dasji prays to Rama (God) that he may be made a slave of slaves. There is a pun on the words "Ram Das," for the Master Himself being Ram Das, He is at once Ram (God) and Das (His Slave). The word Rama has also different connotations as under:

1. 'Rama' was the son of King Dasarath of Ajodhiya, the hero of the great epic poem, The Ramayana.

2. 'Rama' is often used allegorically for 'human mind' because of its all-pervading capacity and thought unlimited by time, space, and cause.

3. 'Rama' is also identified with the Universal Spirit which is the Cause and Effect of the entire universe, and in whom we are born, live, move, and have our being.

4. 'Rama' lastly, is that which is above the previously mentioned three forms, and is sometimes called by the sages:

> Akarta (who does not do anything);
> Abhogata (who does not enjoy anything);
> Agochar (who is beyond the senses); and
> Anadi (who is not bound by any limitations whatsoever, and yet is the substratum of everything).

It is in this last sense that the word is used here by Guru Ram Dasji. He is addressing that Great Power and invokes that Power to confer upon him the high privilege of being a slave of the slaves of that Power.

You may have heard or read in the scriptures that: The Power -

> works without hands,
> sees without eyes,
> walks without feet,
> hears without ears,
> et cetera,

and that He is all-pervading and everywhere. The problem that confronts us is how to get in touch with this unseen Power called 'Rama.' To tackle this problem we must approach it by way of the 'Doctrine of Likes.' If we wish to study some sermon it is but necessary that we should go to one who is well-versed and proficient in that sermon. We cannot learn it from inanimate objects such as stones or bricks, or even animate beings such as animals or plants. The 'Doctrine of Likes' demands that to obtain knowledge of God we must necessarily approach one who knows God's science and is himself proficient therein.

A point arises here relating to the difference between book knowledge and practical experience. It must be appreciated that a practical man alone can give satisfaction to an aspirant thirsting for the latter type of knowledge, for the knowledge of God depends upon the actual realization and experience of the soul. It is only the person with a practical experience of God who can impart GOD-KNOWLEDGE, since such a person has already realized God, has become One with Him, and being immersed in His Divine Intoxication, he stands out as a human pole for the manifestation of God's Light. He is the mouthpiece of God and his talks on God and God-realization

are always authoritative and effective, as these are based on his own personal experience. Such a person is called by many different names:

'Das' (Servant); 'Mahatma' (Great Soul);
'Rasul' (Intermediary) 'Murshid (Master);
'Sadh' (Ascetic); 'Sant' (Saint);
'Guru' (Guide).

In him sits that Great Power of God which beckons you, and through him you can reach this Power. As he helps in linking you with God, he is called a Rasul or connecting link, but the eyes of the world rest upon his physical form and thus address him in various ways. The Omnipotent Power resides in his body, using it as a vehicle for its manifestation, thereby becoming easily accessible to mankind. In the 'Doctrine of Likes' therefore, a human body of flesh and blood can alone be the most appropriate means through which this peerless power can be made visible to human eyes. Like attracts like -- this is the law of nature you must ponder over. 'Birds of a feather flock together' - pigeons with pigeons and hawks with hawks. Everyone of us is in the habit of associating with his own kind, and just as beasts love beasts so man loves man.

Keeping this in view, let us for a moment consider the case of 'Avataras' (Incarnations). The Negative Power has had many incarnations or manifestations, some of whom were in human form such as Rama, Krishna, Parsuram, etc., while others were in the form of animals, Kachh (Tortoise), Machh (Fish), and Singh (Lion), etc. But we find that only the Avataras who appeared in human form are greatly honoured and worshipped. Why then this disparity between our regard for the two kinds of Avataras? It is because the former were like us and belonged to the same species, for how can we be attached to an Avatara who is unlike us? A Muslim Saint has beautifully expressed this principle thus:

"O, agar khuda ast, khud me ayad."
(If He be a God, He must come Himself to us.)

In fact there is no difference between God and the Guru, for should the Guru be pleased with you then God too is pleased with you. We have not seen God who can tell us about Himself but we can see a human pole through which He manifests Himself in human form. The Saints often refer to this in modest language so as not to arouse the displeasure of the orthodox, who are engaged in and wedded to the performance of rites and ritual:

"Man

"Man khuda ra, ashkara dida am,
Dar surat-i-insan, khuda ra dida am."
(I have seen God plainly and visibly. I have seen Him in the garb of a man.)

This was fearlessly declared by a Muslim Saint. And the Saints often modestly say:

"Mardani khuda, khuda na bashand
Lekan Ze khuda, juda na bashand."
(Even though the Godmen are not God, yet they are in fact not separate from Him.)

Time and again Great Souls have tried to explain this. In the teachings of the Sikh Gurus it is recorded that God, who is the Creator and Sustainer of the entire Universe, resides in and manifests Himself through the Guru.

Swamiji in this very connection has said:

"Gur Razi, te karta razi."
(In the pleasure of the Guru lies the pleasure of God.)

Every Saint has in very explicit terms declared the extent of his inner realization, and it is from their own accounts that we learn the Truth, or else we, who are always working on the sensual plane, could never by mere book knowledge or worldly wisdom, understand that they are the abode of God and reflect His wisdom and greatness. Unless they are one with Him they can never tell us of Him.

Maulana Rumi declared on one occasion:

"Dar bashar roo posh gardesh aftab."
(The Sun is hidden behind the human curtain (body).)

This human form or raiment is not an adequate means of manifesting God's greatness, and it is because of this that the Saints emphasize over and over again the need to transcend the flesh.

Hazur used to say:

"You

"You may consider me a friend, a brother, or a
teacher, but introvert or withdraw yourself as
I direct and when you see for yourself the
grandeur of the Master you may then describe
him as it may please you to do."

We have to transcend the limitations of the flesh. The Saints have necessarily to come in human form to perform the mission of teaching mankind. In a prison enter both the prisoners and the physician -- the prisoner goes in to serve his sentence, while the physician enters to serve the prisoners. On the recommendation of the physician the ailing prisoners are supplied with milk and butter, and are even freed from the rigor of the imprisoned life. This is just a crude illustration. In this vast prison of the Universe we come to serve our sentences as imposed on us by our own actions, while a Saint comes to the relief and for the rescue of ailing humanity. He shall impart unto you that which he possesses and shall give you that knowledge of which he is the Master. It is true that like us the Guru has a human form, but whereas we have lost our real identity and have become one with the physical form, he is just a polarized God, or Lighthouse, and sheds God's Light in the world around him.

Swamiji says:

"Ye ankhen hain, dhur ghar ki."
(These eyes of his peep through eternity
and beyond.)

And Guru Nanak says:

"Jaise men ave, khasam ki bani
Taisa kari Gian, we Lalo."
(O Lalo, I simply utter that which the Master
sends from within.)

In short, they actually feel that what they utter, and what they see, is by the Divine Power alone and not subject to the plane of senses as it is in our case. Swamiji accordingly lays stress on the close gaze and observance of the eyes and forehead of the Saints, for there is reflected God's Light:

"Sant ka dekho ankh aur matha."
(Always look at the eyes and forehead of a Saint.)

Their eyes are lotus-like chalices bubbling over with the liquid of Divine Love.

The

The mere sight of such eyes is enough to create a thrill within us, just as the sight of a wrestler awakens in us a keen desire to possess such a well-proportioned body and its strength.

"Chashme-O, maste khuda."
(His eyes are God-intoxicated.)

The eyes of the Great Souls infuse in us Divine Intoxication -- an Intoxication not sensual, but Godly. The moment they close their eyes their souls pass on to higher regions and they can return when they choose to do so. Should they so wish they can bestow this power on us and we too can traverse spiritual planes and regions beyond the senses. Therefore, in spite of the human form they retain, they are gifted with a special competency. It is because of this that the Holy Scriptures eulogize the Saints so much:

"Wali allah ra bar kias-i-khud magir,
Dar navishtan yaksan ayad, sher-o-shir."
(Think not of the Godman as an ordinary individual, for in writing Sher (Lion), and Shir (Milk), two Urdu words, there is hardly any difference.)

The greatness of a Godman cannot be gauged by limited human intelligence, for with the apparent human form they possess, they have capabilities that lie far beyond the human ken. Just as Sher (Lion) and Shir (Milk), words apparently alike in writing and pronounciation, yet they are entirely different in significance; for while the one means a savage animal, the other means a health-giving food. In the same way there is a world of difference between a person wedded to the senses and a Saint who is above and beyond the senses. While the former writhes and wriggles with the venom of the world stored within him, the latter, like a cool, refreshing spring of crystal-clear water, gently pours forth exhilarating breezes on those who sit beside him. The words of one are like tongues of fire, while those of the other are like a healing balm to lacerated minds.

"Sakit ka bolia, jaise bichhua dase."
(The talk of the worldly-wise has a scorpion sting in it.)

One who is not connected by the Divine Link injects poison into the hearts of the listeners who suffer greatly from the bitterness of his malicious talk. The Saint on the

other

other hand, is one with God, and is a living temple in human form, radiating the Divine Light around him. He is at once formless and with form. Inwardly he is linked with the Universal Spirit, and is entrusted with the mission of emancipation, or salvation of souls. This merit one can hardly hope to achieve by means of propaganda or learning. It is in God's hand and He grants this commission to whomsoever He wishes. The Jivas, or the embodied spirits, cannot be liberated by mere empty, vain words.

An Inspector of Police, having been vested with authority, can ask anybody to leave a particular place which he would not like to vacate if asked by any other person. Similarly, the task of bestowing vision upon the 'third eye' and of withdrawal above and beyond the plane of the senses, can best be discharged by competent personalities who are vested with authority or gifted in that line. Such beings are the 'Word Personified.' God is both speechless and wordless, but 'God-in-Action,' or the Power of God, which is at once the Creator and Sustainer of all the Universe, is the 'Word' (Nam or Kalima). As God is Love, the Godman is Love personified -- a great reservoir of bliss and peace.

He dons human raiment, however impure and imperfect, simply because He has to discharge His commission in the world; to teach the embodied souls that:

they are nothing but sparks from the great Universal Light;
their native abode is in Sach Khand (the region of Eternal Bliss);
their family (Gotra) is of Satnam (God-in-Action); and
it is possible to introvert and transcend the sensual plane at will to this heavenly region.

The Vedas and all other scriptures and sacred books sing the praises of these Great Souls who possess these competencies, and not of the self-made and self-styled Masters.

So says Guru Arjan:

"Aprampar pad permeshwar, Nanak Gur milia soi."
(O Nanak, meet a Master whose abode is far beyond and who is one with Brahman (the Creator) and with God.)

He also says:

"Satgur

"Satgur mera sada sada, na awe na jai
O abnashi pursh ha, sab men reha samai."
(My master is an eternal being. He neither comes nor goes. He is an immortal being and pervades everywhere.)

"Guru ki mehmah kia kaha
Guru Babek Satsar
Ad jugadi jugo-jug
Pura permashwar."
(The Greatness of the Master is indescribable. He is the fountainhead of the Elixir of Life. He was before the Creation and before the beginning of each cycle of time. He is God Himself.)

Just as God is Sat-true-at all times, so is the Master Sat-true-at all times. It is said:

"Guru men ap rakhia kartar
Gurmukh kot asankh odhare."
(God Himself enshrines His Power in the Master, and that mouthpiece of God has competency to rescue millions.)

And also:

"Gurmukh kot odharda, de name ek kani."
(With just an atom or a grain of His Power He can save millions of Souls.)

God resides in the Master, and the latter has competency to salvage myriads of souls and grant them salvation with just an iota of His power. His mission is:

"Satgur aisa chahia jo sab se lai milai jio."
(The true Teacher or the real Master is one who is competent enough to bring all shades of people within His fold.)

He is the beacon of light for the entire humanity, and makes no distinction in race, caste, or creed, for to him each living person is just an embodied soul.

In the Gospel we read:

"Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us."

"Ape

"Ape satgur ap shabad dev
Jug jug bhagat piare."
(He is at once Satguru (impersonal and formless) and Shabad (Word or God-in-Action). In all ages He is worshipped by His devotees.)

Tulsidas says:

"Bandon Gurupadkunj-kirpasindhu nar rup hari
Mahamoh tam panj-jasun kirpa hari kar nikar."
(I worship the lotus feet of the Master. He is the ocean of kindness and God personified.)

Just as the sun dispels the darkness, so does He dispel the darkness born of attachment. Once Jesus inquired of His disciples as to whom He was, and it is by such questions that Saints often reveal their true identity, for only a chosen few can withdraw from the sensual plane and have a glimpse of the grandeur and greatness of the Master.

Sant Kabir once said:

"Kahin Kabir, ham dhur ghar ke bhedi, lai
hukam hasuri."
(I say unto thee that I am conversant with the mysteries of God's House; and I bring thee a message from the Most High.)

To the questions asked by Jesus, the disciples said:

"Some say that thou art John the Baptist, some Elias; and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets."

But Simon Peter said:

"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

Jesus answered and said:

"Blessed art thou Simon Bar-Jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee, that thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

On

On another occasion, the disciple Philip said to Jesus:

"Lord shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us."

But Jesus replied:

> "Have I been so long time with you, and yet thou has not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou, then, 'Shew us the Father?' Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, or else believe me for the very works' sake."

Such are the utterances of those who have realized God.

When Guru Ram Dasji prayed he said:

"Make me a slave of Thy slaves, O God."

If an enlightened soul of this type, with human form, and linked within with the Universal Spirit, were to meet you, he could surely link you, too, with that Over-Soul. Should you wish to have a dip in the ocean you would certainly go to the bathing ghat of the ocean which would be just as good as a dip in the ocean itself.

Maulana Rumi says:

> "If you come near a Godly person you come near God Himself, and if you go away from a Godly person you go away from God Himself."

If there were an electric switch in your house linked with the power house, and you were to come near it, then you in fact come close to the power house itself, for by a mere push of the button you can bring into action the live current of the power house connected to the switch and so get all your cooking, heating, or lighting done. You must approach the switch if you wish to harness the energy of the power house to your domestic needs. Each step away from the switch will remove you farther away from the power house.

God is all-pervading like electricity in the atmosphere, but you cannot make use of this electricity except through an electric pole. Similarly, you can only have an idea of God if you go to a Godman through whom He works and manifests Himself, and in His company you can think of God and aspire to great heights. The realization of energy cannot be had from books. These may, at the most, give you an account of the energy, but can neither unleash the energy nor show you what it is actually like. You can only see its effect through a medium, just as you can have the idea of strength and manliness when you look at a "Sandow" with a well-proportioned muscular body, radiant eyes and a glowing face. The prayer of Guru Ram Dasji is therefore of the highest order. He wants to be the slave of God's slaves, for in their company alone can one expect to have inner light, a way out of the enchanted house, and ultimate salvation. This is all that one should aspire to and wish for, and in attempting to rise to the same level as God we shall ultimately know Him:

"Nanak ae was uncha howe koe
Tis unche ko jane soe."
(O Nanak, unless one goes up to His
level, one cannot see Him.)

"Akhin bajon vekhna, bin kanan sunnan
Pairan bajhon chalna, bin hathan karna,
Jibha bajhon bolna, iven jiwat marna,
Nanak hukam pachhan ke, te khasmen milna."
(One must see without eyes,
hear without ears,
walk without feet,
do without hands,
talk without tongue,
and die while living,
and only then will one know and recognize
the call of the Beloved -
the Kalima,
the Nam,
the Akash Bani,
or the Word --
and actually meet Him. Thus he prays to come into
closer contact with the Master Soul who like us
inhabits a physical body, but who is internally
linked with God, so that through his instruction
and grace he, too, might reach God.)

Couplet No. 2.

Couplet No. 2.

"Jab Lag Sans Hoi Man Antar - Dhur Sadhu Pavije."
(As long as I live I shall long for the dust of the feet of such Living and Enlightened Entities.)

The expression "Dust of the Master's feet" refers to both inner and outer -- material and spiritual -- dust. In its broader sense it implies the entering into the fold of the Master by taking of the beneficial magnetic effect radiating from His physical presence, and thus imbibing and putting into practice the instructions imparted by Him. In its inner significance it refers to the inner light which greets one when, after withdrawing from the nine portals of the body, he enters the tenth, the Mysterious Exit. This light emanates from the lustrous form of the Master within and is spoken of as the dust of His radiant lotus feet. Thus His instructions as a Guru, which are symbolized by the dust of His feet without, leads to Light, which is the dust of His feet within. That is why the Guru refers to it:

"Sadh ki dhur karo ashnan."
(Bathe in the dust of the Sadhu--one who has mastered and transcended the senses.)

In the great epic 'Ramayana' it is also stated:

"Every moment try to gather up thy fast wandering consciousness at the centre which is just behind the middle of the two eye-brows (seat of the soul). Next cleanse the mirror of thy body and of thy mind (purify your physical and mental actions). In this way, O Tulsi, shall the dust of the Master's feet grant the inner light or vision."

We also come across the following in the 'Ramayana' --

"The nails of the Master's feet are more resplendent than the light which millions of gems when put together can emit. On reaching the Master's feet one can become all-knowing."

This refers to the inner experience which the practical devotee on the Path can very well appreciate.

Guruji also says:

"Nanak

"Nanak Das shi Sukh mange
Mo ko kar santan ki dhure."
(The humble Nanak asks for one thing:
'Grant me O God the dust from thy
Saints' blessed feet.')

Thus Guru Ram Dasji prays for the highest boon -- association with the Saints. Their inestimable instructions and guidance -- so that through Their blessings he, too, may revel in the Inner Light which is the Summum Bonum of human life.

Couplet No. 3.

"Shankar, Narad, Sheshnag, Muni - Dhur Sadhu Ki Lochije."
(A yearning like this (for the dust of the Master's feet) is not peculiar with me alone. Even persons of note, like Shankara (the intellectual giant), Narad (the great devotee), and Sheshnag (the thousand-hooded serpent, legendary supporter of the earth), have all in their time been equally anxious to receive a gift of dust like this.)

Once Lord Siva and his consort, Parvati, were out walking together. On the way Lord Siva stopped to make obeisance at a particular spot, and Parvati, who could see nothing at the place, inquired as to whom her Lord showed so much respect. Lord Siva replied that on that very spot a great soul once sat in meditation and hence the spot was worthy of his highest esteem. This shows how even Lord Siva was eagerly yearning for the dust of the Saints. The significance behind the various places of pilgrimage is the sanctification of these places by the blessed presence of some Great Soul who has in the past sat there in devotional meditation and thus realized the Over-Soul. So these places have acquired special significance and veneration.

Couplet No. 4.

"Bhavan Bhavan Pavet Hoi Sab - Je Sadhu Charan Dharijai."
(Wheresoever a Godman treads, that becomes a Holy place.)

In the life history of Guru Nanak we read of a place called Panja Sahib, near Hassanabdal (now in Pakistan). It

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is here that Guru Nanak, by the palm of His hand, held a great rock boulder unloosed from its rocky bed on the hilltop and hurled down upon Him by Wali Khandari, a Mohammedan Fakir. This place is visited by many pilgrims. All such places owe their sanctity to one or other of the Saints.

Love has its own peculiar law. The legendary Majnu, lover of Leila, would go about doing obeisance at every place where he found Leila's footprints, for the very dust she had walked over was worthy of his profound reverence and esteem. Thus the very spot that comes in touch with the Saint's feet gets sanctified, and in course of time becomes a place of pilgrimage. Swamiji also said:

> "The feet of the Sadhu are much better than 68 places of pilgrimage; for the sanctity of these places are only due to his feet."

In India there are said to be 68 sacred places of pilgrimage, but the religious merit that one may get by visiting all these places can be acquired by personal contact with the Guru, both in meeting Him outwardly and realizing Him within -- provided, of course, He is really a Great Soul. His very gaze is enough to work out one's salvation.

It is said that once Hazrat Sannai paid a visit to the Prophet of the Desert, Hazrat Mohammed, but did not find him at home. Later, when a messenger brought word of the visit to the Prophet, the Prophet inquired of him whether he had the good fortune to meet Hazrat Sannai. The messenger replied that he had seen his back from behind, and upon this the Prophet congratulated him on his good fortune. It is by God's grace that an association with such a Great Soul washes off all human imperfections and makes one immaculate. When the touch of His very feet can turn a barren spot into a place of pilgrimage, His sight can have far greater effect on those who sit at His feet.

Couplet No. 5.

"Taj Laj Ahankar Sab Tajiae - Mil Sadhu Sang Rahijai."

Guru Ram Dasji was the son-in-law of Guru Arjan Dev and had a burning passion for spirituality. Ordinarily

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it is considered disgraceful for the son-in-law to stay at the father-in-law's house, but as he was after spirituality and could not find it anywhere else, he, in spite of the taunts and sarcasm from all sides, paid no heed to the criticism from the public and remained at the house. Hence, the Master preaches that one who is lucky enough to find a Master Saint should not allow his position, pride of birth, social status, or thought of what others might say, to stand in his way. Often, we do not visit a Saint through fear of public opinion. Such ideas are handicaps and hurdles in the striving after spirituality.

This weakness is also apparent to those who delight in being called Mahatmas (Great Souls). One Mahatma seldom visits another, due to complex social, caste, and other gradations. It is a great pity that these considerations and feelings crop up among Mahatmas whereas in a tavern all sorts of tipplers, Mohammedans, Sikhs, Hindus, untouchables and others, revel together and enjoy one another's company.

Such things are indeed insurmountable obstacles on the path of spirituality. Take the case of a physician. For him there is no distinction between a Hindu, Mohammedan, Sikh, and any other member of the community. These words have no meaning for him as it is his duty to heal suffering humanity. Likewise, too, with a spiritual being. Both are an asset to humanity and the common heritage of all humanity. As Bearers of Light they come to shed this Light all around them. It is, no doubt, good to be born in a temple, but to die in it is a sin. We may by birth belong to one or other class or social level, but to cling to it all one's life without a spiritual experience of any kind is sad indeed. The Saints do not cling to the forms and rituals of any religion, and hence the Master Ram Dasji preaches that one should, after discarding all vanities and thoughts of public opinion, associate with a Perfect Being or Godman, no matter whether he be a Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, or a Christian; for in spite of this nomenclature he is a liberated Being, and whosoever associates with him shall also find liberation.

The instructions of one who has himself attained salvation, if followed carefully and conscientiously, will lead the aspirant to salvation, too. Therefore, go to a Saint if you wish to find God. It is said:

"Jain

"Jain Satgur Tahin sat sangat banai."
(Wherever there is a Satgur, the gathering around Him is called a Satsang.)

Satgur is one who preaches Sat (Truth) to the Satsang. Again:

"Satgur bajhon sangat na hoi
Bin shabde par na pawe koi."
(Without Satgur there can be no Satsang, and without Shabad (Nam or Word) there is no way to realisation.)

There can be no spiritual discourse or spiritual gathering (Satsang) without a Satgur who is the fountain-head of spirituality. Just as a Professor of medicine or law can teach science or legal proceedings to thousands of his pupils, so, too, an awakened soul can awaken thousands of souls from deep slumber. A contact with such a being is called Satsang (association with the Sat or Truth -- the unutterable and unchangeable permanence). Thus if one is anxious to see God he should go to a Godman, in the same way that a person who is in need of the electric energy in a power house would go to the switch. In Him you would find no hard and fast religious or caste distinctions.

One who has never transcended the physical plane cannot possibly give you any spiritual experience. Spirituality is, after all, an experimental science and cannot be mastered by mere theorising, therefore, a person who cannot there and then make you experience this supernormal condition cannot be relied upon for future guidance and is of no use to you. Should you, however, come across a Master who can give you the satisfaction and experience you are after, you should give yourself to Him regardless of anything.

Guru Arjan Dev, in this connection, said:

"The great purpose for which thou came into this world (for Ram Nam or God Realization) can be achieved from and through the Saints. Drive aside all thoughts from thy mind and then alone shalt thou find Him within thee. Extricate thyself out of all useless entanglements and explicitly follow the Master in all that He says."

He

He goes on to say:

> "The main purpose of human life is to attain to God-Realization, or Ram Nam (God-in-Action). It is Power Personified and not a mere attribute or word. Only after shedding your egoism can you achieve this power and feel its very presence within you. This spiritual wealth comes only through association with Saints, and for this you will have to turn aside from all enjoyments of the world, not caring what others may say of you. If you are once swayed by public opinion you will lose the golden opportunity and hopelessly fail to get the Summum Bonum of life."

The great pity is that people have never cared for such a life. In the lifetime of Guru Nanak the people closed the gates of Kasur (a town in the Punjab) in His face and called Him a Kurahia (one with a perverted intellect, an evil genius who pollutes the intellect of others and leads them astray). He therefore used to stay with Bhai Mohanda in a nearby village. Once at nightfall He reached the village of His beloved friend and inquired of the villagers where He stayed. When they pretended ignorance and motioned to Him to proceed on His way, Guru Nanak said:

> "Dan Mohanda tali khak je mile tan mastak laie."
> (If the dust of Mohanda's feet be found I will show reverence to this dust and apply it to my own forehead.)

It is generally found that the priestly order of Brahmans, Maulanas, and Sheikhs always has a terror of the Enlightened Souls, and often pitch themselves against these Souls for fear of losing their livelihood. By fair or foul means they try to oppose them, and those ignorant souls who listen to their virulent and malicious propaganda against the Saints are lost forever.

The aspirant is therefore advised to come into direct contact with an Enlightened Soul, and should he be fortunate to come across one he should try to gain first-hand knowledge of him. He should listen to the teachings of the Saints, and see and judge for himself instead of relying on the second-hand opinions of others who may have their own axes to grind, and who would in their own interest try to frighten him away from Him. Here is an incident that happened in the time of Hazur Baba Sawan Singh:

A Mohammedan

A Mohammedan aspirant once got down from a train at Beas and inquired from a passer-by the whereabouts of the Enlightened Soul that lived there. The man told the Muslim malignant things about the Master and ridiculed his belief in this Holy Person, with the result that the aspirant did not wait to ascertain the truth of what he had heard, and instead proceeded on his way by the next train. Some years passed after this incident, but one who is hankering after religion or spirituality cannot rest, and so the same Muslim came to Beas a second time. I, too, happened to be present when, after the spiritual discourse given by the Blessed Master, this man asked to speak for a few minutes. The microphone was placed before him and he said:

> "About four years ago I came to Beas and inquired about the Master, but someone spoke so disparagingly of Him that I left the place then and there. I now deplore that I was credulous enough to lend an ear to that fellow's false report, for had I not done so, I would have been richer by four years spiritual experience today."

One should therefore rely on one's own knowledge and experience and not on the preconceived opinions and heresay accounts of others. You must know that Godliness and evil cannot abide together at one place, just as fragrance and stench cannot exist at the same time in the same place. A Saint has always around Him an atmosphere of serenity and peace which you yourself can experience should you go near Him. He has no bad tastes to exhibit and does not talk ill of others.

Couplet No. 6.

"Dharam Rai Ki Kan Chukave - Vish Dubha Kadh Kadijai."

Herein is described the mission of the Master -- the winding-up of the Karmic process and consequent liberation of the soul from the binding force of all past and present actions. With the burning up of these impressions one becomes a liberated being, and hence the audit and account of one's actions after death does not arise. The soul is no longer forced to follow The Messenger of the Angel of Death, for the Master comes in His astral form to take the spirit to higher spiritual re lms when the allotted span of one's earthly existence is reached. That is why Guru Nanak says:

"O Nanak

"O Nanak, snap all ephemeral ties that bind thee to the people of the world, for their relationship is just a temporary one, and seek out the eternal friendship of the Saints. While the former shall leave thee even in thy lifetime, the latter shall stand by thee even unto and after death."

The Master alone has competency to take charge of a person at the time of his death. The people of the world, friends, and relations, and our near and dear ones, at the utmost accompany the bier as far as the cremation or burial ground. But what of the spirit that has left the body -- that belongs to the Master and He takes charge of it. In the Guru Granth Sahib (Sikh Scriptures) it is recorded:

"Sacha Satgur sev sach sambhalia
Ant Khaloiya ai je, Satgur age ghaliya."
(Devote yourself to the true Master and tune yourself to Nam. If you do so, the Master will receive you at the time of your exit from the body at death.)

So long as you live in this physical world this power, in physical form, gives you instructions and guidance, and when you leave this world the same power in its astral or subtle form appears again to be your friend and guide. Thus it never leaves you till the final goal is reached and you become one with it. It is said:

"He is ever with you, both in this world and the next, whether you are at home or abroad."

From the moment He takes charge of the spirit the Karmic cycle of Cause and Effect, at once and forever comes to an end. It is then for that Power Personified to pull us out of the unfathomable depths of worldly destruction, and so the Master calls a halt to our sinful acts and bids us introspect and examine ourselves. He directs that the web of Karmas (past actions) that has brought us into the world may happily and pleasantly be spun out and finished with, and that the Sanchit Karmas (the stored-up or unfructified acts done in the past) are burnt to ashes by Nam--a spark from the Eternal Flame or Link with God-in-Action.

Hazur often said:

"If

"If a perfect Master cannot do this much service for the Jivas (embodied souls) after initiation, and they have to be dragged down willy nilly like bound slaves by the Messenger of Death, then it is better to bid adieu to such a person immediately, the sooner the better for you."

It is because of this competency alone that the Scriptures sing the praises of a Satguru, Death is the last enemy of mankind, and that Power Personified grants victory over death by initiation into the process of soul withdrawal while one is still living.

Dadu therefore said:

"Dadu pehle mar raho, pachhe mare sab koi."
(O Dadu, learn to die in advance (while living) for in the end all have to die.)

Similarly, there is a Quranic injunction:

"Die thou before death."

This is the grand idea in the teachings of the Quran. When you have learned to die at will there remains no sting in death and no fear of the God of Death. Even the most sinful get chastened by the healing touch of the Saints, and by association with them they turn over a new leaf. In one way or another their Karmic account is wound up and they are made to settle their Karmic debts.

Bhagat Kabir said:

"Sona kai na lage, loha ghun rahin khai
Bhala bura jo gurbhakt, kabhi narak na jai."
(Gold does not gather moss, nor does iron get moth eaten. One devoted to the Guru, whatever his deeds, cannot go down to perdition.)

Whosoever comes to a Guru is sure to be purified through and through. The cycle of transmigration gains momentum by the pressure of Sanskaras -- the inevitable law being:

"Wheresoever thy heart is set, there shalt thou irresistibly follow."

This

This very existence is the result of bondage born of attachment and infatuation for the world and worldly things. Should your heart be set on a Satguru who is a liberated Being, then you, too, shall get liberated and follow Him to His abode in Sachkand, the place of eternal peace.

We visit our churches and temples and pray for forgiveness. We make confessions at the altars, recount our shortcomings before priests in the temples, before Maulanas in the mosques, and before Bhais in the Gurdwaras (Sikh temples), but seldom do we admit the horrible crimes that we commit in the inner recesses of the mind. In the presence of Hazur, in the midst of thousands attending Satsang, persons would stand up and confess their faults. Hazur would just raise His hand and say:

"Finish up with what is done, and do no more."

Couplet No. 7.

"Bharam Suke Bahu Uph Suk Kahie - Mil Sadhu Sang Harijai."

In this couplet the Master tells us that just like a withered tree we are lost in the hallucinations of the world. As a tree gets dried up from lack of water at the roots, so, too, do we waste away and wither for want of association with the Saints. In this matter-of-fact world it is only love for the Lord that can resuscitate the tree of life.

Guru Nanak spoke thus to Madhu:

"Mere madhuji, sat sangat mile, so taria,
Gur parshad, param pad paya, suke kasat hariya."
(O Madhu, an association with a Saint is a great redeeming feature. Through the grace of the Guru one reaches the highest heaven, and even the cut and dried timber (crumpled mind) feels rejuvenated. So there is hope for everybody.)

It is also said:

"Come back, come back, and again come back, even though you may have broken pledge, have no fear nor hesitation in going to the Master again. He is a fountain-head of grace and freely bestows the same grace; so with all your broken pledges you need not leave His door. As

there

"there is no limit to our sins, so there is no limit to the grace and benediction of the Master."

Hazur used to say:

"The washerman gets all types of clothing for washing, from the man who works in the oil-press, or the confectioner, and he never refuses to accept these. He knows that each of these has an inherent quality of whiteness in it, and that he is competent to bring that out as any professional washerman should be able to do."

There is not a single soul in the world that is free from shortcomings. The Enlightened Soul is a past master in the art of self-withdrawal. He tells us of a way out by which we can withdraw the spirit from the sensual plane to its own centre between the two eyebrows.

Sin consists in too much attachment or infatuation for worldly objects. If you know how to withdraw the spirit from the plane of the senses you leave the sin far below. Even if you are a sinner you need not despair, for the Godman comes into the world to redeem sinners only. God is a fountain of forgiveness, and the Godman is a Haven of refuge for fallen humanity.

Bidhi Chand was a great dacoit, but Guru Arjan Dev transformed him into a Saint. He had a number of such persons in the Sangat (brotherhood) and a complaint was once lodged with the Emperor Jehangir to the effect that the Guru had assembled an army of reckless marauders. When called upon to explain, the Guru answered:

"These people might have been robbers once, but they are not now."

Many thieves and robbers used to meet Hazur, too, and through His grace they were altogether changed. The grace of an Enlightened Soul would revivify withered trees. Man, too, is just like a dried-up tree, with this difference that his roots are upwards, between the two eyebrows, whereas that of a tree is downwards to the earth below. Just as water supplied to the roots of an autumn-singed tree brings forth fresh leaves, so the Waters of Heaven bring freshness to man's soul. The Godman brings this message of hope for one and all. Seek

Him out and then follow His instructions implicitly and you will find a great change within you. You cannot learn horsemanship without being knocked down, now and again. To fall in sin is human, but to remain in sin is a worse crime. When people would come to Hazur for forgiveness, He would simply say:

"Desist in the future and follow the instructions, for that is the only remedy."

Couplet No. 8.

"Tante Bilamb Pal Dhil Na Kijai - Jai Sadhu Charan Lagijai."

Guru Ram Dasji emphatically declares that one need not lose a single moment in seeking out a Master Soul, for He alone has the means of redemption. If one were at mid-day passing through a sandy desert with hot, scorching winds blowing in the face, and not a drop of water to drink, he would feel restless indeed. But should he, while in this predicament, perchance come across a shady tree laden with sweet-smelling flowers and luscious fruits, beside a spring of cool, crystal-clear water, he would at once relieve and refresh himself.

Maulana Rumi says:

"O traveller, sit near one who knows thy needs and under a tree laden with fresh flowers; instead of wandering restlessly through a market town, go to one who can feed thee on honey. But stretch not thy hands towards every bubbling cauldron, for it might have in it something that thou may not need."

Should you come across a Master Soul who can experimentally make you experience the Reality within your own self, then doubt not His words; but if someone simply asks you to follow a particular course of conduct and await the result in the fullness of time, then rely not on his words, indefinite and uncertain as these are. Thus go to some Perfect Being, for He alone can make you perfect like Himself.

Couplet No. 9.

"Ram Nam Kirtan Ratan Vat - Har Sadhu Pas Rakhijai."

Here

Here the question arises as to what it profits a man who goes to a Saint. In reply, Guru Ram Dasji says:

"In the company of a Sadhu one gets Kirtan (music of Nam, all-pervading power). It is the greatest wealth that one can strive for and aspire to. God has kept His treasure with a Sadhu."

All the Saints have spoken of these untold riches. In Gurbani, or teachings of the Guru, it is said:

"Kul kirat, shabad pachhan
Iha bhagat, chuke abhiman."
(In this Kailyuga (Iron Age) Kirtan, or music, consists in knowing and recognizing the Word (Shabad). This is the highest devotion and it rids one of his egoism.)

Now about Shabad it is said:

"Utpat, parlo, shabde Hove
Shabde hi, phir utpat hove."
(The Shabad, or Word, is that Power which is at once Creative, Destructive, and Re-creative.)

The Song Celestial or Divine Music is a great blessing for humanity. In this connection, Maulana Rumi says:

"A Godman has within Him untold tunes, and the lovers of God find in these the Elixir of Life. But, alas, this music cannot be heard by the ears of the flesh which are quite unaccustomed to its tunes."

It can be heard only by the inner ears. This Divine Music is going on ceaselessly within every individual, and is so thrilling and enrapturing that one forgets everything else. Guru Ram Dasji has spoken of it as:

"This Divine Music is the holiest of the holy. In this Iron Age it is the essence of all piety, and through the grace of the Master you can hear and retain this music within you."

The key to unlock this sweet music lies with a Godman. It is said:

"At

"At thy gate there are strains of music which come floating and vibrating at my forehead."

This music is going on within every person and is called the Bang-i-asmani or Akash bani (heavenly music). The instrumental music produced by human agencies may last for some hours, but it cannot go on eternally as the heavenly music does. The ever restless human mind becomes intoxicated by the wondrous tunes and at once is calmed and rested. The music of the world, too, has this attraction. A poisonous reptile is bewitched by the sweet strains of Bin (the snake charmer's instrument), and the swift-footed antelope is charmed by the beat of a drum so that it is snared. Even so this human mind is attracted by the rapturous strains of music. When there is so much magnetic effect in the music of the world, one can marvel at the enormous potentialities of the inner music of the soul. On different occasions Saints have tried to give an account of this music:

"The Divine Music in this Kaliyuga occupies the highest place. Satguru alone can link us with these strains. I am indebted to my own Master who has awakened the sublime symphonies within me. Blessed is one who is fortunate to get into the company of a Saint and through His grace listen to the Divine Music."

How to get this Hari Kirtan is the next question. The answer is given in the following couplet.

Couplet No. 10.

"Jo Bachan Gur Sat Sat Kar Mane - Tis Age Karh Dharijai."
(Whosoever accepts the words of the Sat Guru or Master as gospel truth, he is blessed with these divine strains.)

The highest gift of spiritual wealth can only be obtained by having implicit faith in the teachings of the Master. You cannot have it all simply by performing salutation and doing obeisance to Him, for it is the deeds that count and not the hollow words.

"Satgur bachan hai - Bachan hai Satgur."
(The Master is not apart from His teachings, nor are His teachings separate from Him.)

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You can have spiritual riches if only you follow His teachings, implicitly and willingly.

"Santan moko punji bakshi - utra man ka dhoka,
Dharam Rai ab kia karege - jab phato lekha."
(The Saints have bestowed upon me the gift of spirituality and all my misgivings have vanished. The Angel of Death becomes powerless with the winding up of Karmic Sanskaras (impressions of actions).)

The gift of spirituality as granted by the Master has, of course, to be developed after direct and first-hand experience, till the experience actually and undoubtedly becomes our own. Those who come into contact with the Master and yet remain on the plane of the senses have not followed the Master's teachings with perfect faith and devotion. Disregard to instructions, in spite of personal respect for the Master, is all meaningless. Should you even pay heed to His words you can achieve positive success. The science of spirituality is, in fact, more mathematical than mathematics itself. Practice alone is the key-note of success, and without practice all efforts would be in vain. This wealth is within you, and the Master links you up directly and assists you in developing it.

Christ says:

"If you love me, keep my commandments."

At the time Guru Ram Dasji was made the spiritual head, there was a large following. In those days, too, there were many centres where spiritual teaching was given, and seven women and twelve men were duly commissioned for these centres. The followers of the Master came from far and near, some from Kabul and others from Ceylon, and most of them sang devotional songs but had no inner experience. Realising this state of affairs, the Master said:

"The devotees come for devotion with sacred hymns on their lips. The singing and hearing of these hymns is alone blessed to those who follow and abide by the instructions of the Master."

When we have to learn any worldly science we have to abide by the instructions of the adept in that science. This is exactly so, too, in spirituality. It is, of course,

the grace

the grace of the Master that permits you to experience, during the first sitting, the process of self-withdrawal. After this little experience you can of course develop the condition by regular and patient practice.

Couplet No. 11.

"Santo Suno Suno Jan Bhai - Gur Kadhi Banh Kokijai."
(The Guru therefore with His clarion voice gives a trumpet call to His fellow beings to follow Him.)

What his call and message is we learn in the next couplet.

Couplet No. 12.

"Je Atam Ko Sukh Sukh Nit Loro - Tan Satgur Sharan Pavijai."
(If you want an unchanging and permanent spiritual bliss, you must come into the fold of the Satguru.)

Hazur used to say:

"Consider me just a father, a brother, or an elder, but for once come within and witness the greatness of the Master and then you are free to call me what you will."

It therefore matters little what you call the Guru in the beginning.

This everlasting and eternal Bliss of the Soul cannot be had for riches, worldly possessions, earthly enjoyments, learning and knowledge, nor for merit gained through pilgrimages and sacrifices. It can only be acquired by the grace of the Master-Soul who simply says:

"Tap inside,"
tells us how to do so, and
actually helps us in the process.

Therefore, it is for us to develop the process.

Couplet No. 13.

"Je Wad Bhag Hoi Ati Neka - Tan Gur Mat Nam Dharijai."
(O friend, it is only by great and good fortune that you can, by the grace of the Guru, get firmly implanted in Nam (God-in-Action).)

It is only by good fortune that one comes across such a High Soul and gets linked to Nam, so that he begins to taste the nectar of Elixir of Life. In the terminology of the Saints, the blind are not those who have no eyes or have lost their vision, but are those who have not the eyes to behold Him and realize Him, and so remain adrift from Him. It is said:

"The blind are not such as have no eyes in their faces, O Nanak. Those alone are blind who behold not the Lord."

The blind people as described above cannot at all by themselves recognize the Enlightened Souls. It is only God Himself who may in compassion put a person in the path of a Master Soul.

What does the Master Soul teach then? It is said:

"Nanak eh bidh jano gurmat - Ram Nam liv laya."
(O Nanak, know ye the Master's teaching in this that He links thee with Ram Nam.)

As to Nam and its power, it is said:

"Name hi te sab jag hoiya."
(The whole world sprang into being from Nam.)

Nam is the Universal Power which manifests everything. It is the Kalp Briksh (wish-yielding tree).

The Christians call it "Word,"
The Mohammedans - "Kalima,"
The Upanishads describe it as "Udgit" (Song from Beyond); and
The ancient sages speak of it as: -
"Akash Bani" (The Voice of the Silence),
"Nad" (Music), and
"Sruti" (That Which Is Heard),
while the fire-worshipers regard it as "Sarosha."

Now, as to its abode, this power of Nam is said to rest in the human body.

"The valuable treasure of God's Power (Nam) resides in the flesh."

It

It is only the very fortunate ones who get linked with this Universal Power. Though we consider one who is rich in worldly possessions to be fortunate, it is only the riches of Nam that accompany one on the last journey at the time of death, and not the worldly wealth. It is in fact the "solace of life here and hereafter," as Arthur Schopenhauer, a great German philosopher has said.

Couplet No. 14.

"Sab Maya Moh Bikham Jag Tarie - Sehje Har Ras Pijai."
(The entire world is lost in the whirlwind of desires and attachments. We have completely identified ourselves with our physical body and its physical needs.)

This horrible ocean of the world cannot be successfully crossed over without the aid of the Master. The Guru with a magic potion of Hari Nam cuts asunder the Gordian knot that binds us tightly to the world. Save for a soul here and there that may, through the Master's grace, get enlightened, the rest of humanity remains in a deep slumber.

"The unfortunate, like Rip Van Winkle, lie buried in deep slumber. A rare soul is awakened through the Master's grace."

There is one high-road that safely leads across this fathomless ocean of the world, and that is the conscious experience and contact of the spirit with the Shabad, Nam, or Word. Just as a lotus flower growing in the water keeps its lovely blossom out of the water, and the water-fowls keep their wings dry and fly off at will from the river, even so the soul immersed in Shabad remains while in the world, not of the world, both now and after death.

"Jaise jal men kamal niralam, murgai nisane,
Surat Shabad bhavsagar tarie, Nanak Nam bahhane."
(O Nanak, the spirit dyed in Nam easily and quietly swims over the fearful ocean, just as a lotus flower and a water-fowl, though both creatures of the water, yet remain unaffected by the water.)

The moment vision is restored to the inner eye there comes a great change in one's entire outlook. One begins to feel the intrinsical value of life and to weigh and judge aright

the real significance of each object. He acquires discrimination. All these are the natural accompaniment of, and flow from, the grace of the Master.

Couplet No. 15.

"Maya Maya Ke Jo Adhikai - Vich Maya Pache Pachijai."
(Those who are stuck fast in the physical senses and are forgetful of their inner selves, die a tortured and lingering death. They lead a life in utter darkness and pass away in that condition.)

In their case there is no end to the cycle of transmigration, and like a bullock yoked to the oil-press, they, in spite of countless gyrations, remain where they are -- subject to countless births and deaths.

Couplet No. 16.

"Agian Andher Maha Panth Bikhra - Ahankar Bhar Lad Lijai."
(Those who are not linked with the Nam, or the Great Power, or have had no opportunity to contact a Master Soul, live in ignorance a life of egoism which gets inflated from day to day as they feel elated at their own deeds.)

It is also said:

"So long as one feels that he is the doer he remains in the clutches of life and death."

It is only the Guru who can liberate the soul from its mental obsession.

Couplet No. 17.

"Nanak Ram Ram Ramo Ram Ram - Rame Te Gat Kijai."
(O Nanak, identify thyself completely with Ram, or that all-pervading power, for that alone would lead to thy emancipation.)

This treasure can only be had from a Saint, and its price is implicit faith in Him, and constant practice of His teachings. This is the only way to achieve this inestimable wealth.

Couplet No. 18.

"Satgur Mile Tan Nam Drijai - Ram Name Rale Milijai."

In conclusion, the Master tells us that the inestimable treasure of Nam can only be acquired from one who is a liberated Being. Such a Master Soul tells us of the way out and makes us experience soul-withdrawal. He puts us upon the Path and helps us in our onward march to the higher regions, and is all the time of immense assistance to us. Such a Great Soul is, in fact, implanted in God, though outwardly He looks like a human being and is engaged in human pursuits.

God is Anam (nameless). When He comes into being He assumes the form of Nam, which means all-pervading power in the form of Sound. This Nam or Sound principle finds its fullest manifestation in that Great Soul, and whosoever goes to Him is linked with that Sound principle, too. By contacting the Nam-power, one is united with Anam-The Lord. It is only in this way that one can achieve these spiritual riches related in the preceding couplets.

Thus Guru Ram Dasji prays to God that he may have an association with the Saints so that he, too, may be implanted in that Great Power. That is why he wishes all through his life to have the good fortune of living with such Master Souls and receiving the benefits that the dust of their feet bestow upon mankind.

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