BABA JI AND THE SCIENCE SPIRITUAL

III

TO PRESENT the teachings of a past Saint who has left no compositions of his own either in verse or in prose, and in whose time shorthand and the tape recorder were yet unknown, is not an easy task. However, the bunch of letters that Baba Ji addressed to his beloved "Babu" Sawan Singh Ji have been preserved and are very revealing.[1] Further, some of those who came in contact with him have left suggestive accounts of his discourses. But most important of all, Hazur Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj, to whom he passed on the spiritual torch, has interpreted within living memory the message in its essence of his great Guru. Piecing all these together, we can arrive at a clear conception of the nature and scope of his teachings.

The creation

The Absolute Reality in its ultimate form was *Nirakar, Nirgun* and *Anami*—Formless, without attributes, and Nameless—and could only be expressed in negatives: "neither light nor darkness," "neither sound nor silence," etc. It was incomprehensible, ineffable, infinite and indescribable. It was this Supreme Reality that was responsible for everything else. When it projected itself into form, it brought into being the purely spiritual realms of *Agam,*

[1] Most of the citations from Baba Ji's letters in the pages that follow are translated directly from the Gurmukhi originals. The reader wishing to read his entire correspondence with Baba Sawan Singh Ji may consult *Spiritual Gems* (Beas, 1958).

Alakh, Sat Naam, etc.; Light and Sound appearing as its primal attributes. Thence as it descended downward, it brought into creation the material current or *Kal* which gained in predominance as it moved lower and still lower. The countless regions that were created below the purely spiritual realms of *Sat Desh* could be divided into three grand divisions: *Brahmand, Und* and *Pind*—the causal, the astral and the physical, or the spirituo-material, the materio-spiritual and the material.

So long as one lived in the plane of the relative, one was caught in the web of Maya. One desire was succeeded by another and pleasure was followed by pain. There could be no lasting rest, no lasting joy. God, in filling the cup of man's earthly blessings, had left out happiness and contentment, to insure that His creature did not wholly forget his Maker. The only way to attain beatitude lay in transcending the realm of relativity and reaching the regions of pure spirit where the soul merged in the Absolute, became lost in the Ocean of Consciousness, and was freed from all failings and desires.

The Path of Liberation

How was this transcension to be achieved? Baba Ji, like Kabir, Nanak and Swâmi Ji, repeatedly affirmed that outer practices were not of much avail. Reading of scriptures could awaken one's interest in spirituality, but by itself it could not insure emancipation. Mystic literature and religious ritual were useful in many ways: they kept mankind aware of a deeper Reality than the one they were accustomed to in everyday life. But this Reality was to be approached through practical means, and absorption in intellectual problems and controversies only diverted one's energies from one's real Path:

Khasam na chinae bawri, ka karat barai,
Batan bhagat na hohingay, chhoado chaturai.
O man! If you have not realized the Almighty, why you brag of your greatness? Let go thine intellectual subtleties.

KABIR

Sakhi Shabd Sandes parh mat bhoolo bhai,
Sant mata kuchh aur hai, khopa so pai.
Don't you be deluded by restricting yourself to mere reading and writing of scriptures. The Path of the Masters is different. He who is truly after it will get it.

KABIR

The devil could quote scriptures, and Baba Ji maintained that "religious wranglings and disputes, the pride of caste, the *Varnashram,* of worship, pilgrimages, mere reciting of scriptures, worshiping those who were past and gone, and such other actions and disciplines" were all "a great deception" and trap set by Kal to keep the soul within the bondage of the realms of relativity. In like manner, the outer *kriyas* or practices of traditional yoga—*pranayam* and various *mudras* and *asanas*—were ineffective for taking us to our real goal. Baba Ji, as his life amply testifies, greatly respected holy men of all creeds and callings, but he never lost sight of man's highest ideal and lived by the insight expressed by Kabir:

Sadh hamare sab barae apni apni thor,
Shabd parkhu jo milae tis aagae sir mor.
All holy ones are worthy of reverence,
But I adore only One who has mastered the Word.

KABIR

He had at a very early age experimented with many a yogic method and whenever he pronounced on the subject, he spoke not as one who bases himself on academic learning, but as one who has himself practically experienced what he says. His words carried conviction, for there was not a trace of prejudice in what he said. He simply explained that he himself had explored all avenues and found the path of Sant Mat or Surat Shabd Yoga to be the highest. He had a great deal to say about the wonderful miraculous powers that could be acquired through yogic sadhnas; but his one criterion was: did they make one the master of one's mind, freeing one from the tyranny of desire? If so, then there was nothing to be said against them, but if not (as was usually the case), then they were hardly of any use. While in Murree in 1894, he, in response to many questions addressed to him by Baba Sawan Singh Ji, dwelt at length on the subject of comparative yoga and concluded by demonstrating how Kabir and Nanak had assimilated the best from their predecessors; how they had penetrated far higher into the Mystic Path; and how they had succeeded in developing a method for mergence with the Formless Absolute that was within the reach of all. He would often quote from past Masters to reinforce his point, and in particular he would cite what his great Guru had said:

Sant Mata sab se bara yeh nische kar jan
Sufi aur Vedanti donon neeche man,
Sant Diwali nit karen Sat Lok ke mahin
Aur mate sab Kal ke yun he dhur urain.

The Path of the Masters is far superior to all others, believe ye in full faith.
Sufism and Vedanta can lead you to a certain

extent but cannot take you to the ultimate goal.
The Saints live eternally in the splendor of the Supreme One.
All other creeds and orders fail to transcend the realms of Relativity.

SAR BACHAN (*poetry*)

What was this science of the Surat Shabd Yoga that represented the crown of mystic achievement? It was, said Baba Ji, the path most economical in effort and the one most rewarding for reaching back to the Primal Source of all life and light. Its secret lay in the insight that if the soul was to merge back into the point from where it had descended, the way of ascent must be identical with that of descent. The Nameless One, when He had assumed Name and Form, had projected Himself into *Shabd, Naam, Kalma* or the Word. It was this spiritual current, whose primary attributes were melody and effulgence, that was responsible for all creation. In a letter dated 21st April, 1903, Baba Ji wrote:

> It is through Shabd that everything came into manifestation — Ishwar (God as the sustainer of the world), Jiva (individual soul), Maya (the subtle and gross material), Brahmand (the physical, astral and causal planes) — all were brought into being by its motion.

All sages, in their own different ways, had testified to the working of the Word or Naam Power:

Kun kae kehnae sae hoowa alam bapa.
Through the utterance of the Word all things came into being.

And again:

> *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*
>
> JOHN 1:1

What the Masters of the Surat Shabd Yoga said on this subject was nothing new; what was distinctive was their emphasis on the idea that if everything—even the *Jiva Atman*—had come into manifestation through the agency of Shabd, then Shabd was the best and only means for reaching back to our Point of Departure, the Nirakar, Nirgun, Anami and Absolute. The music and glory of the Word spread through all creation and permeated our being. If only the Atman could be contacted with it, it could use this "string from the Nameless Lord" to reach His Door. But the soul in its downward descent had loosened the link and had forgotten its real nature. Acquiring the gross coverings of body and mind, it had lost sight of its native home and identified itself with its prison. Baba Ji said in his letter of 15th May, 1900:

> Ever since the Jiva Atman has been separated from Sach Khand (True Abode) and from Shabd Dhun, it has lost its faith in the Sat Purush (True One) and Shabd Dhun. But the Shabd always looks after the Jiva Atman though it knows it not for it has fallen deeply in love with Mind and Maya, with the objects of Maya and the senses that are so deceptive. It loves them so well that it cannot realize that it is to its own detriment, considering as beneficial what is in fact harmful. Love for the Mind has left it anaesthetized, and the Mind itself has fallen senseless before the

pleasures of the senses, and finally, Maya has cast such a spell that it may never recover from its swoon.

The Perfect Master

Our spiritual faculties had got so fogged and cloaked with the gross coverings of Mind and Maya that, even though the Shabd was forever reverberating within and around us, we could not hear its music or see its glory:

Nanak sae ankhriyan bae-an jini disindo mapiri.
Those eyes are different with which my Beloved is seen.

RAG WADHANS 577

How was this chain to be broken? How could man once again revive his link with his Maker? For this, Baba Ji affirmed, one needed indispensably the aid of a competent Master:

Dhur Khasmae ka hukam paya
Vin Satguru chaitya na jai.
Such is the Will of the Lord—
He cannot be known except through a living Satguru.

VAR BIHAGRA 556

Without his enlivening touch the soul could not awaken from its slumber and get attuned to Naam. The Jiva Atman was too far lost in the gross material to contact Shabd on its own account. Besides, the inner way was not an easy one and even if the soul could transcend physical consciousness and enter the realms within, it could not proceed very far on its own. The regions *Und* and *Brahmand* were well-nigh infinite and without a spiritual guide it would remain lost in their wonders. Further, there were

points in the mystic journey, especially between one plane and another, that were so difficult that but for an Adept the soul would be forever obstructed there.[2]

Baba Ji indefatigably emphasized the necessity of a living Master for success in the field. Past Saints may have explored all the mysteries of the mystic realms and may even have left accounts of their experiences. But the inner worlds were indescribable in terms of human language, and at best they could only speak in hints and parables. Since these hints and parables were about a realm of experience completely beyond ordinary human experience, they could not be fully understood except through the aid of One who had himself direct access to the experiences they described. Thus even to understand the true message of past Masters, one needed a living One, and it was only when Baba Ji met Swami Ji that he understood the full import of the Granth Sahib and the writings of Kabir and other great Saints.

The spiritual journey was not a matter of intellectual disquisition. It was a question of practical ascension. Even

[2]Baba Sawan Singh Ji in a letter to one of his disciples makes the necessity of a living Master in the Mystic Path very clear indeed: "When I was in the hospital on account of the fracture of my leg, one day when I was meditating, Baba Ji's form appeared before me. Baba Ji, or rather what seemed to be his form, said: 'If, in a case of emergency, meat and drink are used, there is no harm.' But when I repeated the Five Names, he got up and walked away. Now because I had seen Baba Ji in real life and could visualize him, I found out this trick. But those people who concentrate on the old Masters who passed away thousands of years ago are likely to be misled. His (the Saint's) eyes and his forehead cannot be imitated. Hence, you always require a living teacher for the pupil, a living physician for the sick, a living husband for the wife and a living ruler for the people. I maintain that no one else can help a disciple so much as a living Master." (*Spiritual Gems*, p. 150.)

for academic knowledge a book could not be a substitute for the guidance of a perceptive teacher. Then how much more would this be the case in the spiritual field? The Jiva Atman was so lost in Maya that, according to Baba Ji, it could not of its own accord contact the pure Shabd Dhun. An act of grace alone could put it in touch with the inner Light and Music, and this grace was the gift of a living Master:

> Radhasoami, Lord of the Soul, full of pity and compassion, came down Himself in the form of a Saint, gave us the clues to the Spiritual Regions and showed us the way to reach Sach Khand (True Abode) through Shabd Dhun.

Past Saints were worthy of reverence. Their lives were luminous signposts always beckoning us toward our Divine Home. But it was the law of Nature that the living impulse could only come from the living, and the task they had performed for their own age must, in ours, be performed by One who lived amongst us and who had mastered the way they had mastered. In fact, their writings, if critically studied, were an endless testimony of the need for a living Master.

Who was a competent living Master and how was he to be recognized? Baba Ji knew that there were countless wolves that moved about in sheep's clothing, and since everything depended on finding the true Guide, he laid great stress on the need for vigilance and discrimination. His early experiences had shown only too well the rarity of such great Spirits—one perhaps in an age, at times more (as with Nanak and Kabir, Maulana Rumi and Shamas Tabrez, Tulsi Sahib and Swami Ji, who were contemporaries) but alas always too few—and a man was blessed

indeed if he could come across such a One. The records of past Saints could be used as a touchstone, as had been done by Baba Ji during his quest. If a man was a true Master, and further, a mystic of the highest order, all obscurities and contradictions that puzzled one while reading the scriptures would vanish at his touch. He would not only be able to explain effectively the writings of one school of mystics, but of all, for he had access to all the inner realms, not just one. As a lad Baba Ji had met many a sadhu, but not until he sat at Swami Ji's feet did he begin to appreciate all the treasures stored in the Granth Sahib. Mystics of a lower order could interpret records of only those experiences to which they had access, but One who had ascended to the highest heights could explain everything—a point which Baba Ji's meeting with the four pundits brought out fully.

Another feature of a true Saint was his amazing humility. It was one of the supreme paradoxes of human life that those who claimed to be Saints were not, and those who were, never claimed to be such. Nanak declared himself to be no more than a slave of the servants of Saints and Swami Ji maintained unruffled the garb of his humility. It was not by what a man claimed that he was to be known, but by what he did; a tree was judged not by its name but by its fruit; and a Saint was recognized by his perfection as a man, his freedom from worldly desires, his love and kindness, his unassuming ways, his concern for the welfare of others and his unconcern with name and fame. He gave away his spiritual gifts freely like any other of Nature's blessings, and maintained himself by his own labors:

Gur, Pir sadai mangan jayae
Ta ke mool na lagye payae.

Bow not before one who calls himself a guru
But depends on the charity of others.

SARANG VAR, 1245

If on the human level it was his perfection as a man that marked out a true Saint from the rest, on the spiritual he was to be known by the inner experiences and guidance he could afford. His ability to give some direct spiritual experience, however little it may be, to his disciples at the time of initiation was, Baba Ji insisted, the final test of a true Master. He did not promise spiritual attainment in some future life after death. He gave a taste of it here and now. He linked the soul to the inner Light and Sound and it was the disciple's task to nurture and nourish this seed to full blossom and maturity. The gift of Naam was the sole prerogative of the Satguru and his guiding hand stretched everywhere, in the inner planes no less than in the world outside. So great were his love and protection that no earthly relationship could ever hope to compare to them. His Radiant Form accompanied the soul after it had transcended the body, and led it from plane to plane toward its celestial home; and the perceptive disciple could see his grace working at every turn. Miracles he could perform indeed—being one with the Divine Will—but he was reluctant to disturb the settled plan; and even if he let his grace take the upper hand, he let it work unseen, claiming nothing for himself but working only in the name of his own Master. He did not concern himself with disputes and controversies: "Go within and see for yourself," was his constant dictum, and the stress always fell on the inner and not on outer forms and rituals.

Faith, love and self-surrender

It was indeed a supreme blessing to find a true Satguru.

If the search for a competent Master needed great perseverance and discrimination on the part of the seeker, the qualities most demanded of him after the quest had been crowned were faith, love and complete self-surrender. It was not until King Janak had renounced body, mind and wealth—*tan, man* and *dhan*—that he received enlightenment. To meet a true Master was to realize one's own limitations, and one's blessedness in being accepted at his feet. It was also to know that his love and his wisdom were measureless and infinite. Such a realization must, if one wished to make the most of one's opportunity, be accompanied by humility and faith and the acceptance of his will as supreme. Baba Ji in his discourses and no less in his letters time and again asserted the necessity of love and faith on the part of the disciple. Writing to Baba Sawan Singh on 16th May, 1901, he said:

> Shabd is the real form of the Satguru. By linking with it you will reach your destination. But the condition is that you first develop love and devotion for the person of the Master for without it nothing else is possible. The Satguru is one with the All-Giver, the Anami-Radhasoami, and has assumed a physical form for the uplift of jivas. Whosoever develops a strong love and devotion for him and regards him as the Supreme Lord Himself will contact the Shabd Dhun and be saved.

On another occasion he wrote:

> Even after a hundred years of Bhajan one does not get so purified as by an intense longing for *darshan* (meeting with the Master), provided that the longing is real and true and the love for the Satguru is from the innermost heart.

Self-surrender was the natural corollary of such faith and love and Baba Ji's letters return insistently to this theme:

> Be not lost in yourself. Let this thought be firmly and unshakeably fixed in your mind: "Body, mind and wealth, *nirat* and *surat,* eyes, ears, nose, mouth, hands, feet—yea, all that is in the world is the Satguru's. I myself am nothing. Whatever you are doing, do it as Satguru's and always seek to do what is the best. Do not forget this even for a moment, but take it as a *hidayat,* a commandment.
>
> (24th May, 1901)

> Never let the idea of "mine-ness" find a place in your heart. Even if you get the lordship of Brahmand, do not regard that you have any share in it: "I am only an agent." Everything is the Satguru's. Let the Master's injunction be ever in your mind: "I am nothing, I am nothing, I am nothing," and let the remembrance of the Lord be your constant thought and the form of the Satguru imaged in your heart always.
>
> (7th September, 1900)

> Weed out all worldly desires from your heart and place them at your Master's feet. Claim nothing for yourself and try to tune yourself to his Will which should be uppermost in your heart. Even if he asks you to dig grass, do it, for to obey the Satguru is the highest action. If you can cast your heart in this mold, then all things will be added unto you.
>
> (18th September, 1902)

When Baba Sawan Singh Ji once wrote that he did not even yearn for Sach Khand but only prayed that he had "love and faith at the Satguru's holy feet," Baba Ji was

extremely pleased and replied that such self-surrender was "indeed the highest *karni* (discipline)," and assured him that "he who had such a love for the Master would certainly reach Sach Khand, and passing through the Alakh, Agam, Anami-Radhasoami, get merged in the Wonder Region" (11th September, 1897).

The life without

The seeker who had found a true Guide and who had begun to develop the right kind of love and faith in him, would naturally attempt to fashion his life according to his Satguru's Will, and Baba Ji laid great emphasis on the need to transform our lives. It was not necessary, he maintained, to leave the world in order to pursue the inner Path. What was needed for spiritual progress was inner detachment, and he who had surrendered himself completely to his Guru was free from all earthly ties. Some of his disciples would at times express the desire for complete renunciation, but he always kept such tendencies in check:

> You say you wish to give up home and service and devote yourself exclusively to Bhajan. Home or service or wealth—are they really yours? Turn it over in your mind. It is all a magician's game and the world is a dream. Then why worry about clutching and relinquishing?
>
> (18th September, 1902)

The ideal he always held up before his disciples was that of the royal swan that had its home in the water yet rose up from it dry and untrammeled. If he would not have his disciples attached to the world, he would not have them neglect their worldly duties either. When Baba Sawan

Singh wrote that he would be taking ten days leave and spending it at Beas, Baba Ji replied:

> When you come on ten days leave, you should first proceed straight home, and then on your way back drop in Saturday at about 5 p.m. at the Dera from where you can proceed to duty the following day after attending the Sunday Satsang. You must go home for there are many things awaiting your attention there for the last two or three years. Therefore please go straight home. I will be very pleased if you first go home and then come here.

When on one occasion his beloved disciple was unable to secure leave for seeing him and offered to come over nonetheless, Baba Ji was far from happy and strictly forbade any such step. "Please never write such a thing again," he answered, "that you would come here without taking leave," and added, "The work that you are doing, that is also the work of Radhasoami, the work of the Lord."

However, while living in the world one had to follow a very rigorous discipline. The road to the New Jerusalem was a narrow and difficult one. "Your way of living," said the sage of Beas to his disciples, "must be different from that of other people." And how exacting was the discipline he demanded becomes clear from one of his letters:

> You do not seem to understand that when your official duties are over, you are not to talk to anyone. In the evening between 6 and 8, you should sit for Bhajan as long as possible—be it half an hour, an hour, fifteen minutes or an hour and a half—and keep the surat on the inner planes. Then hold Satsang from 8 to 10 p.m., after which you may go to sleep or talk

> as you please. Then at 4:30 in the morning you are to sit for Bhajan and continue up to 5:30. Then throughout the day you have to attend to your official routine and may, if you like, talk during those hours. But as soon as you are free from office duties, you must not waste time in idle talk or in the company of non-satsangis. You should have your meals in private . . . You are never to have meals cooked from non-satsangis in your kitchen, especially if they take meat and drink. If you associate with non-satsangis, you will have to suffer from the effects of their company.
>
> (17th October, 1902)

Abstinence from non-vegetarian food and intoxicants was a prime condition for taking to the spiritual path. Baba Ji laid equal stress on the need for honesty. In the same letter we have quoted above, he wrote:

> If you are offered anything free, never accept it for how will you repay it? If you do not adhere strictly to this rule, you will never attain the highest spiritually.

One must not be led away by the world but look upon each object with discrimination. "The entire world is tied with the ropes of the love of parents, children, wife and earthly relations," and one must free oneself from this slavery. Running away to the jungles was no solution. It had to be an inner detachment, and this inner detachment could only come through the love of a true Master. Hence the great value of Satsang, for it was only through association with him that one imbibed the true values of life, learned of the delusions of Maya, and imbibed a love that displaced the love of the world. Peace and blessing radiate

from the person of a Saint and whoever came under his spell was freed from worldly tensions, ambitions and jealousies. He saw all creatures as of his own essence and knew all worldly gain to be a passing shadow. Such a man alone could cut through the meshes of Maya and reach out toward the worlds beyond.

The life within

The perfection of outer conduct was essential as it was only an indispensable means for reaching the inner goal. Love and faith for the Satguru, self-surrender and the ethically unimpeachable life all converged on this center. Man's ultimate goal was at-one-ment with the Absolute, and if this was not achieved the rest was not of much benefit. It was this question of actual spiritual ascension that was Baba Ji's main concern as a teacher. He did not expend much time on matters of theory. Why dispute? Why argue? he would say. Turn within, go inside and see for yourself. His correspondence with Baba Sawan Singh Ji is one long exhortation to leave the outside world and to retreat to the world within, and each of his letters has something valuable to say on the actual practice of spirituality.

Since the soul had fallen a victim to Maya through the Mind and the senses, the way of liberation for it lay through its withdrawal from them. The two sadhnas that Baba Ji gave for practice, as his predecessors had done, were *Simran* and *Bhajan*. The first, involving the repetition of the sacred names of the Lord, was to be practiced at all hours of the day. "Always keep the Simran in mind," he enjoined, "even while moving or busy at work." Constant thought of the Supreme One was the greatest security against worldly thoughts and desires. It helped the mind

in keeping itself free from its usual preoccupations and when done with full attention at the time of *abhyasa* or meditation, it enabled a speedy collection of the currents of consciousness at the spiritual center between and behind the eyebrows. Once such concentration or *Dhyan* had been attained, one could get in touch with the Sound Current, and Dhyan (resulting from Simran) led naturally to *Bhajan* or absorption into the Shabd Dhun:

> When you are doing your Bhajan or Simran, do not have any worldly cares in your mind nor let yourself be distracted by any thoughts. First do your Simran for a quarter of an hour, then gradually fix your attention in the music of the Shabd Dhun. Then give up Simran and anchor your mind and soul in the Shabd. You will then experience great bliss and Supreme Grace will descend on you from the highest region.

Such was the general pattern. The details, of course, were adjustable. The time factor could vary, but daily abhyasa was to be maintained at all costs:

> Listen to the Shabd Dhun, calling in your heart, every day with great love and devotion, for fifteen minutes or ten minutes or five minutes or an hour or two, according to the time at your disposal. But you must listen to it every day for a while.[3]

There was great beauty in the Shabd. It had a music that was beyond any music created by man and which drew

[3] Hazur Baba Sawan Singh Ji also laid great stress on this: ". . . no matter in what circumstances one finds himself and what new problems one is facing, a devotee should not miss his Bhajan. He may give only fifteen minutes or even five minutes to it daily, but he should be on it without a break." (*Spiritual Gems*, p. 462)

the soul toward itself. It was forever calling the spirit toward its Divine Home and though it was not heard by ordinary men, yet those who had developed, through abhyasa and the grace of a Satguru, the capacity of inner hearing, could hear its melody every minute of the day, now growing stronger as the mind focused itself at one point, now dimming and fading away as one's thoughts scattered in various directions and attention was dissipated. It was Shabd that was the true anchor of the seeker. It was the conscious power that had brought everything into creation and it was also one's real Master—the *Shabd Guru* —for the Satguru in his human form was its physical manifestation. Baba Ji once said:

> Shabd Dhun—that is our real form. This physical body is only a garment. Nobody could keep it forever and nobody ever will . . . Believe, O devout ones, that the Shabd form of the Satguru, which has no beginning and no end, is within the body.

Once one had developed a constant link with this inner music, it worked as a shield against worldly afflictions and sorrows. Misfortunes visited everyone and one's past karmas had to be paid for; but for the man who had rooted himself in the Shabd Dhun, they had lost their sting. Baba Ji, speaking mostly to simple villagers, drove home his teachings through examples and similes based on village life. Thus explaining the protective power of Shabd, he would say:

> The body is like a village or city and the Shabd Dhun is our own house. When somebody dies or there is some great suffering in another house, everyone in that house is very unhappy but we, in our own house, are quite contented.

Again, clarifying the magnetic power and hold of the inner music, on another occasion he wrote:

> . . . the Shabd Dhun will pull it (mind) and keep it in the same way as animals, like goats or cattle, are kept tied by means of a rope.

The greatest obstacles to the seeker were the mind and the senses. It was through their agency that the soul had been caught in the nets of Maya, and the soul had to disengage itself from them in order to be free. Shutting out sense experience was not so difficult. Even when the gates of the senses had been shut, the mind continued to disturb and distract. It was the root of the ego principle and, therefore, the chief cause of the jiva's isolation from the Universal Lord. How was this restless dragon to be conquered? Baba Ji maintained that the chief remedy lay in meditation on the form of the true Master and absorption in Shabd:

> You ask me how to hold your mind. It is held only through Shabd. Hear its music daily and meditate on the form of Satguru. Then the mind shall cease to wander and one day, borne on the Shabd Dhun, the soul shall reach Dasam Dwar (the third inner plane and home of the Universal Mind). Thus, leaving the mental apparatus behind, the soul shall unite with the pure Shabd and through the grace of the Satguru reach Sach Khand. Have no doubt, it shall reach there.
>
> (7th January, 1901)

Once the mind had been brought under control and it no longer doubted and wavered:

> Then the Radiant Form of the Master appears within.

> There is no difference between it and the physical form. It is like a reflection in a clear mirror. So long as the glass is not clear, nothing can be seen reflected.

The mind was indeed a glass, which, when sullied by the muck-flow of worldly attachments, blurred and hid everything; but the moment this film was cleansed, it imaged the Universal in itself. The surat, collected by Simran at the *Tisra Til,* shot through it with the aid of the magnetism of Shabd. As it entered the inner realms, it was met by the Radiant Form of the Master that welcomed it and thenceforward guided every step of its inner journey.

Once the soul had won access to the Master in his Radiant Form within, its major task was over. The rest was a matter of time. It could of course be taken directly to higher planes by the Satguru, but he worked out the progress gradually for else, as was the case with an insistent pundit, the shock and strain of it would be too great. The *Sanchit* Karmas (actions of past lives to fructify in future births) and the *Kriyaman* Karmas (actions in this life also to fructify in future ones) had of course been rendered ineffective the moment the Master had accepted one in his fold. But the *Prarabdha* Karmas on which the present life was based had to be worked out, else death would immediately ensue. The Master sought to exhaust these as swiftly and as smoothly as possible. When Baba Sawan Singh Ji's leg was fractured, Baba Ji revealed that it was the result of no mere accident but of past karmas whose fruit could not be avoided. But his suffering if not wholly canceled had been mitigated through his Satguru's intercession. "Whatever suffering has come to you," Baba Ji wrote, "is only a fifth part, four parts have been condoned," and went on to add:

> Suffering and troubles are blessings in disguise for they are ordained by the Lord. If our benefit lies in pain, He sends pain, if in pleasure He sends pleasure. Pleasures and pains are tests of our strength and if one does not waver or deflect, then the Almighty blesses such souls with Naam.
>
> (8th May, 1897)

Whatever troubles befell his disciples, Baba Ji told them to be of good cheer. The sooner their accounts were cleared the better, and special grace was theirs in the hour of trial:

> Sickness and pleasures are the fruits of past actions. All those who are sick are extended special grace. Let them, therefore, have no worry, but bear it with equanimity. During suffering, the mind wanders not and turns to Bhajan readily in sorrow. So blessed are the periods of sickness when the mind is turned toward Bhajan. This is a special gift to Satsangis. So whenever sickness and pain afflict you, accept them as the Lord's Will and devote yourself to your spiritual exercises. So long as the surat is absorbed in the Shabd Dhun, pain will not be felt . . . Has it not been said: "Pleasure is the disease and pain the remedy."
>
> (17th October, 1902)

"Once one meets a competent Satguru, one learns the complete inner way and launches on the spiritual journey," Baba Ji would say, "there is then only the liquidation of give and take that limits its flight. The soul is then not pure enough to catch the Divine Shabd and must be first freed of all karmic reactions. The Satguru must free it from the chain of karmas in this life itself so as to safe-

guard against the necessity of taking further births for their repayment."

Hence the inevitability of suffering, but fortunately for Satsangis "years of pain are liquidated in a matter of days." The Shabd Dhun was one's guiding angel, one's protecting charm. If one took refuge in its richness, one's karmas were steadily burnt away in its purifying flame. As the mind grew calmer and the karmas got exhausted, the soul was progressively released from Maya and guided by the Radiant Master within, penetrating to ever higher inner planes. The disciple had not to worry. His task was only to abide by his Guru's commandments, and labor according to His Will. It was for the Satguru to crown his efforts as he considered fit and appropriate, for he was the best judge and did what was best for the disciple:

> What the Lord considers best He is doing. Do not bring yourself into the picture. Live by the words of the Master and continue performing your earthly duties. When the fruit is ripe, it will fall of its own accord without injury to itself or the bearing branch, and the ripe fruit is held in great value. But if we pluck the unripe fruit forcibly from off the tree, the branch is injured and the raw fruit shrivels and is of little use. Meeting a competent Master is the fulfilment of human birth: this is the fruit of life. To live by his commandments ensures its proper nurture. Daily Simran and Bhajan to the maximum possible are its best food and nourishment, and mergence with Shabd is its ripening and falling off.
>
> (3rd March, 1899)

Such was the progress of the soul. Its ripening was a matter of steady growth. Supported by the words of the Mas-

ter, nourished by Bhajan, and borne on the Shabd Dhun, it transcended realm after realm until it left all coverings of mind and matter behind and reached Sach Khand. This was its True Abode, the realm of pure spirit. From there, merging into the Divine, it receded progressively into the Formless, until, passing through the Alakh and Agam, it reached the Anami, the Nameless and Formless source of all that moves and has its being.

With some, as in the case of Baba Ji himself, the entire journey, owing to the spiritual proficiency they had gained in past lives, was accomplished at what seemed to their fellows a phenomenal and amazing speed. There were others who, through their intense devotion and abhyasa, reaped in a single life the fruits of many births. But the overwhelming majority consisted of those who took to spirituality as a passing phase of idealism and who did not make Shabd the sheet anchor of their lives, but turned to it only intermittently. For such people success in a single life was not assured. But the seed once sown by a Master could not go to waste, and that which had not sprouted in one birth could blossom forth in the next, under the guidance of the living human manifestation of the Shabd Power working at that time. And even this was unnecessary if one had already before death contacted the Naam current and washed away all earthly desires, for then one could work out the rest of one's salvation from supra-physical planes. Once a true Satguru had taken one in his fold, one was assured of deliverance and sooner or later would reach one's Eternal Home. Even if he left his earthly frame his guidance and protection continued unaffected. There was no need for those who had been initiated by him to seek initiation from any other; for if the Guru's physical form was mortal, his Shabd form was eternal and

ever reverberating. One could of course seek elucidation on knotty points from the fellow disciple who had been chosen by one's Master to succeed him. But as for inner guidance, that continued to remain the sole responsibility of one's preceptor even if he was physically alive no longer. The disciple's sole duty was to follow the practices enjoined by his Guru and it was for him to crown them with success. Had not Jesus said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world"? And did not Swami Ji on the last day of his mission on earth assure his devotees: "Have no fear whatsoever. I am forever with each one of you and your protection and care shall be even greater than before"? [4]

[4] *Jeevan Charitrar Swamiji Maharaj,* p. 112. It is relevant to point out here the controversy initiated by Shri S. D. Maheshwari in his *Radhasoami Faith, History and Tenets* (Agra, 1954), Chapter 22, regarding paragraph 250 of *Sar Bachan* (prose). The volume was not written by Swami Ji himself, but was based on dictations and notes taken by disciples, and published several years after his death. When Baba Ji undertook to have it republished at Beas, he strictly adhered to the Agra text but for paragraph 250 which, he was convinced, gave an erroneous picture of Swami Ji's teachings. Swami Ji had always said that once a true Master had taken a disciple under his wing, he would never forsake him whatever the matter. Even if he left the physical plane, his guidance continued; we have already quoted his last words on the subject. Nor should it be forgotten that when referring his disciples to Rai Saligram, he expressly stated that if they desired "elucidation" (not initiation) on any point, they could consult "Saligram" for it.

Keeping the above in mind, Baba Ji had paragraph 250 of the Agra edition, which stated that a disciple could make no progress after the death of his Guru until he sought out his successor (a point not always easy to settle), deleted, and substituted for it the following, to accord with Swami Ji's original teachings:

> If anyone is initiated by a perfect Satguru, having love and faith in Him, serving Him devotedly, and before he has advanced far the Guru should depart, he should continue to contemplate His form and perform all of the exercises prescribed by the Guru. The same Satguru, in the same Radiant

An ancient science

Baba Jaimal Singh gave out his spiritual message not as something new, but as an ancient science. Its traces were to be found in the scriptures of all faiths, but it came into full blossom in known history with Kabir and Nanak. Their writings reveal unequivocally that they had realized the inner science to its full potential. The great tradition that these Master-souls had established was continued by Nanak's successors and then, as we have already seen earlier in this study, passed on to Tulsi Sahib of Hathras and from him to Swami Ji of Agra, before returning with Baba Jaimal Singh to the Punjab.

The Surat Shabd Yoga was not merely a faith, but a science. It had not been confined to India alone, but was known to the greatest of the Sufis; and historical records suggest that the two movements, in India and in the Middle East, often met and intermingled. It was a path open to all men and most suited to our times. Swami Ji in giving out his message was not teaching anything new. He was doing what his great predecessors had done: revitalizing and reinterpreting for his times the truths given out of old. Baba Ji strongly resisted any suggestion that his Master had discovered a wholly new path, as some people came later to suggest. Had he not himself declared in *Sar Bachan* after stating his tenets:

Jo mun maen pateet na dekhe
To Kabir, Gur Bani Pekhe,

Form, will continue to carry on the work as he had commenced it, and will carry it on to final success, as if he were still in the body.

Stated in this form, Bachan 250 fits in perfectly with Bachan 254, which fails to harmonize with it in the Soamibagh version.

Tulsi Sahib ka mat joi,
Paltu, Jagjivan kahen soi.
In santan ka daeon parmana
In ki Bani sakh bakhana.

He who cannot realize this fact
Let him refer to the teachings of Kabir and the Sikh Gurus.
Tulsi Sahib also taught those truths,
While Paltu and Jagjivan point to the same.
I refer the skeptic to the testimony of such mystics,
For their teachings are in accord with what I say.[5]

And did he not often base his discourses on the writings of Kabir, Tulsi Sahib, Bhikha, and especially of Guru Nanak?

Any hypothesis that Swami Ji while beginning in the footsteps of his predecessors suddenly, after 1858-61, transcended to some higher realms unknown to any before him, could at best only misrepresent him. His poetical compositions were the fruit of the last years of his life, and in them he had said, while stating that the Satguru was identical with the Sat Purush:

Sewa kar puja kar un ki,
Unhi ko Guru Nanak jan.
Vohi Kabir Vohi Satnama
Sab santan ko vohi pahchan.
Tera kaj unhi se hoga,
Mat bhatke tu taj abhiman.

Serve and worship the Guru for he is Nanak;
Kabir is also in him, and even so is Sat Naam.

[5] *Sar Bachan* (Beas, 1950), p. 350.

Truly, every Saint is the embodied form of the Formless;
Your emancipation will be wrought by Him and Him alone.

In the light of such recorded statements—to say nothing of what Swami Ji directly told his disciples—how could one be so obtuse as to claim a new invention for him?

The Agra Saint, Baba Ji pointed out, in spite of what came to be claimed later (about a decade after his death), had always initiated his disciples into the Simran of the Panch Shabd. Indeed, this was the primary ground of difference on account of which Baba Ji was unwilling to join the Central Administrative Council at Soamibagh in 1902. The greatest Saints of the past had put their disciples on the Panch Shabd, he said, as was clear from their writings:

Kabir through the agency of the Five Words is now ever merged in the silence of the Formless.

KABIR

Know him to be a true Master who can open in thee the way back to God,
And guides thee in the spiritual path with the clarion call of the Five Sounds.[6]

GURU NANAK

Without the Satguru one finds not the secret of Naam,
Sweet is the elixir of Shabd that flows through the Simran of the Five Words.[7]

GURU AMAR DAS

[6] War M. 1.

[7] Maru M. 3.

Blessed indeed is one who through the grace of the Master
Unfolds the eternal melody of the Five Sounds.[8]
GURU ARJAN

Tulsi Sahib also referred to the same explicitly in his writings.

Swami Ji respected and revered them and pursued the same course as theirs. In *Sar Bachan* he clearly stated at one point:

Panch Shabd ka Simran karo
Siam set main surat dharo.

Keep repeating the five holy Words, and focus on the dark spot within.

When Swami Ji began using the term *Radhasoami* brought into vogue by his devoted and beloved disciple Rai Saligram, he did not, Baba Ji affirmed, begin a new faith or creed. He simply accepted the word as yet another name for the Unnameable Infinite; interpreting it on the outer plane to stand for the disciple (*Radha*) and the Guru (*Soami*), and on the inner plane for the soul current (*Radha*) and its source (*Soami*). When Baba Sawan Singh Ji objected to the use of this new word at Murree in 1894, Baba Ji, as we have already seen, picked up a copy of *Sar Bachan* and read out the verse:

Radha aad surat ka naam
Soami aad Shabd nij dham.

Radha is the name of the primal soul current (surat);
Soami is the name of the primal source of Shabd or the Word.

[8] Ramkali M. 5.

He explained that the Absolute in His ultimate form was formless and indescribable, yet Saints in their zeal to point Him out to their disciples had given Him countless names. Had not the authors of the *Vishnu Sahasranama* and the *Jap Sahib* coined hundreds of names for the All-Merciful Creator? Then why object to "Radhasoami"?

The Reality which Swami Ji attempted to point out by the term "Radhasoami" had been referred to by his predecessors by other names, like *Khasam* or *Soami* (Supreme Lord), *Maha Dayal* (All Grace), *Nirala*(the Mysterious), *Nirankar* (Formless), and *Anami* (Nameless). Thus Kabir once said:

Kal Akal Khasam ka keena
Eh parpanch badhawan.
Time and the Timeless both spring from a single source
And are vital for His manifestation.

And Nanak had declared:

Kot Brahmand ka thakur Soami
Sarabh jian ka data reh.
Soami is the Lord of all creation and the Master of all the souls.

Tulsi Sahib had spoken in a similar vein:

Sab ki aad kahun main Soami.
I address as "Soami" the Creator of all that is.

Swami Ji himself, like his Master, invoked the Supreme Reality as "Soami" or more often still as "Sahib Soami" and "Satguru Soami." He used those terms freely in his discourses and letters rather than the word "Radhasoami." It is just likely that these occurred in his original poetical

compositions as well, but that the word "Radhasoami" was substituted for them, for purposes of homogeneity, when these poems were collected some six years after his death along with many of Hazur Maharaj Rai Saligram's compositions, in the volume entitled *Sar Bachan* (poetry), in which "Radhasoami" word stands either for the ultimate goal—Soami or Anami—or for the Guru.

Baba Ji was prepared to go thus far and no farther. He respected the term "Radhasoami" as yet another attempt at naming the Nameless, but could not accept the special mystic significance that began to be given to it after Swami Ji's death. Had not the Agra Saint himself said in Bachan 115, Part II of *Sar Bachan* prose:

> Naam is of two kinds: *Varanatmak* and *Dhunatmak*. Innumerable are the benefits of Dhunatmak Naam and hardly any of the Varanatmak Naam.[9]

[9] In the light of Swami Ji's Bachan 115 quoted above, which Shri S. D. Maheshwari himself cites (*Correspondence with Certain Americans,* Agra, 1960, p. 193), one fails to realize how the latter could commit himself to such patently self-canceling statements as: "*Radhasoami Naam* is resounding in all refulgence in higher spheres" (p. 192); "Like the word *Om, Sat Naam* is resounding at the seat of *Sat Purush* (True Being). In the same way the Shabd or Sound *Radhasoami* is resounding in the Radhasoami Dham" (p. 266). It is indeed interesting to learn that Hindi is the *lingua franca* of the transcendent worlds. One had thought that the inner Shabd was *Dhunatmak* (musical and irreducible to speech) and not *Varanatmak;* and further that the Anami or Radhasoami realm was beyond Naam and Form, the Parent and Creator of Shabd (which came into full manifestation only at Sat Lok) and not its seat and center. It is not irrelevant here to point out that mystics have attempted to describe the music of Shabd only up to the fifth plane—speaking of the bell, the conch, the drum, the *kingri* (one-stringed harp), the flute, etc.—but beyond that have been forced to utter *Herat! Herat! Herat!*—"Wonder! Wonder! Wonder!" Form and Shabd, as we have already stated, progressively disappear after the fifth plane, and what finally remains is the Ocean of Blissful Consciousness that defies all description.

All names that could be brought into verbal expression were Varanatmak and were therefore outer, and subject to variation from person to person and from people to people. The inner Shabd was the same in all ages and the same for all people. It was wholly musical, defying verbal expression or description, and was the source of all creation and therefore the sole object of the seeker's abhyasa. Any word prepossessed in one's mind appears to be reverberating in that Sound principle. Baba Ji, abiding by the spirit of his great Guru, unhesitatingly declared, "Any word which may possibly be brought into utterance and writing could not be an internal spiritual Sound which is the unspoken and unwritten law and order of the whole creation." How could the word "Radhasoami" be Dhunatmak when it had been brought into outer expression, and how could it be said to be "resounding" in the highest spiritual plane where form did not exist and where the Shabd itself had not yet come into manifestation?

His Master, Baba Ji explained, had always held his teachings to be those of Kabir and Nanak and had never claimed to have entered realms unknown to any man before him in human history. Had not the greatest mystics of the past left definite testimony of their access to all the eight inner planes? And did not one read in Nanak:

Sat Lok ke oopar dhave
Alakh, Agam ki tab gat pave
Tis ke oopar Santan dham
Nanak das kio bisram.

He who transcends the Sat Lok
Alone knows the essence of Agam and Alakh,
The Saints have their abode above them
And poor Nanak too is a resident there.

Swami Ji's last words placed his adherence to the traditional path beyond any shadow of a doubt. He had made it clear that he had nothing to do with "Radhasoami" developed as a cult. His path was that of Sat Naam and the Anami, and if he did accept the term "Radhasoami" it could only be as another Varanatmak name for the Unnameable One.

All names like *Sat Naam, Onkar,* etc., given for Simran were in like manner Varanatmak. Their sole functions were (a) to help build up Dhyan or one-pointed concentration, and (b) to serve as passwords for crossing from one plane to another. The soul's task (and the Satguru's) was to reach the fifth plane, Sat Lok, and for this five passwords, one for each realm, were needed. Once the soul entered the regions of pure spirit, no further passwords were necessary. As it beheld the Sat Purush, the deity of Sat Lok or Sach Khand, and the first definite manifestation of Naam and Form of the Formless and the Nameless, it realized that He (i.e., Sat Purush) and the Satguru were not distinct but one and the same, and that it itself was also of their very essence. Its search for the Absolute was at last over and it began to merge in Him. As it entered deeper and deeper, being absorbed from Form into the Formless, it passed through Alakh (indescribable) and Agam (inconceivable) until it finally lost itself in the Ocean of Bliss and Consciousness that is the Ultimate Reality beyond any name and form, ineffable, immaculate, indescribable, and immeasurable. It was what it was and nothing more could be said of it. The only way left for describing it was through negatives. It was neither light nor darkness, neither sound nor silence. No Shabd could be said to be resounding there, as Shabd had not yet come into manifestation, and to say that the strains of "Radha-

soami" could be heard vibrating there was a contradiction in terms.

All past Adepts in the Surat Shabd Yoga had taught as such. Any perceptive student of their writings could see that they all regarded the entry into the fifth plane as the goal that both disciple and Guru must set before themselves. For achieving this, the Simran of the five sacred names was essential; and once the soul had entered Sat Lok it remained the Sat Purush's task to merge it into Himself and permit it to recede further and still further into the Formless and the Nameless. It was this very two-phase process that Swami Ji underlined when he said, "My path was the path of Sat Naam and the Anami Naam," and at the conclusion of Bachan 26 in *Sar Bachan* (poetry), while describing the soul's entry into Sat Lok and its journey beyond, he made the whole method very clear indeed and left not a shadow of doubt:

Pushap madh sae uthi avaza
Kau tum hoe kaho kaja
Satgur milae bhed sub dina
Tis ki kripa daras hum lina
Darshan kar ut kar magnani
Sat Purush tub bolae bani
Alakh lok ka bhed sunaya
Bal upna dae surat pathaya
Alakh Purush ka roop anoopa
Agam Purush nirkha kul bhoopa
Dekh achraj kaha na jaye
Kaya kaya sobha varan paye

From the lotus there arose a voice:
"Speak! Who are you and what brings you here?"

"My Satguru gave me the key to this realm
And through His grace I am blessed with thy darshan."
Beholding the Lord it was lost in ecstasy;
Thereupon the Sat Purush spoke
Giving forth the secrets of Alakh Lok
And by His own power raised it further.
The form of the Alakh Purush defies description.
Agam Purush, the Lord of all creations,
His wondrous sight cannot be described
And His glory cannot be rendered in words.

Baba Ji strictly adhered to his Master's original teachings and assured his disciples that if they lived by his instructions they most certainly would "reach Sach Khand, and, passing through Alakh, Agam, Anami Radhasoami, get merged in the Wonder Region." Saints in the past had attained the highest state through the agency of the Five Names, so why change them now? Why travesty Swami Ji's message merely for starting a new cult? The Surat Shabd Yoga was an ancient science and it had not changed overnight. Before his last day, Baba Ji called all his disciples then present at Beas and declared: "It is the Will of Din Dayal Swami Ji Maharaj that I open the doors of the spiritual treasure house even more widely than before. My Master wishes that I give you in even greater detail than before an account of the inner realms, the first five and the last three, so that you should not be put in doubt and say that one who was favored of Swami Ji passed away in silence." He then spoke at length on the wonders of the worlds within and ended with the words we have already cited in the conclusion to the biography: "All my life I

have only sought to serve my Master, and now whatever he had to accomplish through this poor physical frame is over."

It is impossible to reduce to bare statement the outer teachings of a great man. The task becomes doubly difficult in the case of a Saint of the eminence of Baba Jaimal Singh Ji. Such spirits speak from a wisdom that we cannot understand and act not as limited human beings but as the agents of the Lord:

Jaisi maen aavae Khasam ki bani
Taisra kari gian wey Lalo.
What my Lord speaks within me, O Lalo,
That alone I utter.[10]

GURU NANAK

Their message lives in every little word they speak and in every little gesture. The abstract statement of their philosophy is but the skeleton of bone and cartilage that misses altogether the flesh and blood of their direct impact on their disciples. Who can now recall those words of wisdom, of peace, of consolation, of reassurance, of encouragement, of loving reprimand that Baba Ji uttered as he moved among his disciples? And who can now record those little acts of selfless kindness and superhuman love that unconsciously brought home to those around the unquestioning conviction of the truth of what the sage taught? If ever there was a problem that could not be solved, he sat wrapt in meditation, and when he returned from the inner planes the answer was with him. But all that—beyond a few brief recorded accounts—is lost forever, the meaning spoken and the meaning left unspoken and expressed through the agency of the eyes, the words

[10] Tilang M. 1, 722

of advice on every conceivable subject to the never-ending stream of disciples and seekers; and it is gone beyond recall. We can only give the husk, the skeleton, and leave the rest to the reader. And for his better remembrance and convenience we summarize here some of the main features of his message—the most ancient, and yet, in his hands as in those of every great Saint, the most new and the most vital.

Surat Shabd Yoga

It is the highest form of Yoga which takes the soul to the very source, the source of all life and creation, the Formless and Nameless Anami. It is the most economical and quickest way, and can be practiced by all, young and old, children and women, householders and non-householders. In fact, it is the best suited for our times when other yogic forms, so slow and exacting, are well-nigh impossible to practice. Swami Ji made no mistake when on his last day he said, "In this *yuga* (time cycle) nothing can avail except devotion to a true Master and the practice of Naam." [11]

The Satguru or the True Master

He is an embodiment of the Sat Purush in human form, having become one with Him. "Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us." Without the active aid of such a living Master, nothing is possible. Past Masters may have ferried their contemporaries across, but they cannot be of much use to us. The Shabd Guru must always be contacted through the agency of its living manifestation. The only infallible test for competence in this field is the Satguru's

[11] *Jeevan Charitrar Swamiji Maharaj*, p. 112

ability to give some first-hand experience which may be later developed. Once one has found a true Master, one should concentrate on inner discipline. His guidance is always with us and continues even after he has left the physical plane.

The Gurmukh or the genuine disciple

Having found a genuine Master after resolving all doubts, one must live up to the ideal of a perfect disciple. And what is it to be such a perfect disciple? It is to have full faith in the Satguru, never questioning his wisdom and authority. It is to be lost in his love while at work or at play, for such love alone can purify the heart of the imperfect loves of the world. Further, given such faith and love, one is to follow to the best of one's ability his injunctions: "If you love me, keep my commandments." If a disciple develops those qualities and surrenders himself completely to the Satguru's Will, he shall be freed from worldly desires, become an apt receptacle for the Shabd Dhun, and the Master's grace and generosity shall descend upon him like a flood that breaks open all inner gates and obstructions.

The outer and the inner

The way to salvation lies not outside; it is within. Outer rituals are of no avail and, though it is desirable to honor the memory of past Masters, to be lost in the worship of their *samadhs,* statues or pictures cannot be of any substantial use. One must hold up their lives as a model and like them concentrate upon the world within. Baba Ji himself would spend weeks in Bhajan and Simran with only short breaks for food. He always encouraged his disciples

to give as much time as possible to the sadhnas he had taught. Constant remembrance of the Lord was the best protection against attachment and Maya; and one should maintain the five-fold Simran all the hours of the day. No less important was Bhajan, which needed more concentrated attention. Whatever the matter, however preoccupied with outer duties, the disciple must find some time every day—be it ever so little—for Bhajan. Only through maintaining the link with Shabd could anything be gained and once a disciple had strengthened the link through constant practice, the inner music flowed in incessantly at all hours of the day, becoming a clarion call forever inviting him within and deftly lifting him like a silken robe from off the thorns of earthly desires.

In short, Baba Ji taught spirituality as a non-sectarian inner discipline which was accessible to all. He always emphasized that the matter was not one of outer forms and sects: it was entirely a question of inward purification and practice. He who could find a true Master, grow into an apt disciple, and unfailingly pursue the sadhna he had been taught, would without doubt sooner or later reach Sat Lok. The Satguru's task was to take the soul to the Sat Purush, on beholding whom it realized itself to be of the same essence, and saw the Satguru and the Supreme Lord as one and indivisible. There it merged into the Sat Naam, with whose help it receded further into the Alakh, Agam, Anami (or Radhasoami) and even to a Wonder Region beyond as will be evinced from one of the letters of Baba Ji (presented in *Spiritual Gems*), each marking a further stage of the soul's absorption from name and form into the Nameless and the Formless, the final stage being beyond all forms of light and sound and therefore wholly indescribable in terms of human experience.

One could succeed in this path irrespective of one's social or religious background. True to Swami Ji's injunctions, Baba Ji attempted to interpret spirituality in as non-sectarian a manner as possible. He did away with many of the older outer practices, chief among them being *bhaint* or tribute to the Guru, leaving it entirely to the wishes of the disciple to subscribe toward the running of the Satsang. Nor did he encourage the adoration of any particular mode of salutation that might tend to grow into the mark of a creed. While at Murree, Bibi Rukko once (under the influence of a recent visit to Agra) instructed the Satsangis to greet Baba Ji when he came with the word "Radhasoami." Baba Ji was far from pleased: "See that in the future you do not repeat the mistake," he admonished. "We spirits come not to create new sects and creeds. We are here to dissolve all differences. Why distract these simple people with these outer slogans? My task is to take them within and let them greet me each according to the traditions of his community." As we have already seen, he had a nucleus of Muslim disciples and he never gave them the feeling that they had in any way to renounce their own faith. It was only a field of study like mathematics or astronomy that people all over the world could take up and master, and what he taught them were the very same truths that the greatest of the Sufis—Jalal-ud-Din Rumi, Hafiz, Shamas Tabrez, Inayat Khan—had given out to their disciples.

This task was carried further by Baba Ji's spiritual son, Hazur Sawan Singh Ji. During his ministry, Baba Ji's prophecy was fulfilled and the Satsang expanded tremendously. The message of the great Master was carried across the seas and men of all faiths sought shelter in its fold. In conformity with these new developments and to suit the

changing spirit of the age, Hazur Sawan Singh Ji began to interpret the timeless message as an inner science. More and more of the outer ritual was shed, and practices like *charan-amrit* or *mukh-amrit* and *arti* completely disappeared. Like Baba Ji, he was ever willing to meet the spiritual leaders of all faiths; and Dr. Johnson, one of his American disciples, records in his *With a Great Master in India* how he would visit the places of worship of every sect wherever he went.

The scientific tendency has continued to gather strength and men are no longer willing to accept spirituality as in former days as a matter of devotional faith. "We must be convinced," they say, "we must have proofs. We cannot be satisfied simply with doing in a blind way what our forefathers did." So keeping pace with these developments the Ruhani Satsang in Delhi has finally abolished in consonance with the wishes of Hazur Sawan Singh Ji the last vestiges of ritual; even the living Master's photograph is not held up for attention. Stripped of all its outer encrustations, spirituality emerges as a science, as scientific as any other, as verifiable in its results. Let any seeker take it up and let him create in the laboratory of the soul the conditions that are prerequisite, as sure as the day follows the night shall he rise into the Kingdom of God.

GLOSSARY OF ORIENTAL TERMS

ABHYASA Meditation; spiritual practices or exercises.

AGAM PURUSH The Inconceivable One; Lord of the seventh spiritual region, the last stage before the Absolute; first (partial) expression of the Absolute God.

ALAKH LOK The sixth spiritual region, two stages before the Absolute.

ALAKH PURUSH The Indescribable One; Lord of the sixth spiritual region and the second (partial) expression of the Absolute God.

AMAR DAS, GURU (1479-1574) The third Guru of the Sikhs, disciple and successor of Guru Angad.

AMRITSAR ("The Pool of Nectar") The holy city of the Sikhs, located in northern Punjab. Named after the pool in *Dasam Dwar,* it was founded by Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan.

ANAMI The Nameless; the Absolute Formless God; the Essence before it comes into expression or existence; the eighth and final spiritual stage. Also called *Maha Dayal, Nirala, Soami,* and *Radhasoami.*

ANGAD, GURU (1504-1552) The second Guru of the Sikhs. Disciple and successor of Guru Nanak, who chose

him in preference to his physical sons, and changed his name from Lehna to Angad—"one cast in his mold."

ANURAG SAGAR A book by Kabir, dealing among other things with the creation of the world.

ARJAN, GURU (1563-1606) The fifth Guru of the Sikhs, disciple, youngest son and successor of Guru Ram Das. He built the Golden Temple at Amritsar and compiled the *Granth Sahib,* the Sikh scriptures, which includes, besides his own songs and those of his predecessors, the available writings of all Saints, whether Hindu or Muslim. He was tortured to death by the Emperor Jehangir.

ARTI The practice of waving lights before a deity.

ASANAS Various yogic postures for health or meditation.

ATMAN Soul; the essence of the individual, of the same nature as the Universal.

BABA A reverential prefix, added to the names of old or exceptionally holy men.

BASANT PANCHMI Festival marking the advent of spring.

BEAS One of the five rivers of the Punjab, on the banks of which Baba Jaimal Singh Ji set up his abode while carrying on his work as a spiritual torchbearer.

BHAI Brother; term of affection.

BHAI BALA One of the two constant companions of Guru Nanak (the other was Mardana, a Muslim).

BHAINT Love offering.

BHAJAN The practice of listening to the holy Sound Current within. Also used for holy songs and hymns.

BHIKHA A sixteenth century Indian Saint.

BIBI A term of respectful affection used in addressing ladies.

BRAHMAND The causal plane or *Trikuti;* the second inner region, a spirituo-material plane, subject to decay and

dissolution. Sometimes used to include the two planes below it (astral and physical) as well, in which case it is used to mean the macrocosm.

BRAHMIN Literally, "one who knows Brahm (God)." In practice, the highest of the four Hindu castes, that of priests and educators.

BRAHMCHARYA Chastity; life of restraint. Also used for the first of the four Hindu *ashrams* or stages in life, the pre-householder stage of a chaste student.

BUDDHA The Awakened or Enlightened One; title given to Prince Siddhartha Gautama (583-463 B.C.), who gave up his throne for the life of a mendicant and is honored as the founder of the Buddhist religion.

CHAITANYA MAHAPRABHU (b. 1485) A great Hindu mystic of Bengal, considered by many to be an *avatar* (incarnation) of Vishnu.

CHAPATI Indian bread.

CHARAN-AMRIT Nectar; washings of the feet of a Saint.

DASAM DWAR *or* DASWAN DWAR Third inner plane, next after the causal or *Brahmand;* consists of pure spirit and subtle forms of matter in varying degrees. Here the pilgrim soul, by dipping in *Amritsar* (the sacred pool of nectar located here), is washed clean of all impurities.

DERA Abode. Used for a colony named after its founder.

DHAM Region or home; goal.

DHUN The music of the inner Sound Current or *Shabd.*

DHUNATMAK That Name which is inexpressible by outer means; pertaining to the inner Sound Current.

DIN DAYAL Lord of compassion.

DIWALI Festival of lights, held in India every autumn to commemorate the victory of Rama over the forces of evil.

DIWAN Minister.

FAKIR Muslim term for a Saint.

GADDI Seat or cushion. Used to mean the inheritance of temporal power or possessions of a departed Saint.

GHARIB DAS, BABA Nineteenth century Saint, a disciple of Tulsi Sahib of Hathras and brother disciple of Swami Ji; eventually settled in Delhi.

GHAT A bathing place on the bank of a river.

GHAT RAMAYANA A spiritual, esoteric version of the *Ramayana,* by Tulsi Sahib of Hathras.

GIANI One learned in religious lore.

GITA Short for *Bhagavad Gita,* a Hindu sacred scripture in which Lord Krishna gives instruction on various forms of yoga.

GOBIND SINGH, GURU (1660-1708) The tenth Guru of the Sikhs, son and successor of Guru Teg Bahadur. Did the work of an avatar as well as that of a Saint, functioning as an ideal knight protecting the weak from the strong and restoring justice, as well as initiating souls and taking them back to the Father. He gave the Sikh religion its present form and created the institution of the *Khalsa,* the brotherhood of the pure. Some say he did not die on the traditional date given above, but lived on for many years obscurely serving the poor.

GRANTH SAHIB The Sikh scriptures compiled by Guru Arjan. Comprising over 1,400 pages, the book is mostly in Punjabi and includes the hymns of Nanak, Angad, Amar Das, Ram Das, Arjan, Teg Bahadur, Kabir, Sheikh Farid, Ravidas, Namdev, Ramanand, and many other Saints, both Hindu and Muslim.

GURBANI The teachings of the Gurus as found in the

Granth Sahib; not to be confused with *Gur-ki-Bani,* the holy Sound Current made manifest by a Guru.

GURDWARA A Sikh shrine or temple.

GURMUKH Mouthpiece of the Guru; a disciple who has achieved such a degree of surrender that the Guru talks through him.

GURMUKHI The script in which the Punjabi language is written; devised by Guru Angad.

GURU Dispeller of darkness; He who can show the way Godward by instruction, example and the imparting of experience.

HAFIZ (d. 1388) A native of Shiraz in Persia and poet-mystic of the highest order. A great Sufi, his poems are considered among the finest in Persian.

HAKIM A medical practitioner in indigenous drugs.

HALWA A kind of Indian pudding.

HATHA YOGA A form of yoga dealing with the control of the body and bodily activities as a means to good health, and eventually to stilling the mind. It is supposedly practiced as a preliminary to Raja Yoga or other yoga systems involving the use of *pranas;* in practice, it frequently constitutes an end in itself and is taken up for health and long life.

HAZUR A respectful form of address, applied to venerable persons of distinction in any walk of life.

ITHAS History.

JAPA Intense repetition, with the tongue of thought, of God's name, so much so that one's individuality is lost.

JAP JI The great poem by Guru Nanak which serves as a prologue and epitome to the *Granth Sahib.* The words literally mean such a degree of concentrated meditation

that new life (*jia* or inner awareness) is infused in the heart of the meditator. For an English translation of the Jap Ji, with introduction, commentary and notes, see *The Jap Ji: The Message of Guru Nanak,* by Kirpal Singh (Delhi, 1968).

JAT Cultivator; farmer; peasant.

JI Signifies love and respect; used as a suffix added to personal names or titles.

JIVA *or* JIVA ATMAN Embodied or individual soul.

JIVAN CHARITAR Biography.

KABIR (1398-1518) A great Indian poet-Saint of Benares. A Muslim by birth and education, he became a disciple of the Hindu Saint Ramananda, and his whole life was spent in tearing down the barriers between Hindus and Muslims and demonstrating the inner truth common to each. A weaver by trade, his influence on the spiritual life of northern India was enormous, and his lyrics (many of which are included in the *Granth*) are considered the finest in Hindi. He is honored as the founder of the *Kabir-panth* (a Hindu sect numbering about a million adherents) but his spiritual significance for the modern world lies in the impulse that proceeded from him to Nanak and is still active in the living Master of today.

KAFIR Infidel; heretic. Used by Muslims.

KAL The Negative Power, or that aspect of the One God that flows downward and is responsible for the maintenance of the causal, astral and physical planes. The female aspect of Kal is known as *Kali* or *Maya.* Kal manifests in three ways: *Brahma, Vishnu* and *Shiva,* or Creator, Preserver and Destroyer (within the confines of the lower three worlds only) respectively. The pre-

servative aspect of Kal (Vishnu) incarnates (*avatar*) from time to time to maintain the balance of minimum spirituality and restore justice.

KALI YUGA The Age of Time or Dark Age; the fourth and final time-cycle of the manifestation of the Universe, in which life is short and hard, justice is minimal and evil predominates. A compensating factor is that pure spirituality is more available to suffering mankind than ever before. The age we are living in now, it is said to have begun in 3102 B.C.

KALMA The Word that created the Universe; the Koranic term for *Shabd, Naam,* Word, Sound Current, etc.

KARAM Kindness, mercy, compassion, grace.

KARMA The law of action and reaction, based on desire and I-hood, which causes continual wandering in the cycle of birth and death (transmigration), and governs the fate or destiny of each life. Actions done in one life (whether in thought, word, or deed) form the basis of the karma of the next life. For a complete discussion of this subject, see *The Wheel of Life* by Kirpal Singh.

KARTARPUR "Abode of God;" a city in the Punjab named by Guru Nanak, who spent the last part of his life there.

KHADI Hand-woven cloth.

KHASAM Literally, "husband;" used for God, who is considered to be the spouse of all souls.

KRISHNA, LORD (d. 3102 B.C.) Worshiped by the Hindus as the eighth avatar (incarnation) of Vishnu. His teachings are found in the *Bhagavad Gita* and in the Puranas.

KRIYA Disciplinary yogic exercise.

LALA A prefix used to address a gentleman.

LALO A carpenter who was a devoted disciple of Guru Nanak.

LEHNA, BHAI The original name of Guru Angad (q.v.).

MAHA DAYAL Boundless mercy. Used for the Absolute God, also called *Anami* (q.v.).

MAHANT Head of a monastery.

MAHARAJ Literally, "great king"; when used in a spiritual sense, it is added before or after the name of a Saint.

MAHATMA Great soul.

MAHAVIRA A contemporary of the Buddha, he is considered to be the founder of the Jain religion; but the Jains themselves look upon him as the last of the *Tirthankaras* or Great Masters of ancient and prehistoric times, whose memory they honor and revere.

MARDANA (1460-1530) A Muslim rebeck-player, he became a disciple and constant companion of Guru Nanak. Three poems of his are included in the *Granth.*

MAYA Illusion; the feminine aspect of Kal (q.v.), which is responsible for the clouding of vision in the lower worlds, so that individual forms appear as real in themselves and the Power of God which gives them reality and is working through them is not perceived.

MECCA A town in Arabia, the birthplace of the Prophet Mohammed; a place of pilgrimage for all Muslims.

MIAN A reverential form of address among Muslims.

MISTRI A mechanic or skilled craftsman.

MOHAMMED (570-632) The last of the Semitic prophets, he founded the religion of Islam (often incorrectly called "Mohammedanism") and labored mightily to raise the spiritual and social level of the Arab people among whom he was born and to whom he was called to serve. The revelations received by him from God are found in the *Koran,* the Islamic scripture.

MUDRAS Hand positions used in various yogas as an aid in controlling the mind.

MUKH-AMRIT Food consecrated by a Saint after he takes a little of it himself.

NAAM Name; refers to the Creative Power of God, His original expression, the essence of the whole manifested Universe and of each individual. Also called *Shabd, Kalma,* Word, etc. Of the essence of the Supreme Father, it reveals His Will to man—directly to those souls ("Word made flesh") who have become one with it, and through them to others.

NAMDEV (1269-1344) A calico printer of Maharashtra and at one time a highwayman, he became a disciple of Guru Giandev and eventually a great Saint, ending his days at Pandarpur in the Punjab. Sixty of his hymns are included in the *Granth.*

NANAK, GURU (1469-1539) The first Guru of the Sikhs, honored by them as the founder of the Sikh religion. A younger contemporary of Kabir, he had close associations with him and continued his mission, ignoring religious and caste differences and teaching the practice of the inner Sound Current.

NAND LAL, BHAI An advanced and devoted disciple of Guru Gobind Singh.

NIRAKAR The Formless One; the Absolute God, also called *Anami* (q.v.).

NIRALA Indescribably wonderful. Used to describe the Absolute God.

NIRAT Gazing faculty; that part of the attention used in seeing.

NIRGUN Without attributes.

OM The Sound Current or *Naam* from the causal plane downward; the Creator of the lower worlds.

ONKAR The Form of Om.

PALTU A great Hindu Saint of Nangpur in Oudh, initiated into the Surat Shabd Yoga by his family priest, Gobind Ji, a disciple of Bhikha.

PANCH SHABD The Five Sounds; refers to the one Sound Current resounding throughout the five inner planes between the purely spiritual and the physical. In each plane the Current manifests as a different Sound, the knowledge of which is part of the initiation instructions given by a true Master. Also refers to the mantra or *Simran* of five names, which is based on the inner five sounds and connected with them through the charging of the Guru.

PATHANS Brave tribal people of the Northwestern Frontier Province (now in West Pakistan).

PESHWA Marhatta chieftain.

PIND The physical plane; the lowest plane of all. Includes all solar systems, universes, galaxies, etc. Also refers to the physical body, and to the psychic functioning of the individual below the eye focus or *Tisra Til* (q.v.).

PIPA, RAJA (1408-1468) The king of Gagaraungarh, he became a disciple of Ramananda and a brother disciple of Kabir and Ravidas. He gave away his riches to the poor and became a great Saint. One of his hymns is included in the *Granth Sahib*.

PIR Muslim or Sufi term for *Guru* or Master.

PRANAS Vital airs pervading the bodily system and controlling the various physiological processes: breathing, elimination, digestion, swallowing, circulation. Those practicing yogas based on Patanjali's system (Hatha

Yoga, Raja Yoga, etc.) control the pranas and use them to withdraw from the body—a very difficult process.

PRANAYAM The process of controlling the *pranas.*

PRANVA Meditation on a sacred syllable in rhythm with the *pranas.*

PRARABDHA KARMA That portion of a person's *karma* (q.v.) which determines his fate or destiny in this life.

PUNDIT A Sanskrit scholar, learned in the Vedas.

PUNJAB "The five rivers;" a plain in northwest India through which five rivers flow, now partly in Pakistan.

PUNJABI (1) A modern Indian language derived from Sanskrit, written in the Gurmukhi (q.v.) script, and spoken in the Punjab; (2) A native of the Punjab.

RADHASOAMI The Lord of the Soul; name coined by Rai Saligram (q.v.) to mean the Absolute God or *Anami,* and sometimes the Guru. Now the name of a religion which bases itself on the writings of Swami Ji.

RAI SALIGRAM, HAZUR MAHARAJ A devoted disciple of Swami Ji of Agra and brother disciple of Baba Jaimal Singh. He coined the word *Radhasoami,* which was accepted by Swami Ji as another name for the Nameless. Swami Ji referred his disciples to him for elucidation of his teachings after his death.

RAM DAS, GURU (1534-1581) The fourth Guru of the Sikhs. He was the son-in-law and devoted disciple of Guru Amar Das, and the father and Master of Guru Arjan.

RAMAKRISHNA, SRI (1836-1886) A great Bengali mystic, widely regarded by Hindus as an incarnation of Vishnu. He was a contemporary of Baba Jaimal Singh, and like him, Kabir, and other Saints, taught the basic oneness of all religions. He was a devotee of Kali, the

Divine Mother, but under the guidance of his guru, a sadhu from the Punjab named Totapuri, he transcended that stage and went much further within. Much of his life was spent in a God-intoxicated state, although he earned his living as a priest. Among his disciples was the well known Swami Vivekananda.

RAMANANDA (1340-1430) A great Hindu Saint and the guru of Kabir, Ravidas, Raja Pipa, etc., he was the disciple of Raghvananda, third in line from Ramanuja. One of his hymns is included in the *Granth Sahib*.

RAVIDAS A fifteenth century cobbler Saint and disciple of Ramananda. Like his brother disciple Kabir, he taught the Surat Shabd Yoga and the unity of all religions. Among his disciples was the Rajput princess Mira Bai, who became a great Saint and poet.

RISHI In Hinduism, an inspired poet or sage. Usually refers to the saints of ancient times to whom the Vedas were revealed.

RUHANI SATSANG Spiritual gathering; a congregation of Truth-seekers irrespective of religion, caste or race, sitting at the feet of a fully realized Saint. One such exists with headquarters at Sawan Ashram in Delhi.

RUMI, MAULANA JALAL-UD-DIN (1207-1273) Great Sufi Saint of Persia, author of the *Masnavi,* considered by many the greatest spiritual poem ever written. He was a schoolteacher (*Maulvi*), but under the influence of his Master, Shamas Tabrez, he became a great spiritual guide (*Maulana*). Like other great Sufis, he taught the *Sultan-ul-Azkar* or the Yoga of the Sound Current.

SACH KHAND The Region of Truth; the fifth inner plane and first purely spiritual one. Seat of the Positive Power, the Supreme Father, who at this stage is seen to be one

with both the Guru and the individual soul. Not subject to decay or dissolution, it is the goal that Saints of the highest order set for their disciples, as it is not until this stage is attained that true liberation is achieved. Here the work of the Guru ends; God Himself takes the soul beyond this point.

SADH *or* SADHU A disciplined soul; one who has attained the third inner plane. Popularly used in India to mean wandering monk.

SADHAK One who practices spiritual discipline; an initiate on the first stages of the Path.

SADHNA Spiritual discipline or exercise.

SAHIB The Lord; the Supreme Being. Frequently used as a suffix added to the names of Saints as a mark of respect.

SAMADH Sanctuary for the preservation of the ashes of a great Saint.

SANT Saint; Master of the highest order. One who has reached the stage of Sach Khand, the fifth plane.

SANT MAT The Path of the Masters. The essence of all religions, it is attached to none and consists of the practice of Surat Shabd Yoga (q.v.) at the feet of a Saint.

SANT SATGURU A Saint of the highest order who is commissioned by God to lead others back to Him and to show them the Truth within their own selves.

SANT SEPAHI A soldier saint.

SAR BACHAN "Essential Utterance;" name of two books, one in poetry and one in prose, containing the teachings of Swami Ji of Agra.

SAT True; that which exists.

SAT DESH The purely spiritual regions. See *Sach Khand.*

SATGURU Master of Truth or True Master. See *Sant Satguru.*

SAT LOK The Region of Truth; the fifth inner plane. Another name for Sach Khand (q.v.).

SAT NAAM True Name; Expression of Existence. Given to the Primal Sound Current as it comes into Being at the stage of Sach Khand. Another name for Sat Purush.

SAT PURUSH The True Being; the first full expression of the Absolute God. Called also the Supreme Father or the Positive Power, He is the Lord of Sach Khand and is the highest form of God that can be called personal. Also known as Sat Naam.

SATSANG Contact or association with Truth, either directly (inner) or through the agency of some Saint who is a full expression of Truth (outer). Also refers to the congregation presided over by such a Saint or his representative.

SATSANGI One who comes in contact with Truth; a disciple of a perfect Master.

SAWAN SINGH, HAZUR BABA (1858-1948) Beloved disciple and successor of Baba Jaimal Singh. During his ministry the number of disciples increased fifty times (from 3,000 to 150,000) and the work expanded into Europe and America. He was succeeded by Maharaj Kirpal Singh Ji of Delhi.

SETH A form of address used for affluent persons.

SEWA *or* SEVA Service; a labor of love.

SHABD *or* SHABD DHUN The inner Sound Current that is responsible for the creation and maintenance of the entire Universe—spiritual, causal, astral, physical—and is the essence of each individual, who can hear its wonderful music for himself when shown how and given a contact with it by a Sant Satguru. The expression of God, it is also called *Naam,* Word, etc.

SHAMAS TABREZ A great Persian Saint, Master of Maulana Rumi.

SHIV DAYAL SINGH, SWAMI (1818-1878) Great Saint of Agra, popularly known as Swami Ji Maharaj, the guru of Baba Jaimal Singh. He revived the teachings of Kabir and Nanak and explained them to the general public in very simple language. He was initiated by Tulsi Sahib of Hathras at the age of six, and spent seventeen years in meditation in a dark, back room.

SIKH Literally, a disciple; same word as the Sanskrit *shishya* or *chela*. Has come to mean a religious sect which worships the memory of ten Great Masters (see *Sikh Gurus*) and is found mainly in the Punjab and northern India.

SIKH GURUS Ten Great Masters, who came in an unbroken line for two centuries and who are today worshiped by the Sikhs. They are Nanak, Angad, Amar Das, Ram Das, Arjan, Har Gobind, Har Rai, Har Krishan, Tegh Bahadur, and Gobind Singh.

SIMRAN Constant remembrance; in a spiritual sense it refers to *japa* or repetition of God's names, a sadhna given by Saints to still the mind and clear it of the Simran of worldly impressions that it is already engaged in.

SOAMI The Absolute God; see *Anami*.

SOAMIBAGH A place in Agra where the sacred remains of Swami Ji Maharaj are enshrined in a magnificent marble structure.

SOHANG "I am as Thou art." The Lord of the fourth inner plane; used as a mantra by yogis and others.

SUFI A Muslim mystic. The highest Sufis were perfect Saints.

SULTAN-UL-AZKAR "The King of Prayers;" Muslim term for Surat Shabd Yoga.

SURAT Attention; expression of the soul; hearing faculty.

SURAT SHABD YOGA The union of the attention, or expression of the soul, with the Holy Word or expression of God; also called *Sehaj Yoga* or the natural way. It leads to full liberation without recourse to the control of pranas, and is the essence of all religions.

SWAMI JI Beloved Lord; a title denoting both affection and respect often given to holy men in India. In this book, it is used throughout for Shiv Dayal Singh (q.v.) of Agra, who was popularly addressed as such.

TEGH BAHADUR, GURU (1621-1675) The ninth Guru of the Sikhs, he was the son of the sixth Guru, Har Gobind, and the father of Guru Gobind Singh. He was beheaded by the Emperor Aurangzeb.

TISRA TIL The Third Eye, Single Eye, *Shiv Netra,* etc. The chakra or focus between and behind the eyebrows where the soul currents are gathered together as a prelude to withdrawal from the body and entry into higher planes.

TULSI SAHIB (1763-1843) Originally Sham Rao Peshwa, the elder brother of Baji Rao Peshwa, he gave up his throne for spirituality and settled in Hathras. He wrote the *Ghat Ramayana* (q.v.) and was the guru of Swami Ji Maharaj of Agra, to whom he passed his spiritual mantle. He should not be confused with Tulsidas, a much earlier Saint (sixteenth century) who wrote the *Ram Charitra Mansa* or Hindi Ramayana.

UND The astral plane; the first inner stage, a materio-spiritual region, subject to dissolution. This stage is the highest known to some yogic and occult schools; most of it is bypassed on the Path of the Masters.

VARNASHRAM *Varna* means caste, and *ashram* in this context means stage of life—*Brahmcharya* (student), *Grehastha* (householder), *Vanprastha* (spiritual aspirant and renunciate), and *Sanyasa* (perfected soul qualified to teach others)—as enjoined in the Hindu scriptures.

VARANATMAK Any name of God that can be written or spoken.

VEDA The holiest and most ancient of the Hindu scriptures. There are four of them (*Rig, Yajur, Sama,* and *Atharva*) and they are each divided into four parts, of which the final and most spiritual consists of the Upanishads.

VEDANTA The philosophical system derived from "the end of the Vedas"—the Upanishads.

YOGA From the Sanskrit *yuj,* to join. The science of controlling the mind and senses and withdrawal of the consciousness from the body in order to unite with God. There are two basic ways of achieving this withdrawal: through control of the *pranas* (q.v.) or through control of the *surat* (attention). The former method was expounded by Patanjali in the fifth century B.C., and his presentation constitutes one of the six *darshanas* or philosophical systems of Hinduism. Hatha Yoga, Raja Yoga, etc., are all based on *pranayam* or control of the pranas, and derive from Patanjali. The other method, that of controlling the attention and uniting it with the inner Sound, is a natural method open to householders as well as to ascetics, and is the one advocated by the Saints (see *Surat Shabd Yoga*). The word also refers to the psychological disciplines (Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga, etc.) explained in the Gita, which are a part of

both of the above-mentioned systems. For a complete discussion of this subject, see *The Crown of Life* by Kirpal Singh (Delhi, 1971).

YOGI One who has mastered the technique and practice of any form of yoga, and can impart it to others. Often used for ascetics engaged full-time in the practice of yoga, regardless of the degree of mastery. Also sometimes used for those who have mastered Prana Yoga as distinguished from those who have mastered Surat Shabd Yoga (who are called Saints).

ZOROASTER Greek form of the Persian *Zarathustra* (660-583 B.C., approximately). The founder of Zoroastrianism, whose practitioners today are the Parsees of India. He taught the worship of the God of Light (symbolically represented by fire) and of the *Sraosha* (or Sound Current), the Creative Verbum. His teachings are included in the *Zend Avesta,* the Parsee scripture.

FOR FURTHER READING

THE WAY OF THE SAINTS: *Sant Mat* by Kirpal Singh. An encyclopedia of Sant Mat from every point of view, this is a collection of Master Kirpal Singh's short writings from 1949 to 1974. Revised edition contains a brief biography of Master Kirpal, as well as a longer biography of Baba Sawan Singh. Many pictures, 418 pp.

THE LIGHT OF KIRPAL by Kirpal Singh. A collection of 87 talks given from September 1969 to December 1971, containing extensive questions and answers between the Master and western disciples visiting at that time. Unforgettable moments thread through these talks, moments of unparalleled joy as those fortunate groups absorbed His radiance and listened to his words. 15 photos, 496 pp.

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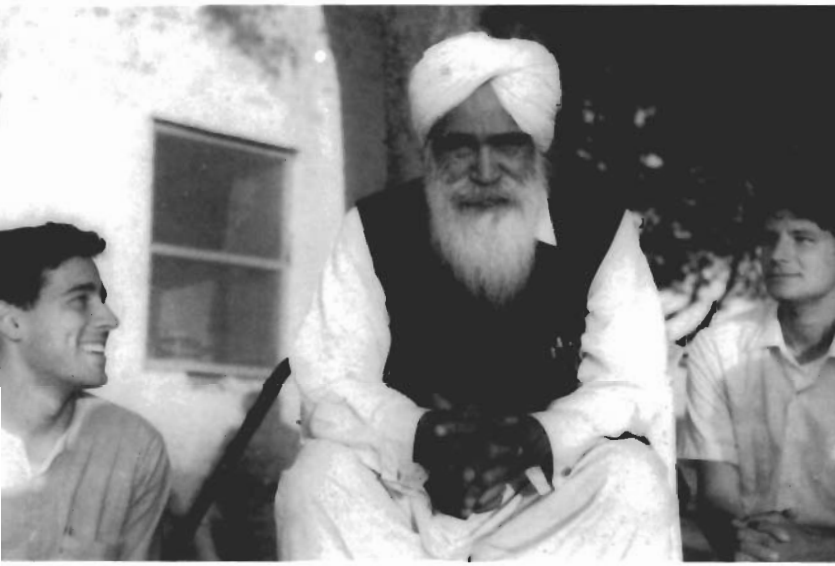

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