ENDS AND MEANS *was issued November 22, 1956 as Circular No. 3. It was published in* Sat Sandesh *in March 1970.*

Ends and Means

WHENEVER one takes upon himself a duty, he must be clear about his responsibility. This need for understanding the obligations that are entailed with any piece of work is of much greater importance for us—the members of the Ruhani Satsang—for we have taken upon ourselves the most important and the most difficult task in the world—i.e., enabling ourselves and our fellow beings to attain self-knowledge and God-knowledge. We must, before we can be of any real service, be absolutely clear about the fundamentals of *Para Vidya* or the Path of the Masters.

2. The Para Vidya literally stands for the Knowledge of the Beyond. It seeks to make the human soul one with God by transcending the physical, the astral and the causal planes of existence. It has therefore nothing to do with outer forms and ceremonies—rites, rituals, sacrifices, fasts, vigils, pilgrimages. These are outer practices. We have to make the best use of them. If they are adhered to literally at the sacrifice of the spirit, they are positive hindrances on the Path. For instead of leading us beyond the world of the senses, they fix us more firmly therein. In our Satsangs we should not mix up the science of Para Vidya with any other kind of movement, which deals with other than this science. We should understand that this is the highest of all movements, which is the goal of all religions as taught by all Masters who came in the past, including Jesus

Christ. Of course, our Satsangs will be universal and serve as a common ground or school of spirituality devoid of all forms and rituals, for all Masters who will be welcome to give their valuable talks on the theory and practice of science of self-knowledge and God-knowledge. Our main aim of life is to know ourself and to know God. We must never waver from this and in every action we do, we must consider whether it takes us nearer to or farther away from our ideal and we should ceaselessly try for the same.

Awake, arise and stop not until the goal is reached.

UPANISHADS

3. What is God and how can we know Him? God, as all the scriptures and the saints have said, is nameless and unknowable. Then how can we know God? The answer is that the Absolute is not knowable, yet makes Himself known by manifesting Himself as Light and Sound Principle. Most religions tell us that the creation began from these primal manifestations. Now the Divine Light and the Divine Sound or "Word" (known variously as *Shabd* or *Nad* among the Hindus, *Kalma* among the Muslims) may be contacted by rising above physical consciousness. They exist in a latent form in all of us. Our goal must therefore be to develop them and contact them within us. To do this, we must through meditation learn to withdraw our soul to its seat behind and between the eyes. Having once contacted the Inner Light and Sound, we can progress toward their source, passing from plane to plane until we reach God.

4. To succeed on this Inner Path, we must find one who has explored it to its utmost limits. A *living* Master is an inevitable need and indispensable means to the attaining of self-realization. On the purely physical level, he serves

as a living example of a perfect life. He tells us of our true home and the way that leads to it. On the spiritual side he gives us details of the Inner Path, its intricacies and difficulties, provides us, by using his own attention, with an actual experience of withdrawal from the body and of the Inner Light and Sound, and guides us through the more difficult parts of our inner journey till we reach our goal. The Master Saint is a human being like any one of us, but through the blessings of his Master and intense spiritual discipline he has risen into cosmic awareness. He has become one with God and is a conscious co-worker of His Divine Plan. He is a living embodiment of God's Love and does nothing of himself. He is not tormented by any self-interest, but works for the benefit of suffering humanity. If we can sacrifice our personality to him, as he has sacrificed his to God, following all his commandments, then alone we can make spiritual progress. To obey the Master is in fact to obey God, for it is God Who works through the human pole.

5. The spiritual Path is a difficult one and requires a rigorous self-discipline. We must forever be on the alert against anything that draws us away from the Path. We must carry out our Master's instructions to the very letter, devoting regular time to meditation. We must learn to overcome self-love which is a fire that consumes and destroys, and cultivate love for God, which is a fire that purges and purifies.

> *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind . . .*
>
> *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*
>
> MATTHEW 22:37-40

We must constantly remember that our aim is God, and must not be concerned with anything that makes us forget that aim. We must be above party spirit and avoid party factions. Our whole life must be built upon love and humility which are inseparable. If we make any spiritual progress we must guard against pride. Instead of looking down upon our fellow beings we must thank God for His grace and repay it by humbly helping our brethren in their material and spiritual need. If there be those who do not understand or who do not wish to understand the Truth, we must not feel irritated with them. They are as much God's children as we are, and must be won over by love and persuasion. We are all laborers in the Vineyard.

We are all engaged, as you know, in fulfilling the great cause of the Great Master, which is the cause of God. We must therefore form ourselves into a band of selfless workers united in indissoluble bonds of love and fellowship. We, the initiates, whether old or new, are all seekers of the one God, and are equally dear in His eyes. The same Master Power is helping us all alike. Should there be any honest differences of opinion, we must try to resolve them by mutual discussion in a spirit of good will and amity rather than breed rancor and discord that may go to widen the gulf between individuals and groups. In cases where we cannot decide, the Master may be approached for final decision. We stand for secularity and not sectarianism. In the grand and glorious service of God there can be no thought of high or low, for all of us are moved by a spirit of true comradeship.

6. It is very necessary to distinguish clearly the ends from the means. To lay too much stress on the means is likely to make us gradually forget our objective and to

become fossilized. Once we know, for example, that abstinence from all kinds of meat diet and spiritous liquors helps us on the spiritual Path, it is enough that we avoid them. But to take it as an end in itself is to miss the goal. Offending others because they eat meat is worse than meat-eating itself. Hate the sin, but love the sinner. Live and let others live. Welcome those are who choose to come on the way, but we have no right to hate or offend others because they eat meat. Vegetarian diet is essentially a helping factor for those who would prefer to follow the teachings of the Master. Hafiz, a great Saint, says, "Drink wine, burn the holy scriptures, and put Kaba, the House of God, on fire. You may do all this but never offend or molest anybody." If you are really anxious to meet God you should not offend or molest the heart of anybody, which is the dwelling house of God. It may however be stated that if one adheres to strict vegetarian diet, that will help a good deal in having normal life, but does not necessarily result in better tempers, controlled sex life or detachment from gross thoughts, desires and actions, worldly ambitions, possessiveness, lust or greed. Kabir says, "If you leave hearth and home and retire to a secluded place and live on pure vegetarian diet, even then the mind does not leave off its base habits." Alongside such essential and positive aids, we must religiously devote regular time to the spiritual practices of contacting the Light and Sound so as to cut down the ramifications of mind, which is so very necessary for self-realization and God-realization, and mold our life accordingly. I would like to add that for the aspirants on the Path it is but necessary that so long as one is in the physical body, vegetarianism should be strictly adhered to. The unholy may be sanctified and made

holy only when one is altogether above body-consciousness. And relaxation in the matter of diet would not only be a positive hindrance in meditations but would unnecessarily contract Karmic reaction. No doubt there is life principle in all type of diets, yet in the vegetables it is in the lowest form and as such the least harmful. The real goal is to use every means possible to rise into full God-consciousness.

7. Similarly the philosophy of Karma too has a specific place in the system of Spiritual Science. But it should on no account be made to induce morbidity and breed a spirit of frustration among initiates and non-initiates. Man is the maker of his own destiny. Though we cannot alter the past yet we can forge the future as best we may. "Thus far and no further" is the deadline which the Master draws for each one of us and it should on no account be transgressed. When you are put on the Path of true pure Yoga, you become free of past holds of stress and tensions physical and subtle. Calmness and harmony are experienced and purification and true detachment are only realized by the average man through the consciousness of the Saint, which if a true Master gives through His Divine Grace, the heavy mountainous loads of past actions become molehills and molehills become nothing. Guru Nanak says, "What is the good of coming to your feet, O Master, if our Karmic debts are not nullified. It is no use taking refuge at the feet of a lion if jackals still be howling on him." The Master has to do his job and the initiates their own: to push on with full confidence in the Master. There are too many leaners on idealistic imagination amongst the initiates and too few who practice. The meditation period should not be one of pretty emotional feelings only. The initiates

should surrender their all to the Master and be willing to die and give up their life for God. "Learn to die so that you may begin to live." The Master knows how to deal best with it. Ours is to act well in the living present, as enjoined by the Master. If we act up to His commandments, He will never forsake us till the end of the world. But we feel, on the contrary, that after the Initiation we are absolved from all obligations, and free to do what we may by simply putting our trust in His Grace. This attitude is a great stumbling block on the Path and retards all real progress. It does not pay in the least to purposely close our eyes in self-complacency to the stern reality of the situation that places rights and obligations in equal proportion on each and every individual. We cannot pick and choose, as we may like. We must therefore guard against such a frustrated mentality and have to work our way ourselves for there are no short shrifts in the Science of the Spirit. It is a long and laborious process of unfoldment for the spirit and we have of necessity to take care of the higher values of life at each step if we are keen in our search for Truth. It is a steep path which if we have to tread without stumbling we must tread with our heart forever fixed on the goal and on the steps immediately before us, for there is no time to look behind; it can only make us shudder and tremble. Ignorance is the only disease from which the soul suffers. It can only be cured by knowledge and the knowledge is the action of the soul and is perfect without the senses, though on the physical plane it cannot do without the service of the senses. True knowledge only dawns on the supramental plane where physical senses can be of no avail. But until that stage of direct communication with the Radiant Form of the Mas-

ter is attained, one has to take care in every thing, for the path is slippery and strewn over with hidden traps that may at any moment catch the unwary pilgrim on the path. Once one slips, the golden opportunity is lost and one does not know when one may be able to get a human birth once again. When we lay too much stress on the means, viz., vegetarian diet and Karmas, we should lay still more emphasis on inversion and withdrawal from the senses and put in more time for the purpose.

Again, the Master, as you know, does not accept anything for himself. All his personal needs he mets on his own account. He has nothing to do with the voluntary contributions of the Sangat or the brotherhood. These funds constitute the public trust and must be utilized for the public good in America and abroad everywhere whenever needed. This can be utilized in a constant flow of literature and current instructions from the Master through the mail. We must remember that money cannot be used to build a spiritual man. Money voluntarily contributed by the followers can be used only by the Master for the uplifting benefit of thousands. All Masters did use such money, for the propagation of their mission. Every initiate must remember that if they receive any literature, etc., from the Master that they are only taking what was paid for by someone else. We must see and think in a healthy way about all this. There is no greater service than that of putting people on the God-way that may ultimately take them to the True Home of their Father. In the discharge of the public obligations, we must needs be scrupulously clean and chaste. Every penny that is spent for any of the recognized purposes must be well spent and be properly accounted for. The accounts of income and out-go should

be periodically checked, audited and the nature of expenses be thoroughly gone into, so that not a cent of the hard-earned money of the initiates goes to waste and we are able to fearlessly render account whenever called upon to do so. We ought to avoid all grandiose schemes as may strike our fancy and serve to pamper our vanity. The mission of the Great Master aims at simple living according to the relative values of life. The highest ideal of life being the knowledge of self and the knowledge of God, all our acts and deeds must be judged and measured by this touchstone alone. If we live by the Law of God, the Law shall uphold us; and if we fail, howsoever little it may be, we transgress the entire Law and are found and judged wanting in our ideals.

Last but not least I repeat what has so often been said, time and again, "By love serve one another," for love is the master key that unlocks the door leading to the Kingdom of God. Loving faith in God and selfless service of His creation are the two commandments by which stand all the Law and all the Prophets.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR HOLDING SATSANG *was issued in December 1956 as Circular No. 4, under this title, and includes the basic guidelines laid down by the Master for conducting Satsang meetings. Many of the specific injunctions, however, have been modified or clarified by the Master in later writings, particularly "How to Develop Receptivity" (included in this book, see below) which should be studied carefully in connection with this circular.*

Instructions for Holding Satsang

SATSANG, as the term implies, is association with *Sat* or Truth. Satsang meetings should therefore be exclusively devoted to the discourses on *Sat,* which in its broader connotation includes talks on God, Soul, Word, the relation between Soul and God on the one hand, and Soul and the Universe on the other, the God-Way or the path of God-realization, and the Godman or Spiritual Master, what He is, His need and importance, and His teachings. It also includes discourses on allied topics like ethical life, love, faith, compassion, and all that which makes way for the healthy and progressive development of Divine Life leading to efflorescence of spirit in cosmic awareness.

THE PURPOSE OF SATSANG

It must always be borne in mind that the actual awakening of the spirit is the work of the Master Power overhead. The talks and discourses are just like refresher courses which may help in the proper understanding of Sant Mat, or the teachings of the Master, on the intellectual level; for theory precedes practice. Both the initiates and non-initiates derive immense benefit from such talks. In these congregations, universal truths are brought home to all alike. A spirit of universal brotherhood on the broad basis of human beings as the children of one Supreme Father is inculcated, so as to link all with the silken bonds of love and amity. For the initiates, these talks serve as cementing

factors on the Path, clarify doubts and misapprehensions, if any; and for the non-initiates, ground is prepared for an inner search which may stimulate the inquisitive mind and help the individuals in their innate craving for a Way out.

The Highway of the Masters has been, is, and ever shall remain the same for one and all. It is secular in character and everyone, whosoever, can tread it. There are no turnpike gates of religion, faith, caste, color, creed, nationality or avocation. All are welcome to it, even though retaining their distinctive religious organizations, social modes of life, and use of national language, etc., for the spirit or soul in man is above them all and remains unaffected by outer pursuits.

SATSANG APART FROM RITUALS

The "Science of Soul" is just like any other science, but more exact, more natural, more lasting, and the oldest of all the sciences. It is the Science of Realized Truth directly connected with the soul in man, and should therefore be kept distinct and apart from rites and rituals, forms and ceremonials; the performance or observance of which keeps one tied down to the plane of the senses, and as such must be strictly eschewed. Our discourses and talks in Satsang should be confined only to explaining the Science itself in lucid terms, without any outer embellishment like lighting of candles, burning of incense, offering of flowers, tinkling of bells, exhibiting photographs and the like. Even though these may appear innocent and harmless in themselves, yet the seekers after Truth are likely to go astray by such symbolisms and forms, and may get entangled and lost.

SUBJECT AND SCOPE OF SATSANG

For the subject of a talk, we may take up the hymns from any scripture, preferably from the Masters of the Sound Current. It may be supplemented by apt quotations from the parallel writings of other Master Saints. The Holy Gospels themselves are full of such material as may fit in with such a context. The illustrations from various Masters are essential so as to bring out the essential unity in the teachings of all the Saints. We should not, however, discuss the practical part of the Science.[1]

Again, the subject itself should be of a non-controversial type. It must strictly refer to the Spiritual Science. Its exposition should be couched in terms that are loving and create a fragrant atmosphere which may have a universal appeal to the audience, without hurting the feelings of anyone. At the conclusion of the talk there should be no questions and answers in the open congregations. It should not form a debating club. If anyone has to inquire anything or wants elucidation on any particular point, that can be done more happily in private. The thistles of doubt and misapprehensions, if any, have to be weeded out with a tender hand, and nobody should be allowed to remain in suspense, for clearing of the mental ground is absolutely necessary before sowing the seed of Naam.

The Satsang should end with meditation for some time, say half an hour, in which all should take part, except for an urgent and unavoidable reason.[2]

[1] For further comments by the Master on this subject, see SAT SANDESH, May 1971, p. 32.

[2] Master has since requested that the meditations take place *before* the Satsang commences. See *How to Develop Receptivity*, pages 386 and 387, below.

LOVE AND SERVICE THE BASIS OF SATSANG

The work of Satsang should be conducted in a dignified spirit of love and service. Our thoughts, words and deeds should radiate nothing but love and sweetness. As "Service" precedes the "Science," our motto should be "Service before self." We cannot adequately advance the interests of any science, far less that of the Science of Realized Truth, unless we are prepared to devote our heart and soul in its service, like a worshipful votary. The Science will make headway of itself if we are true to ourselves and truly offer to serve it.

In case of disagreement on any important issue among the workers themselves, it is better to immediately refer the matter to the Master for his decision, instead of indulging in controversies that ruffle the feelings, cause unnecessary tensions, and lead to unpleasant rifts. It is all the Master's work and he knows best how to guide and straighten out things. With friendly love, we can win over even the dissidents to the Great Cause, and avoid defections. Love can surmount all obstacles and is a veritable cure for all the ills of the world. The necessity for love cannot therefore be over-emphasized in the service of the Master's Cause.

EXTRACTS FROM HAZUR'S LETTERS

"It is very beneficial for the Satsangis to meet with each other; it promotes their love and faith towards each other and the Holy Master; it also gives stimulus to the spiritual exercises. It helps to clear the doubts and difficulties of other Satsangis. Combined Satsang serves a useful purpose. It gives an opportunity for exchange of ideas. The Satsang time is especially valuable in this: that it increases love for

the Master. In a large Satsang there are some advanced Satsangis also who speak from their personal experiences, and this helps in developing faith in others who may come into contact with them.

"Karmas may be physical as well as mental. The gross karmas are washed out by means of external methods such as Satsang, reading of good books, as well as by the company of the Master; while subtle karmas are removed by internal Sound Practice. Initiation is sowing of the seed, which needs the water of Satsang and concentration for sprouting, while love and faith are necessary for its growth.

"Meetings with the members will benefit them greatly. Meet them all with love and affection, such that even a dry, withered heart takes courage and flourishes."

INDIVIDUAL MEDITATION

A few words about individual meditation will not be amiss here. A daily and regular practice of the three *Sadhnas* or disciplines—viz., *Simran, Dhyan,* and *Bhajan*—as enjoined by the Master, is of the utmost importance to achieve results. A disciple must do his or her part of the job and the Master does his. It is for him or her to sit and do the Sadhnas in an atmosphere conducive to progress, with a sweet remembrance of the Master. He or she is not to presuppose things or visualize results, for those will follow of their own accord. We have but to sit in loving remembrance, with steady gaze fixed in between and behind the two eyebrows, and do mental repetition of the Five Holy Words, without any exertion or strain on the eyes or on the forehead. Ours is to be an attitude of passivity, for the Doer is One and only One: the Master, who is the best

judge of the time and measure and manner of each step on the Path.

INITIATION—RECORDING OF INNER EXPERIENCES

Last but not least, I may add that the human memory is very short-lived and in moments of weakness one, under the pressure of ever-assertive ego, is prone to forget the invaluable boon the Master confers, and perhaps begins to think that the spiritual results achieved are of one's own doing, or due to over-zealousness and over-active imagination. At times one, for lack of practice, either does not make progress or, in the mighty and irresistible whirl of the world, loses contact with the WORD and begins to forget the great benefit conferred upon him or her at the time of Initiation. To guard against all such lapses, it is considered necessary that, in the future, each of the initiates should, at the time of Initiation, be required to record in his or her own hand, the actual inner experience gained, both as to Light and Sound principles. The manifestation from within of these principles, by helping the individual spirit to rise above body consciousness, is the task of the Master; and it is the paramount duty of the disciples to develop the same by day to day practice—the injunction in this behalf being, "Take heed therefore that the Light which is in thee be not darkness!"

The disciples should therefore be encouraged to wholeheartedly devote some time to the practice of spiritual disciplines; maintain regular diaries for introspection, showing lapses in daily life and conduct, the endeavors made and the results gained thereby; and they should be sent regularly, after every three months, for the inspection of the Master so that he may extend all feasible help and

guide us on the Path. If an initiate has any difficulty or doubts, he or she should refer them directly to the Master, as and when needed, instead of discussing with others who are as ignorant as he or she is, and making the confusion worse confounded.

Standing at the crossroads of Time, we must make a firm resolve to do better from day to day; at least from the New Year's Day that beckons us on with a promise of rosy dawn. As there are landmarks on earth, so there are landmarks in Time. The past and future are like sealed books to us: the one is in the limbo of oblivion, while the other is in the womb of uncertainty. It is only the LIVING PRESENT that is ours, and we must make the best use of it, ere it slips away through the fingers and is lost forever. Human birth is a great privilege and offers us a golden opportunity. It is for us to make or mar the same, for it is given to each individual to forge his or her own destiny as best he may.

With lots of love and hearty best wishes to you all for a bright and Happy New Year.

THE SPIRITUAL ASPECT OF THE VEGETARIAN DIET, *issued in July 1958 as Circular 10, under this title, has been reprinted many times and in many places. It serves as the Foreword to Dona Kelley's* Scientific Nutrition and Vegetarian Cookbook, *and was published in* Sat Sandesh *in June 1970.*

The Spiritual Aspect of The Vegetarian Diet

EVERYONE seeks rest and peace, but they remain as elusive as ever. All our efforts in this direction come to naught and prove fruitless. Why? Because we work on the wrong lines. Man lives on two planes, the outer and the inner. First, we have to settle things outside to bring peace on the outer plane before we can enter within. There are three factors that count a great deal in this connection:

RIGHT OCCUPATION
RIGHT CONDUCT
RIGHT DIET

The greatest purpose of human life is that one should know one's self and know God, and all the rest is mere dissipation.

"Sound mind in a sound body" is a well-known aphorism. One has therefore to work for these before anything else. We have to keep both body and mind in a healthy condition before these can be used as instruments for spiritual advancement. For this, we have of necessity to resort to food. We cannot do without food for keeping the body and soul together.

Our first and foremost problem then is food, for food conditions body as well as mind.

Right Type of Food
Rightly Earned
Rightly Taken

helps a lot in this direction.

One must, therefore, earn his daily bread by the sweat of his brow, as the saying goes, and should not depend on others' earnings. We must for our livelihood engage in some honest and useful pursuit, may be physical or mental, but it must be free from all guile, hypocrisy, ill will and animosity, for Karmic Law is inexorable in its working. Every action leads to reaction and thus the endless series rolls on interminably. Hence, the need for an honest living, howsoever poor it may be. You cannot have riches by honest avocation. Riches grow by the groans of the poor and the downtrodden, the hewers of wood and the drawers of water, and thrive on the lifeblood of our fellow beings. We ought not, therefore, to run after rich foods and dainty dishes, for these bring in their train much blood-sucking and are tainted with the untold miseries of the lowly and in the long run make us miserable as well.

All of us are being consumed
In the invisible fires of hell,
And yet know it not.

Food, as you know, is made for man and not man for food. We have to make the best use of food like all the other things of life. One who is a slave of the palate cannot do anything useful. By a righteous control of the palate, we can control our entire physical and mental systems. A simple diet is more nourishing and wholesome and conducive to spiritual advancement than all the so-called delicacies which the modern culinary art provides. It will al-

ways give a comfortable feeling and serenity of mind, help you to live within your means however limited they may be, without extending your hand before others.

When I was about to retire after my long government sevice, I was asked by my Chief if I would like to have an extension, but I politely declined the offer saying, "I don't want any extension as I know how to arrange my affairs within the limited amount of my pension."

Now, foods are of three kinds:

1. SATVIK: Pure foods: milk, butter, cheese, rice, lentils, pulses, grains, vegetables, fruits and nuts.
2. RAJSIK: Energizing foods: peppers, spices, condiments, sour and bitter things.
3. TAMSIK: Enervating foods: stale foods, eggs, meat, fish, fowl and wine, etc.

Out of the above, we should always prefer SATVIK or pure foods. These do a lot of good. Again, even of these, we must partake a little below the saturation point of the appetite. When we get delicious foods, we are tempted to eat more than what is actually needed; and the extra food taken, instead of giving extra health and energy, proves baneful. The food which is not digested properly and assimilated in the system causes colic pains and aches and in some cases even cholera, and one has to pay with one's life itself. "Do not overload the motor of your stomach," else you fall an easy prey to nausea. A surfeit of even what is good does prove harmful at times. A moderation in victuals and viands helps in the growth of vital powers in man. In the *Puranas* (ancient Hindu scriptures) there is an allegory of the Food-god complaining to the Lord Vishnu, the Sustainer of the Universe, that people misused him a

great deal. To this Lord Vishnu humorously replied, "Those who eat you too much, you must eat them up, for that is the only remedy."

Fresh air is the most essential part of our food. One must take long breaths, retain them a while and then exhale them out fully so as to cast out all the impurities of the body. Besides, one must drink a lot of pure water and take fruit juices to flush the system through and through to make one clean. But avoid all types of hot and soft drinks, spiritous liquors, and intoxicants, for they render the mind and intellect morbid. Grains and fruits should form our normal and staple foods.

Man, as said before, must earn his livelihood for himself by all fair, legitimate, and honest means. Again, it is the moral duty of the housewife to cook the SATVIK food with heart engrossed in sweet remembrance of the Lord. A food cooked like this, with the mind entrenched in the Beloved and the hands engaged in the work, becomes a manna from heaven and proves a blessing to those who partake of it. The Great Master, Hazur Baba Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj, often used to give us an instance of an Indian peasant with his hands on the plough but singing paeans of soul-enthralling songs to his lady love. Such indeed should be our attitude in these things.

In the year 1921, I was working as Accounts Officer in the Sikh Unit No. 36. I got an orderly-cook in the field. I told him that I would not mind what his life was in the past, so long as he cooked my food while repeating the Holy Names of God on his lips and did not allow anyone to enter the kitchen and divert his mind in idle talk. The cook promised to do this and everything went well for two or three days, but on the fourth day as I sat for my

meditation I felt that my mind was not steady. In the middle of the night, I called the cook and inquired of him if there was anyone else with him in the kitchen while he was preparing the food. At first he denied it, but ultimately confessed that a person had come and had engaged him in conversation and thus diverted him from the sweet remembrance of God. He was warned against this and thereafter he always followed my behests scrupulously. This then is the best criteria to weigh one's spiritual advancement and the purity of the food-stuff that one takes, both in procuration and in preparation.

Sheikh Saadi, a great mystic poet of Shiraz in Persia, always preached to divide the stomach into four compartments:

Two for filling with a limited quantity of simple diet; one for pure and clear water; while reserving one for the Light of God.

We read of an incident in the life of Hazrat Mohammed, the Prophet of Islam. One day a physician came unto him and offered him his services for the sick and ailing in the *Umat,* the Prophet's following. He remained there for about six months in idle indolence, as none of the Prophet's followers fell ill. He approached the Prophet and asked for his permission to leave as no one there felt the need of his services. Hazrat Mohammed, with a gentle smile on his lips, said goodbye to the physician, saying: "So long as the congregation followed the instructions, there would be no chance of any of them falling sick, for they all lived by one panacea—

To always eat a little less than what one may, in his hunger, otherwise like to take;
To lead a chaste life with honest earnings.

Baba Jaimal Singh Ji, a great Master in his time, used to buy some loaves of bread or chapatis and would wrap them in a piece of cloth and hang them on a branch of a tree. He would devote himself to meditation all the day long and when he would get up from his Samadhi, he would take one loaf of bread, soak it in water, and partake of it before going into meditation again. Whole wheat bread is a complete food in itself and we deprive it of vital elements by removing the husk and by grinding it into white flour by power-driven mills and thus destroy the phosphorus and oil in the grains and make a terrible mess of it.

I very often witnessed with my own eyes Hazur Baba Sawan Singh's food which was always very simple and consisted of just a few wholesome items in very small quantities.

All the Saints live on a very frugal repast. So did Shamas Tabrez, a Muslim devout, and Swami Shiv Dayal Singh Ji, both of whom lived by the principle:

Eat Less and Remain Happy.

With a life of simple food and high thinking coupled with high morals and chaste conduct, one needs no tonics which glut the market in these days. The luxurious food not only upsets the motor of the stomach but leads to dire consequences that at times prove very dangerous. Very often persons complain that they do not seem to progress on the path, but little do they realize that it is due to faulty diet and wrong living. Prophet Mohammed, we read, lived mostly on barley-bread.

The SATVIK food keeps the head and heart free from all types of impurities. We every day read that crime and

corruption are on the increase and various types of special police squads are formed to meet this growing menace. "Eat, drink, and be merry" is the order of the day. Everyone wishes to have a good time in traveling and in visiting places of enjoyment and in watching movies, etc., and all beyond his scanty means. But how to get more money? Nothing but Alladin's wonderful lamp can help you to it. An honest man can hardly keep his body and soul together. But very few can escape the temptations and snares of the glittering world. Most of us live a lustful existence: some suffering from the lust of eyes, others of ears, and still others of various lusts of the flesh. We have no consideration for the wives, daughters, and sisters of others and follow them blindly. The world is in the grip of a fast-growing retrogression.

"A man is known by the company he keeps." If you want to know how your children are growing, have an eye on their companions and from them you can easily judge your children.

We have all been created by God. All of us are embodied souls. Soul is of the same essence as that of God and God is in all of us and we should, therefore, love one another. That is what St. Paul taught all his life. It is written in the Koran:

O human beings, do good,
Be good to your parents, relatives, orphans, the needy and the poor,
your neighbors, and your fellow beings,
Such a life pleases Allah.
Allah is within each one of us,
The haughty one who is selfish is not cared for by God.

A Master Saint always enjoins:

1. Love and reverence for all creation from highest to the lowest.
2. Observance of non-violence even in the depths of the heart.
3. Truthfulness.
4. Non-injury to one's feelings by thoughts, words, symbols, and by deed.
5. Kindly treatment toward all.
6. Cheery temperament.
7. Faith in the innate goodness in man.
8. Avoidance from giving bad names to others.
9. Non-indulgence in slanderous and amorous talks and idle pursuits.
10. Avoid accusations, for they boomerang with greater intensity.

If one is keen for God-realization then one must not hurt anyone's feelings, for heart is the seat of God. Have you ever realized that a mango seed when embedded gathers all the sweetness from the soil, while a pepper seed attracts all the bitterness in it? As a man thinks, so he becomes. Nothing is good or bad in the world, but our thinking makes it so. We, like the one or the other of the seeds, draw upon impulses from the atmosphere as suits our own mental make-up.

We have in *Mahabharata*, the great epic poem of ancient India, that outer signs of a chaste and clean life are good deeds. Just as a tree is known by the fruit it bears, so is a man by what he does. This is a great teaching of a great value. It helps a man to flourish and receive a good

name both here and hereafter. He will be the friend of all creatures for he resolves not to hurt or kill any of them, not even the humble bee nor the lowly ant. Such a person will surely know the Truth one day.

Prince Dhrit Rashtra, the son of Kuru the mighty king of Bharat, once hurled a rebuke on Gandiva, the great bow of Arjuna, the Pandav Prince. Arjuna got angry and, touched to the quick, put his arrow on the Gandiva. Lord Krishna, who happened to be near at hand, asked Arjuna what he was doing. Arjuna replied that he, as a Kshatriya prince, had taken a vow "that if anyone would say a word against my mighty bow, I would not spare him." Lord Krishna said, "O Arjuna, could you tell me the fruit of Dharma or Righteousness. Is it pain or pleasure?" Arjuna replied that Dharma or Righteousness consisted only in the resultant love and harmony. So one must first think of the result before doing or even contemplating any deed. It will certainly prolong one's span of life.

A person with a virtuous life will never entertain any evil idea against any person and will never lose his temper and get excited. Such a one gets longevity in life. The life process is calculated by means of breaths. Normally, breathing is going on very rhythmically—some ten to twelve per minute. But when a person is in a paroxysm of rage and is excited, he takes twenty to twenty-three breaths in a minute. Thus there is a veritable truth hidden in the saying that good deeds or virtues prolong life, while evil deeds or vices shorten the span of one's life.

Remember, you may even do meritorious deeds, but if you do not live a good moral life you are nowhere. Try to live by the precept of the Master and then alone your words can have weight with your friends. You cannot

preach of chastity with lust in your heart and a leer in your eyes. You cannot dupe people for any length of time. Sooner or later the cat will be out of the bag. The public cannot trust you blindly for long and take you at your face value. Excuse me, if I were to question as to why societies and preachers very often get a bad name: it is because they do not live by the teachings they preach to others.

A Godly person is possessed with a right mind and a right heart. He has both within and without a perfect spring of peace. His dealings are fair, open, and unquestionable. Truth springs from the very bottom of his heart. The audience is spellbound and gets a feeling of comfort by hearing him, as his utterances are drenched from the cooling effect of the loving and chaste thoughts within him and everyone feels satisfied. A one among many, he stands as a tower of strength, because of the purity of his heart. Lord Tennyson, a great poet, speaking of Sir Galahad, one of the Knights of the Round Table, puts in his mouth the words:

> *My strength is like the strength of ten because my heart is pure.*

It is said that out of the abundance of heart a man speaks. On the other hand, if a person is selfish and mischievous, he cuts with his own axe the tree of his life on which he sits with complacency. Everyone will be afraid of him and live in terror of him. People dread even to see his face and consider him an unlucky anathema.

A righteous person on the other hand has eyes on his weaknesses and through self-introspection weeds them out one by one. Swami Shiv Dayal Singh Ji advises that one should pick up his failures one by one and cast them out.

All other Saints have said this thing in the same strain:

1. Love thy neighbor as thyself.
2. Do unto others as you would wish them to do unto you.

The whole of the religious philosophy hangs by these two cardinal principles. If one puts before him these two golden rules, his life will surely be transformed. The person who has no element of sympathy in his heart nor a human touch, is not fit to be called even a man and he cannot know God. He who treats his enemies lovingly will disarm them in no time.

Insofar as you can, try to do no injury to anyone. Be good to all and you will be at peace with yourself and be a radiating center of loving grace around you. The prayers of others to whom you may have done good will help you. The good thoughts of others will swarm around you with a benediction. The very idea of doing good will first affect you and draw all good vibrations from the surrounding atmosphere.

In a nutshell, we have just laid a *Panch Shila* or five fundamental truths on which we can build the wonderful mansion of spirituality. These are:

1. Non-violence in thought, word, and deed.
2. Truthfulness.
3. Chastity.
4. Love for all and hatred for none, irrespective of position, wealth, or learning.
5. Selfless service—physical and financial—and a willing share in the joys and sorrows of others.

The Living Master cuts asunder the Gordian knot of an initiate.

The disciple of the Master refrains from sins.

Those who will follow the above will enrich their lives here and hereafter. They will control their mind and outgoing faculties by coming in contact with the living Word of God through the living Master Saint.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MYSTICISM. *First issued in August 1961 as Circular 17, this is the Master's clearest explanation of this subject, including the importance of self-surrender as a means of transcending the limitations of the ego, and the identity of love and concentration. Little known even among initiates, it is one of the supreme mystical classics and should be read and re-read by all those who are seriously interested in finding God in this lifetime. It was published in* Sat Sandesh *in August 1970.*

Love, Concentration and Self-Surrender: The Psychology of Mysticism

WHEN ONE undertakes to reach a certain goal in any field of human activity, it is necessary to take stock of one's progress from time to time. It is only through such stock-taking that one can become conscious of one's shortcomings and errors, eradicate and uproot them and plan out future progress. Having put our shoulders to the wheel of the Great Master's Cause, it is necessary that we should, in like manner, review our activity and achievement, from time to time. Without such self-analysis and self-criticism, no real advancement is possible and it was to encourage this practice and make it a daily habit that, in the case of individual initiates, I insisted (and continue to insist) that they maintain a daily record of their thoughts, words and deeds and of the period of meditation. What is necessary for us as individual initiates is even more necessary for us as members of a large movement.

Reviewing the work done in the past few years, there is much, I find, for which we may be grateful. Many have shown remarkable capacity for selfless service and others have made commendable progress on the inner path. Nevertheless, while noting this with pleasure, I cannot help observing the growth of tendencies which must be a matter of concern for all of us. In spite of repeated exhortations and persuasions, I find growing and springing up amidst us the weeds of discord and disharmony. Competition seems to have taken the place of cooperation,

rivalry that of love, and distrust that of trust and good faith.

The emergence of such fissiparous tendencies has marked the beginning of the decline of any great movement. Unless checked, they multiply and lead ultimately to serious rifts and divisions. The original goal is completely forgotten in the heat of controversy and debate and the purpose we set out to achieve lies wholly neglected. If we are to escape this fate we must zealously watch ourselves and rid ourselves of any undesirable traits that may be imperceptibly developing in us.

Why such disharmony should keep up is not difficult to tell. The Master cannot be present in his physical person everywhere and at all times. His mission must be carried on with the assistance of his disciples. These disciples are individuals inspired by spiritual longings who have been put on the road, but who have not necessarily reached the goal. The ultimate end is not easy to attain and very few indeed reach it within this lifetime. The Master's Cause must, therefore, be carried on with the aid of men and women who, in most cases, are yet on the path and have not attained perfection. Their vision is individual, not universal, and the viewpoint from which they see and judge is limited by the degree of spiritual development attained by them. When they are entrusted with any responsibility it is inevitable that they should discharge it within the terms of their own vision and insight. And when in discharging this responsibility they have to collaborate with others like themselves, others whose viewpoint is equally individual and distinct, the roots of discord begin. So long as they work directly under the guidance of the Master, all is well, but the moment they have

also to work in collaborating and cooperating, controversy begins. They should understand that they are all laborers in the field of the Master, working for promoting the Holy Cause of leading the seekers to the Goal of Life. The man who could see, could resolve at a touch the contradictory statements regarding the elephant made by the proverbial six blind men, but left to themselves, they could only wrangle and debate: each considered that he was right and the others wrong and each distrusted what the others had to say.

If six men lacking full vision could not agree about the nature of so limited and well-defined an object as an elephant, it is not surprising that those with limited vision should be unable to harmonize completely on so vast and unlimited a subject as spirituality. And yet, while it is natural for those who lack full vision not to agree fully on such matters, we must not allow this limitation to create division and dissension. For if we fail to find a remedy, we will ultimately have to sacrifice the "Cause" which brought us together, and what a great loss that would be.

There is only one remedy for all such discord and that is Love. He who has not mastered its secret, can never hope to be received in the Court of the Lord. It is the beginning and the end of spirituality. He who understands Love in its true nature and who lives and moves by its light shall, surely as two added to two makes four, attain the Lord.

Love and all things shall be added unto thee.

CHRIST

Listen! for I give you the very essence of truth:
Those who have loved have reached the Lord.

GURU GOBIND SINGH

Love knows selfless service, sacrifice, and self-surrender. Let no one interested in spiritual advancement perform service for the sake of appreciation. Selfless service is a great reward in itself. It even sacrifices one's personal interests for the cause one has sincerely taken up.

What is this love of which all mystics, Eastern and Western, have spoken so insistently? Is it like the love of the earth that we know? If you study the bonds of earthly love, you will find that at some point or another a trace of self-assertion is present in every case. Parent and child, friend and friend, man and wife; each is involved in a more or less strong drive for possession. It is a love that can often rise to great heights of self-sacrifice and yet it is a love that is not wholly selfless.

But the Love of which the mystics speak is a love that must be completely purified of the self. If one has not attained complete purification in this respect, one's love is still not perfect and not truly acceptable in the eyes of the Lord. And so the love of mystics is one in which one completely and unreservedly surrenders one's self to one's love. The seeker who, having found a true Master, has developed such absolute love for him, steadily purifies himself of all imperfections and makes himself a fit recipient of Divine Grace. You may well ask why there is this insistent stress on complete self-surrender on the mystic path. The answer is simple: without this absolute surrender of the last vestiges of ego and selfhood and without such complete absorption in the object of one's love, one cannot attain that unwavering concentration of all one's faculties which is the prerequisite of all inner progress. Absolute love and self-surrender are only other aspects of complete and flawless concentration. The mo-

ment the "self" enters into the picture and the question of "I-ness" arises, the single-pointedness of concentration is dissipated and inner advancement is made impossible. Besides, the goal of the spiritual aspirant lies far beyond the limits of individuality. His goal is union with the Absolute and such union must necessarily be a denial of the limits that separate us from each other. He who cannot rise above the ego, the faculty which creates these very limits, cannot hope to attain to that station which is the denial of all individuality and a realization of the oneness of all life.

Hence it is that mystics of all traditions have been untiring in their stress of the need for absolute self-surrender. It was this cross of sacrifice of the self, the ego, of which Jesus spoke when he exhorted his disciples to bear their cross daily. For in every little act, word or thought, the ego is seeking to dominate us and if the seeker is to triumph over it, he must be prepared to crucify it every moment. To achieve this degree of self-surrender, one must not look up to the Deity in Its Abstract form but in Its human form as the Master. For how else is one to know God's Will directly, in order to surrender one's self to it? What one may take as an intuition inspired by the Divine may be really one's own self speaking in disguise, and surrender to such seeming intentions may be really surrender to the self, the ego. However, if one has found a true Master, who is attuned to the Lord and is His mouthpiece, and obeys him in all things completely and absolutely, he will surely destroy the hydra-headed serpent of the ego and reach his heavenly home one day. There will be moments in the course of such love when one, judging from one's own limited understanding, doubts

the validity of the Master's instructions, but such moments are only tests to make our self-surrender more complete and more secure, and he who passes through these tests successfully, will one day radiate with the glory of God.

Such love and self-surrender to the Will of the Lord embodied in the Master, has been the keystone of the teachings of all mystics and especially so of Sant Mat. Your main task as disciples, as initiates, is to cultivate these qualities to the very utmost and leave the rest to the Master. There will, of course, be moments of doubt and of questioning, but if you can pass through them with your love and your faith unscathed, you will find the spiritual road within steadily unfolding itself before you and all things being added unto you. The path is certainly not easy, but for one who has made such love the cornerstone of his life, nothing could be easier or more certain. Jesus never promised the peace and comfort with which the world is familiar. It was the cross he offered. We have to suffer; to reshape ourselves, to destroy the old and forge the new.

We have to face the ridicule of our fellows and the organized opposition of orthodox institutions. But if we have anchored ourselves in such a love of complete self-surrender, nothing can disturb the peace of our minds or distract the spiritual harmony that is ours. Initially, perhaps, it is easier in the East to take to the mystic path than it is in the West. There is in India for example, a long standing tradition of seeking and following a Living Master; a tradition that is foreign to those to whom religion has been taught in terms of a closed revelation. Nevertheless, this initial advantage is not as great as it might at first appear. For the essential advantage in the field of spirituality is to

be found not without but within. It lies not in the absence of outer opposition but in one's inner capacity for complete self-surrender and love; and outward obstacles may in fact act as tests and stimuli for the development of this capacity. This ability to conquer the ego and to submit oneself to the Higher Will is as rare in the East as in the West, and wherever it can be found there you shall observe the true grandmark of spirituality.

It is this capacity that you must cultivate and develop if you really wish to make substantial progress in the spiritual field. I repeat that the path is not easy. You must crucify your ego and lay your selfhood at the altar of love for your Master. Rome was not built in a day and the True Abode of the Lord is not to be attained with a few weeks' labor. Most seekers want quick results. They want miracles and sudden transformations. But the seed generates rapidly only in thin soil and then withers away. The seed that must grow into the life-giving tree must grow more slowly. The science of spirituality as it has been taught by all Masters and as it has been given to you, is a perfect science. Its truth has been demonstrated by some initial experience. The rest depends on your effort. The Divine Grace is ever ready to pour itself into the vessel, but the vessel must first be ready. The power to perform miracles is not very difficult to acquire, but it is not to be confused with true spirituality, which must be paid for with complete self-transformation and self-surrender.

This then is the task before you. If you aspire for spiritual salvation, then do not lose a moment in seeking to reform yourselves. Man making is the most difficult part of spirituality and if you have perfected yourself in that field, then God realization is not difficult. Let your love

for the Master be absolute and your obedience to his wishes uncompromising. Work for his cause to the best of your abilities, but do not let the individuality of your limited vision inculcate feelings of opposition and resentment for your fellows. So long as one has not attained universal consciousness, differences of opinion are bound to exist. But if one has understood their cause, one will not allow them to disturb one's peace of mind. Whatever the outer opposition, whatever the opinions of others, if one has surrendered oneself completely to one's love, then nothing can ever disturb one's equanimity or obstruct one's spiritual course. He who is upset by what others have to say is without question one who is still controlled by the ego and has yet to conquer his self. He has yet to learn the rudiments of spirituality.

Let me therefore, command you as a Father, exhort you as a Teacher, persuade you as a Friend, to turn to the reformation and conquest of the self if you seek to progress on the inner path. Try to help others and do the best for them, but be not concerned with the fruits of what you do. That is something that you must leave to the Master. Make your love for Him so complete that, beholding His Hand in everything, you rise above all feelings of enmity, rivalry and resentment. See Him present in all and remember that He is always with you, ready to assist whenever you turn your thoughts to Him. And above all do not forget that He is to be won not by words but by deeds: "If you love me follow my commandments." If you can do this; if you can conquer the self and surrender it at the Feet of the Master; if you can learn to see Him working through all things; if you can accept the fact of your own limited vision; if you can undertake a ceaseless and

zealous watch over your thoughts and deeds, weeding out all evils and imperfections—then you shall not only win salvation yourselves but enable others to do likewise. Your example shall shine like a torch in the darkness, and men, even those who may first oppose you, will turn to you for guidance and help. You will find a new sense of peace surging through you, a peace that does not depend on the absence of outer disturbances, but is an inner state of mind that stands unshaken even in the most tempestuous situations. And this same quality shall enter not only your individual lives, but the larger life of the Great Spiritual movement of which you are a part. Instead of being disrupted and divided, it shall proceed single and purposeful toward its goal.

No true Master has ever been interested in attracting large numbers to Himself and quantity has never been my aim. It is quality that counts and I would rather have a handful of disciples, nay even one, who can sacrifice his ego on the spiritual altar and learn to live by love, than millions who understand not the value and meaning of these virtues. I have suggested this before, and I emphasize this again that a seeker should be studied more carefully and his/her background learned more before being recommended for initiation. If, after understanding the basic principles of the science, he is willing to undertake this complete remolding of himself that its practice requires, then and then alone can he become a fit recipient of initiation. And how much more is this need for self-transformation to be stressed in the case of group leaders and representatives. They are the foundations of the movement, and if the foundations are weak, how shall the superstructure stand firmly? Their responsibility is much greater

and their effort must be much greater than that of the ordinary initiate. If they really loved me more than their little selves; if they only knew how deeply I suffer when I see them divided and wrangling, they would never have permitted matters to come to such a pass. I am not happy to say this, but I am left no choice.

The chief element that results in disharmony between the representatives, group leaders and other initiates can also be traced to the word "distrust" or some sort of fear that some of them have acquired certain powers; viz., mind-reading or seeing or listening in on others at a distance, or psychic dominance over others, etc., which they misuse. If any one misuses such powers, those are taken away by the Master immediately. Moreover they are armed with the repetition of five names by which they have no cause to fear anyone.

Take it as an exhortation, take it as a command, but from this day, this very moment, make love and self-surrender (and the two, as I have already said, are really one) the cornerstones of your life. Do this and you will find your life becoming daily a blessing. I am always with you, waiting for you to turn away from yourselves and towards me. Let not the light that has been planted in you become darkness, but let it flame forth into a blaze that shall illumine the world. The path is strait and narrow and difficult, very difficult and exacting, but for one who is truly willing, every help is promised, and he can attain the goal in this very life; a goal that sets all other goals to shame; for beside it there are no goals at all, but empty baubles and toys, at best half-way houses.

I know the initiates abroad are anxious to see me in person, and I also long to be amidst them. You can well

imagine how happy and jolly a father would feel amidst his sons and daughters who are all loving and amicable. I would therefore suggest that by the time I make a trip to America, all initiates, including leaders and representatives, make a special effort to live a pure, Christly and Master-like life as is possible so that all initiates will stand out amongst other men and women shining with love in full bloom, and drenched in the sweet remembrance of the Lord.

HOW TO MAINTAIN ASHRAMS *was written on February 22, 1963, but was not issued publicly at first; a manuscript copy was sent to Nina Gitana, Manager of Kirpal Ashram, Calais, Vermont (at that time the only ashram outside of India dedicated to the Master Kirpal Singh) for her personal use. In September 1964, after Sant Bani Ashram had been established, Nina gave the present writer a copy so that I could use it also; it was the first time I had seen it. Greatly moved by it, we considered it as the Ashram constitution, posting it in conspicuous places and reading it at meetings periodically; we also mailed copies to prospective visitors, so that they could see in Master's own words what he desired from their stay. When we went to India in February 1965, I asked the Master for permission to print it; he looked it over and graciously agreed. Since then it has been continuously in print, and was published in* Sat Sandesh *in September 1970.*

How to Maintain Ashrams

THE FAST-GROWING spiritual activities of Ruhani Satsang have led to the establishment of many Ashrams (centers) in India and abroad. It is felt that some detailed instructions may be issued for the maintenance, scope and smooth working of these places of divine dispensation. The following principles are brought to the notice of all concerned, for strict adherence, guidance and help.

1. "Ashram," as the term implies, means a place of refuge—a spiritual sanctuary from where the gracious Master Power has chosen to radiate its loving life impulses for the benefit of the aspirants for spirituality. It is a place where the hungry souls can congregate for spiritual advancement, in sacred precincts charged with the right type of atmosphere conducive to spiritual growth. It is, therefore, necessary that all those entering into such blessed centers should leave behind all their domestic worries and woes, all thoughts of the world and worldly cravings so as to derive the maximum benefit possible from the holy vibrations overhead and while there, they do nothing in thought, word or deed, as may encroach upon the sanctity of the place and retard their own progress.

2. It is an axiomatic truth that all is holy where devotion kneels. The sanctified spots chosen for the purpose should not be regarded as centers of a social or cultural

get together, where persons may meet for idle gossip and indulge in unbecoming activities. It should be the endeavor of all to maintain and preserve sanctity of the place chosen and reserved for the sacred cause of the Master. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that all initiates and others, including visitors to the Ashram, should observe and maintain integrity, piety and sobriety of the highest degree possible and try to serve one another with reverential humility and loving grace, so as to become fit channels of receptivity.

3. Like religious discipline, spiritual discipline is a further step for the smooth working of the Ashrams and requires of all an extra care in decorum. Here are no priests to greet you, or help you to conduct any rites or rituals, for they are not adopted there and have little to do in the field of spirituality. It is only the outstretched guiding Hand of the gracious Master Power, in all loving compassion and mercy, ever ready to afford possible help and guidance on the inner Path. What is required is silence, serenity and seclusion. All are, therefore, expected to be calm, cordial and composed; deeply receptive for the ever-present grace of the Master. In the hushing silence and thick verdure of green foliage, you will be blessed with the white radiance of the Master Power. The rich fragrant breeze will reveal to you the heavenly melodies of the Audible Life Stream, reverberating through the charged atmosphere. Each pilgrimage will bless you with soul-stirring experiences of the divine vibrations.

4. The atmosphere within these premises, as said before, should be free from all idle pursuits and discussions of non-spiritual subjects like politics, economics, philoso-

phy and the like. The place should be reserved solely for contemplation of the sacred teachings of the gracious Master, and the scriptural texts of the past sages and seers of the Surat Shabd Yoga, for conducting discourses on spirituality and practicing regular meditations both in the mornings and evenings, for in such congregations the Master Power is stirred to its deepest depths and one can gain immense spiritual benefit.

5. The celestial gift of the Holy Naam, as you know, is granted freely and in abundance like all other gifts of Nature, viz., air, water, sunshine, etc. It is not the practice to accept any donations from visitors, casual inquisitic souls and others coming to the Ashram. The expenses of the Ashrams should be met with from voluntary subscriptions from the initiates only, which they may do. All such collections should be accounted for carefully and the funds thus raised should be utilized for the propagation of the holy teachings, with the concurrence and approval of the Managing Committee at each place. It is in the fitness of things to keep regular account of incomings to and outgoings from the Ashram funds, and periodical statements thereof be forwarded to the Central Office at Ruhani Satsang, Sawan Ashram, Gurmandi, Delhi-7 (India) for information and record.

6. "Selfless Service" is a great purifying agent and is a powerful aid in spiritual advancement. All those who have been privileged to be entrusted with the blessed task of the maintenance of these Ashrams should set an example of complete self-dedication in body, mind and spirit. He who serves most with a spirit of self-denial and abnegation is honored much and earns the pleasure of the Mas-

ter. Everybody attending the holy congregations should compete in selfless service and reverential humility coupled with loving cooperation and mutual toleration, so that the people at large, visiting these places of divine dispensation, should see for themselves that you are under the protective and competent guidance of the living Master. The sphere of selfless service should be extended beyond the Ashram to the really needy—the sick and the helpless. "Service" you should bring before "self" which in turn exalts the self to great heights. It should be free, voluntary and in a spirit of loving dedication to the Lord, the indweller in each heart. The "Self" should so expand as to embrace the totality of which it is an integral part, for in the welfare of all is indeed the welfare of the individual.

7. The members of the Managing Committees and the Trustees are vested with the sacred task of helping their brethren. The earning of one's livelihood by the sweat of the brow is a cardinal obligation. So it is desired that all should try to support themselves by resort to honest occupation earned only by honest means. There is, however, no harm in economical utilization of the Ashram funds in serving simple, strictly vegetarian and nutritious food to those coming from outside stations after Satsangs, for which, of course, proper accounts are to be maintained.

8. There should be a small library equipped with literature published from time to time or as may be recommended by the Master. All such books carry His life impulse and as such they are truly charged and will enable the dear ones to understand the true import of spirituality.

9. Equality, fraternity and liberty are the cornerstones of spirituality. All entering the blessed precincts should

forget about their status in life, and cooperate with a sense of the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God. There should be no distinctions of rich or illiterate as all are the children of the same Father and are entitled to share the divine grace in equality. The Kingdom of God is the heritage of all and everyone is entitled to the lost domain.

10. The differences of opinion arising out of certain issues, should be resolved by amicable and polite discussions in private and in case of any knotty problem, reference may be made to the Master for clarification. Loving tolerance should be the guiding principle, for who is there who would not err.

11. All should know it for certain and inscribe on their heart of hearts that the Unseen Eye of the Master is constantly watching the spiritual interests of His children, and all endeavors for maintaining the sanctity of these places will enable you to be blessed with ever-increasing grace. The acts of omission or commission outside these sanctuaries may be pardoned, but lapses in personal behavior or otherwise in these places of divine dispensation are considered to be too heinous and cannot possibly be pardoned, as they spoil the sanctity of the place.

If you will observe the aforesaid fundamentals by assimilating their serene sense, you will surely be blessed with the protection of the Lord.

With all love,

KIRPAL SINGH

SERVICE BEFORE SELF *was issued as Circular 29 on February 21, 1964, just three weeks after the completion of the Second World Tour. It appeared in* Sat Sandesh *in October 1970.*

Service Before Self

Dear Ones:

WITH the unbounded Grace of my Master, it has been possible to complete successfully this phase of the Master's Mission, which took about eight months of continuous touring in so many countries of the West. The loving assistance from all quarters was a source of great delight and inspiration, and rendered the task much easier. I am really thankful to all who took great pains in organizing the tours, planning programs, arranging daily talks and meetings, and helping me in diverse ways to carry the spiritual message to seekers after Truth.

The work of Ruhani Satsang has considerably increased with the establishment of new centers in many places abroad. It would be to the fitness of things to manage the affairs in a more constructive manner. I would therefore like to give you valuable advice in the larger interests of your spiritual progress and ethical growth.

Love, Life (strength) and Light (intelligence) are the holy attributes of Supreme Power—the Holy Naam—the God-into-Expression Power. This is the Holy Trinity, and It is manifested to the fortunate few who develop spiritually under Divine Guidance. These virtues reflect the inner development of the spiritual aspirant and are granted as a gracious gift by the Master. The holy meditations on the Light and Sound Principle bring a radical change in our outlook upon the earth life, and hazy doubts and skepti-

cism are put to naught when we awaken to the Divine Call. One enters into a new world, full of astral projection, where the gracious Master Power is shedding gracefully all bliss, peace and harmony. Inner receptivity, which grows gradually by implicit obedience and loving devotion, reveals the untold treasures of Divinity already existing therein.

An affectionate schoolteacher would welcome more discipline for the few bright students who show keen aptitude for intellectual growth. How much more cautious and vigilant would the Living Master be for the all-round spiritual growth of his children whom he has accepted under His Divine Will. The disciplined initiates are privileged to enjoy divine guidance in their everyday life, and in turn become a source of help and inspiration for their less gifted brethren. The initates are blessed with the charming Radiant Form of the Master within and can benefit from His unerring guidance. He is most eager and keen for your progress. Better avenues of prosperity open for the truly sincere and yearning souls, and many dear ones have borne testimony to this sacred truth.

The representatives and group leaders have a significant responsibility for managing the affairs of Satsang. They are the chosen few from amongst the selected many put on the Holy Path and accordingly deserve special attention. They, being the torch bearers, are required to be shining examples of Truth, Love and Simplicity. True living does not warrant any show or artificiality, but is a simple life full of selfless service and piety. The basic necessity in this behalf is to stand on one's own feet, which means earning one's own living, by the sweat of the brow, for the maintenance of oneself and family. It has a deep signifi-

cance, and all Masters stressed the importance of such honest living, which builds a healthy and contemplative body and mind suitable for spiritual growth. The finer tissues of the physical body are manufactured through a smooth and harmonious blood circulation. Peace and serenity fall to the share of the honest and earnest.

The initiates are advised to render selfless service physically, financially and intellectually, for their inner spiritual progress. Physical service simply means the observance of strict control over body and mind, service to the sick and needy, and leading a clean, chaste life, which purifies the entire system through and through. Financial service falls into the category of donations and offerings, which grant expansion of the heart and broadmindedness. One enjoys the exclusive right of Sonship of God while knowing fully well that all others are the children of the same Father, and inculcating the loving bonds of fraternity. The distinctions of high or low, rich or poor, vanish. Intellectual service grants further impetus and personal conviction for the Path of Righteousness and selflessness. Evidently, all this commences with the physical health of the body, which is built from the intake of food and allied necessities of living. Mystics have practiced penances and austerities for attaining spiritual discipline, but the Masters of the Highest Order have laid a far healthier law for attainment of the same target. They have forbidden the use of anything for ourselves which does not belong to us or to which we have no legitimate right. Such high living grants both continence and contentment, the two strong pillars on which the lofty edifice of spirituality is erected.

It is a well-known aphorism that a tree is known by the fruit it bears. The seeds of spirituality have been sown far

and wide and a plentiful harvest is an assured reality. All that is now needed from the workers—the representatives, the group leaders, the well-wishers and the sympathizers in the holy cause—is to work selflessly in a spirit of loving cooperation, good will and sincere earnestness, and attending to the needs of all and sundry in the Cause of the Master, regardless of whatever may come in the way.

Service before self counts for much on the Path of the Masters. The little self or ego within has to be eliminated by dissolving it into service of humanity. For all are children of one God, no matter how and where situated, or in what inhibitions and limitations of one kind or another they might be living. You may have to face heavy odds, for it is an uphill task, but all adverse winds blow over. If one is able to efface oneself for a higher cause, this in itself provides a shield and a buckler to the true crusader, and helps in overcoming the seemingly insurmountable obstacles. The tougher the struggle, the brighter shines the metal within. This helps to liberate the finer instincts, until one has risen to a great spiritual stature, towering like a beacon light, shedding rays of hope and encouragement to the lone and weary traveler, shipwrecked on the stormy and strife-riven sea of life.

Success in spirituality is not the difficult task which most of us take it to be or make it to be; but it does require patient self-purification, a watchful introspection, a careful weeding out of all undesirable elements present and a pruning of outspreading ramifications; and above all timely tending and nurturing of the tender spiritual sapling as it sprouts from the soil of the human mind. This work hangs on the shoulders of every one of you and I am sure that you are fully alive to your responsibilities and obliga-

tions in this behalf, which in your case are two-fold: one to your own self and the other to your brethren, the new initiates on the Path, and the skeptical and wavering all of whom look to you for day to day help and guidance in all their difficulties, temporal as well as spiritual.

It is of paramount importance to those who have to give the lead, to be aboveboard in every respect, so that no one has an opportunity to raise even his little finger in censure or be misled by any action. Do nothing that may be unbecoming to the Great Cause which you have voluntarily and gleefully espoused. Work as a living embodiment of the God Power, making It a sheet anchor for keeping a steady keel in all your endeavors. It will protect you from all temptations of name, fame, worldly gain or the like, for all of these are apparently very alluring and beckon siren-like to you, but at the bottom they are truly baneful and in no time will hurl you to abysmal depths, if you succumb to them.

Truth is above all, yet true living is higher still. A clean life, with a frugal living from your own earnings will release a tremendous spiritual force within you, and will enable you to shoulder the task that God has put on your way. You can accept as custodians all the voluntary donations which may be given for furthering the Master's Mission. These must be carefully and reasonably spent for the Mission work alone, keeping proper account of the same.

May Hazur bless you in your work.

My best wishes are always with you all.

With loving thoughts for healthy harmony of body, mind and soul,

Yours affectionately,
KIRPAL SINGH

THE WAY OF LOVE *is a letter sent primarily to the California disciples through the agency of a California initiated couple who were returning home after a stay with the Master. It appeared in* Sat Sandesh *in November 1970 under the present title.*

The Way of Love

Dear Ones:

YOU HAVE been all along on my mind and your sweet remembrances have always been fresh by the presence of dear ——.

I send you my loving message.

Human body is a precious asset granted to you all. It is the highest rung in God's creation. The highest object of this earth life in human form is to realize our own selves and then realize God. It is such a noble task, which can only be accomplished in the human body. Soul is a conscious entity, a drop of the Ocean of All Consciousness, and in its miniature capacity carries all the divine attributes of Godhood. Since it is environed by mind and matter, it has lost its heritage and forgotten its origin, the True Home of the Father. The Masters come to our help, to awaken us from this long slumber of ignorance. All the past Masters including Christ have been stressing the importance of this inner development of soul. An unbiased study of scriptures will reveal to you that the Masters have been coming to this earth planet in all ages for the guidance and deliverance of child humanity. Those dear ones who were privileged to sit at their holy feet enjoyed the rare bliss of inner communion with them. The imperative necessity of such a Master-soul is still felt by such loving souls who yearn to meet Him during their lifetime. The eternal law of demand and supply continues working for

all time. So it is under divine dispensation that a living Master comes for rendering feasible assistance and guidance for such ready souls.

It is in accordance with the execution of the Divine Plan that I have been assigned this noble task of assisting all dear ones in the fulfillment of their cherished goals. I would love to assist them in this respect. It is the Divine Grace of my Master that whosoever had the good fortune of seeking inner life has been blessed with the conscious contact of the Holy NAAM within. The Holy Initiation into the Mysteries of the Beyond is a unique start for further development. Most of you have been blessed with this rare gift of heavenly nature with the Grace of the Master. Now it is up to you to develop it from day to day by regular, faithful, and accurate meditations. I am glad that most of you have been devoting regular time for your holy meditations and enjoying inner bliss and harmony. I wish you more of success in your ventures.

I would stress the importance of self-introspection, for which the maintenance of the diary has been prescribed. A keen vigil and careful living is an essential helping factor for inner progress. A disciplined life by having complete control over the senses, which in turn overpowers the soul, should be cherished. The inner divine links of Light and Sound are most helpful for controlling the senses. If you will follow these divine principles, the inner change of life will follow automatically. Truth is above all, but higher still is true living. You should love one another so that others may see and know for themselves that you belong to the Master.

God is love and love is God. The way back to God is also through love. You should always remember this di-

vine principle: that love begets love. The Father is always pleased to see the loving children laying their heads together for the common Holy Cause of the Master. When two lovers of the Master meet, they grow in loving devotion and right understanding.

Satsang is a great helping factor for spiritual progress. It is the Divine Grace of the Master which radiates in such holy congregations where the dear ones get together for imbibing the sacred teachings. I would say that it is an arena where spiritual stalwarts are built. The loving life impulses are radiated in great abundance by the gracious Master Power in these gatherings. You can derive immense spiritual benefit by getting together in his Name.

My heart goes out to all you dear ones. You see, distance is no barrier for the Master Power and anywhere the yearning souls would pray for his guidance, he would materialize and bless you through and through. Time and tide wait for no man. Make hay while the sun shines. You should always hie on your Holy Path irrespective of worldly gains or losses. You will appreciate that after all everything is to be left behind at the final hour of death, and only the Holy NAAM will accompany us into the Beyond. You know very well the supreme importance of regular meditations. The more you are developed while living here, the more of the inner journey is covered in the Beyond. Know it for certain that you are here in this mortal world only for enjoying the rare bliss of Holy NAAM. God and Master (God in man) first; all else secondary. It is the Bread of Life which must be partaken regularly so that your souls may become strong enough to pass through the vicissitudes of physical life. Love is the panacea for all ills. Please give up all remorse and resentment and live

cheerfully. You should remember that nothing binds the human soul more than drooping spirits of morbidity. Always keep cheerful, resigning yourselves to the Will and Pleasure of the Master. You should know it for certain that you are under the gracious protection of the Master Power and He is ever with you through and through.

One learns swimming in water. You must be alive to your mundane obligations and try to meet with the challenge as best as you can and leave the rest to Him. If you will keep the target of your spiritual progress in the forefront, the pinching effect of worldly pains will be lost with the Grace of the Master. An elegant horseman keeps both of his feet well fixed in the stirrups. If you will run Godward, all else will follow of its own accord. A disciplined life is an asset; make it a principle to be always happy, cheerful and grateful.

Prayer and gratitude are akin. There is much to be grateful for, if we only just count the manifold blessings granted to us by the Master Power. A healthy physical body, strong enough to attend to mundane obligations, and a sound mind purified by meditations in the Holy NAAM are perhaps the superb blessings. Always radiate loving compassion for others which will invoke divine grace, and your heart will be purified.

I would reiterate that our days are numbered, and before the great final change, viz., death, comes, the initiates should develop rising above body consciousness by attuning their souls with the Holy NAAM. If you will take one step, He will come down hundreds of steps to greet you. Each and every moment spent in holy meditation stands to your spiritual credit.

With these few words, I conclude and send you all my

love and best wishes for your spiritual progress.

Thank you, dear ones.

Yours affectionately,
KIRPAL SINGH

BY LOVE SERVE ONE ANOTHER, *issued on June 6, 1967, is the first of the powerful circulars sent out by Master during that year (although it could be said that the New Year's Message, Birthday Message, and message of April 2, 1967, all of which are included in* Spiritual Elixir, *are part of the same series). The previous year had seen a serious rift develop among the Master's disciples; while the disagreement involved only secondary matters (primarily organizational) it interfered seriously with the spiritual growth of the disciples, and this series of circulars was issued in response. This one was first published under the present title in* Sat Sandesh *in June 1971.*

By Love, Serve One Another

HOW FORTUNATE you are that you have been initiated into the secret inner Path leading to the Kingdom of God; the Kingdom that comes not by observation (without), but that which lies within you. Know you not that you are the temple of the Holy Ghost? Verily you are so, and you have witnessed within yourselves the primal manifestations of the Godhead, no matter at what level, according to your mental makeup and the receptivity developed by you. *You have seen what many prophets and righteous men desired to see but did not see, and you have heard what they desired to hear but did not hear.*

God is Spirit and can only be worshiped in Spirit. You must therefore try to rise over and above the body consciousness and strive to arise into the consciousness of the higher order—I mean spiritual consciousness—rather than remain tied to your own persons or in fact to any other person, howsoever great he may appear to be in his own eyes or in the eyes of others. Principles are higher, much higher, I would say, than personalities. Persons may come and go, personal cults may linger for a while, yet principles, the spiritual values, last and last beyond time.

Your main concern should now be to develop the inner experience granted to you. Love the God-in-action Power with all your mind, with all your heart, with all your strength and with all your soul. This will enable you to expand beyond all measure, so as to embrace the totality

of His Being, far above party affiliations, party politics and all politickings.

A tree is known by the fruit it bears. Do glory unto the God-Power and you shall be glorified in return without any effort on your part. That is the law. And again, a fruit-laden tree bends with the weight of the fruit it bears. Try to cultivate and attain the divine virtues of love, humility and understanding for all. Who is there under the sun who has no failings and shortcomings? *With all our righteousnesses, we are but filthy rags.* Be polite and courteous with all. Courtesy costs you nothing but it pays rich dividends. Human heart is verily the seat of God and must be kept sanctified at all times and at all costs, no matter what the sacrifice. Learn to live peacefully and amicably with each other, giving due regard to the feelings and sentiments of others. "By love serve one another" should be your rule in life. A loving service adorns both the server and the served alike.

The above injunctions apply equally, nay with greater force, to the Group Leaders and Representatives of the Master, for they have to set a better example to all those who are within the sphere of their influence. They must know that they are just instruments in the Divine Plan and not the flywheel running the plan itself; and unless they work smoothly in loving harmony and cooperation, they are bound to generate heat by constant friction, damaging not only the quality of the work but even themselves.

Ye are the salt of the earth, but if the salt has lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing. Should the protecting hedge itself start nibbling the farm enclosed in its fold, you can well imagine

what would remain of the farm: a pestilence-stricken arid ground of no consequence.

It hardly serves any useful purpose to cast aspersions upon anybody or assign motives to whatever one says or does, for it is not given to us to read anybody's mind when we cannot read even our own. Judge not, lest ye be judged and found wanting in the Divine Scales. Therefore, arraign not anybody, much less your colleagues and brothers in faith. In the case of honest differences of opinion, which sometimes may arise, try to iron them out lovingly and in private, rather than wash the dirty linen in public meetings and public places, spreading a nauseating foul smell around you. If you cannot do so between yourselves, for one reason or another, you will do well to refer the problem to the Master for solution and reconciliation of the apparently divergent views. I, therefore, enjoin on all of you to keep loving and friendly relations among yourselves as children of the same Father and do not do anything that may make anybody raise a pointing finger at you and bring disrepute to the Highest Knowledge—the Science of the Beyond—which you have come by after an evolution through ages past. "Ye are the light of the world" and hence should keep this light aloft on the hilltop so that those who see it, even from a distance, are encouraged to seek you for advice and bless you for your sage counsel and the Master Power that helped you to it. As such, you are to help your brothers in faith, keeping them firm in their loving devotion to the Master instead of coming in between them and the Master—for all belong to Him.

All of us are, in fact, fruit-gatherers in the vineyard of the Master. We have nothing in us to recommend us to His Grace. The puppets in a pantomime show dance not by

themselves but by the wire-puller behind the screen. To assume any importance, in doing the Master's work, is not worthy of noble souls, as you are.

We are all of the Master and for the Master, but not the Master—Gurbhais and not the Guru, for Guru-Power is only in one commissioned from above. The Master knows best how to carry on the Divine Plan. Let us, therefore, submit our individual wills to His Will and not appropriate to ourselves any credit for the gifts freely and lovingly bestowed upon us by Him. After all, what is there in the conduits that simply pass on the refreshing and life-giving water that comes from the overhead reservoir (the Master Power).

The greatness of the Master is not to be judged by the strength of his folowing or by the outer glamor of his court. He is not after wealth nor after name and fame nor after the numbers that follow him. He, standing on the hilltop, knows in what hearts the fire of anguish is smouldering and, like oxygen, comes in so many diverse ways to fan the flames of loving devotion in them. So nobody should feel that he or she is indispensible and therefore put on airs which others may resent or cavil at. Remember that we cannot add to or detract from the glory that is His. If we can be of any service in His Cause, that may, on the contrary, be taken as a privilege coming from Him in His Grace.

In the end, I hope that every one of you, whatever your position in life, whatever your place in the administrative setup for furthering the Holy Cause, will contribute his mite, as best as possible, in a spirit of loving and selfless service and try to enrich himself inwardly by living in peace and amity in his respective circle, radiating nothing

but fragrance to all around him, as so many children in the one Grand Family of Man.

One thing more, which I cannot help but emphasize for the benefit of all the dear ones on the Path. If at all, any of you, at any time, feel that you are the most favored in divine manifestations, you should try to exercise restraint and observe decorum in society, rather than be carried away by the emotional tide that may take you off your feet. Humility is the first and last adornment that embellishes the noble soul.

My best wishes are ever with you and nothing will give me greater pleasure than to see you all, well set on the spiritual Path, with appreciation of each other, moving shoulder to shoulder, forming one spiritual phalanx so that those who see you will admire you and get inspiration from you.

Wishing you, one and all, God-speed on the God Way.

Yours affectionately,
KIRPAL SINGH