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The Glory of the Darshan

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The Glory of the Darshan

Sant Ajaib Singh Ji

Salutations unto the Feet of Supreme Fathers Lord Almighty Sawan and Kirpal Who have had mercy on our poor souls and have given us the opportunity to sing Their praises.

The history of the entire world tells us that no matter in what time any Saint, Mahatma, or Beloved of God came into this world, He neither condemned nor broke any of the existing religions, nor did He form or create any new ones.

We have Their writings with us. Even though physically They are not among us, but still we have Their teachings and Their writings with us, and in Their writings no Mahatma, no Master, has ever said, "God Almighty has created the religions." They all have said, "God Almighty has made man, and man has further made the religions and the communities. Creating the illusions and the divisions of the religions and castes and things like that, we have got ourselves lost in them." All the Masters have said that human birth or the human body is a precious opportunity which God Almighty has given to us, and we can realize God Almighty only in this precious opportunity.

Even the perfect Masters of the present time do not teach us to create new religions or new communities. They tell us that without going to the perfect Master we cannot do the devotion of God Almighty. They tell us that without going to Satsang we cannot know about our shortcomings; without doing the meditation of Naam we cannot get back to God Almighty.

Dear Ones, often I have told you how I was very fortunate, how I got the opportunity to sit at the feet of two great Masters — Baba Sawan Singh and Master Kirpal Singh — and how my soul was able to drink the nectar of Their love sitting at Their feet.

Dear Ones, I have often said that those great Masters were the Ocean of Love and I was the devotee of Love. I have gotten only Love from Them, and I have come here only to share Their love with all of you.

The perfect Masters have risen above the duality and They understand the entire world, the whole creation, and all the religions as Their

This Satsang was given on July 21, 1996, at Sant Bani Ashram, Sanbornton, NH.

very own. When God Almighty is One, and the Path through which we can meet God Almighty is One, then where is there room for duality, and where is there room for any differences?

Mahatmas have worked very hard, and They wrote the *Vedas, Shastras,* and the other scriptures for our benefit. They wrote those thinking that by reading those we will be able to take advantage [of Their experiences] and will be able to do the devotion. But instead of taking advantage of the scriptures written by the perfect Masters, we emphasize more on reading them, just like the parrot goes on repeating something. In that way, we lay a lot of emphasis on reading those holy scriptures rather than understanding and implementing and following what the Masters have written for our guidance.

No Mahatma has ever written that you will get liberated just by getting your ears pierced. No Mahatma has ever written that by adopting any particular colored clothes you will get liberated. No Mahatma has ever written that by reading any particular Veda, Shastra, or other scripture you will become liberated.

Kabir Sahib says, "Do not call the *Vedas,* the *Kitabes,** the scriptures, as the false ones." The Mahatmas have written those scriptures for our benefit; they are the record of Their spiritual experiences. If we will also take advantage of Their writings, and just as They surrendered themselves to Their Masters, if we would also surrender ourselves to the perfect living Masters and do things according to what is written in the scriptures of the perfect Masters, we will also be able to take advantage of this precious human birth, and we will be able to make this birth successful.

So Kabir Sahib says, "Do not call the Vedas and Kitabes as the false ones. False or untrue is that person who does not think about and does not meditate upon what is written in the scriptures. He who does not do things according to the writing of the scriptures sincerely and wholeheartedly, he is the false one."

Master used to say that the reality is that one gardener plants the plants, and the other gardener comes and waters those plants. One Master comes into this world and gives us the knowledge, and after He goes another Master comes and reminds us of the teachings which the earlier Master has given to us. They write Their experiences in the scriptures, and we, the forgetful minds, are such that we forget what the Masters have taught us, so another Master comes after some time and He reminds us of the same teachings which the earlier Masters have written in Their

* Master Kirpal, in *The Crown of Life,* refers to certain followers of the Muslim religion as "the people of the book." Used here "Kitabes" appears to refer collectively to a group of Muslim holy books, as "Vedas" refers to a group of Hindu holy books.

scriptures. In that way, once again, He makes us do the things which the earlier Master asked us to do.

We people of this world have very small thoughts, very narrow minds, and we don't want to believe in a thing which we do not understand. So Saints and Mahatmas lovingly tell us, "Dear Ones, God Almighty for Whom you are searching, you will not get Him from anywhere outside. Whenever you will realize Him, it will be always from your within."

Usually, what do we do after the Masters leave this world? Rare are the souls who do what the Masters have asked them to do while the Masters are still in the body. Few are the souls in this world who sit at the feet of the Masters, and while They are still alive, go within and let their soul enjoy the nectar which the Masters are giving them.

Otherwise, most of the people, what do they do? They always oppose the Masters of the present time.

As I have often said, right from the very beginning the thieves have been chasing the people with wealth. In the same way, the opponents have always been opposing the perfect Masters. What does Kal do? Kal has always been making people oppose and criticize the perfect Masters so that They may not be able to do Their work, so that They are not able to give out the message of Truth to the other people.

With our mind and intellect, we always interpret the inner experiences and inner writings of the Masters outside, and then we say, "The Master gave eyes to a blind person, He gave legs to a crippled person." But only the satsangis know what kind of eyes the Masters give to people, what kind of legs the Masters give to people. They give us those eyes through which we can see the Inner Light, and They give us those legs [by] which we can climb upwards.

Guru Nanak Sahib said, "Those who have become blind in the Will of God are not the blind ones. In fact, those who, even after having eyes, are not able to see God Almighty within themselves, they are the real blind ones."

A brief hymn of Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj is presented to you. In the writings of all the perfect Masters, there are four things which are always mentioned: the glory of Satsang, the glory of the Naam, the glory of the perfect Master, and the environment in which we can do the devotion of God Almighty.

Our mind very easily is affected by the company we keep. If we keep good people's company, we get good qualities, good habits. If we go in the company of bad people, our mind picks up bad qualities very fast.

So Saints and Mahatmas lovingly tell us, "*Sat,* or Truth, is God Almighty, and to be in the company of that Truth is what is called doing the Satsang. So to be in the company of God Almighty is Satsang, or to be in the company of Those Who have become One with and Who have become attached to that Truth is Satsang."

In the *Gurbani* two kinds of Satsangs are described. One is the inner Satsang, the other is the outer Satsang. When our soul becomes free from the clutches of the mind and goes within, when she goes in the company of the inner Master, that is the inner Satsang. And outside, when we are able to go and sit at the feet of the living Master and do the Satsang, that is called the outer Satsang.

We even call that meeting as a Satsang which we do as per the instructions and the orders of the Master. So whatever kind of Satsang we can do, whatever opportunity of doing any kind of Satsang we get, we should always take advantage of that.

A cripple may cross the mountain,

And the foolish may become clever.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj says, "We are the crippled ones, we are the lame ones, and the height which we have to climb is very steep, very high, and we do not have any legs — we do not know how to get over there." Outside, it is easier to climb the Himalayas, because in that climbing we get name and fame. The inner climbing is more difficult because here we have to deal with the mind, we have to face the mind and fight with him. If we are able to get rid of the outer mind, to get rid of the physical mind, we have to fight further with the astral mind. Only after that are we able to climb that journey to Sach Khand.

When we are in the physical plane, we have the physical body, we have physical hands and feet. When we rise above the physical plane, we go into the astral plane, and in the astral body we have the astral legs and hands. When we cross over from there and go into the spiritual plane, there it is all Light, and only after reaching there do we realize how we were the crippled ones, and that we were able to do all this journey, we were able to climb all this height, only with the grace of the Master. The Master gave us the spiritual legs and He taught us, He made us fly and made us reach that place.

In order to go within we do not need any education or any reading. The Masters tell us that we cannot go within just by reading the books or the scriptures. We have to be very innocent just like an innocent child. Only after becoming very innocent can we go within.

So that is why Guru Sahib says, "We are the crippled ones and our Master gave us legs, and He made us climb over that mountain which was very difficult to climb. It was only due to the grace of the Master that we got the spiritual legs from Him and that He made us cross over this mountain. We were the fools, we were the idiot ones, because outwardly we got involved in the discussions and debates over the spiritual writings and scriptures, and we thought that we were the smartest of all. But now we realize that we were the fools, and the Master showered grace upon us. Now giving up all those discussions and debates, we have become the clever and smart ones."

Even the blind one can see the three worlds;
When one meets the Master, he becomes pure.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj says, "We were the blind ones." And just as the fragrance is present within the flower, in the same way, God Almighty is present within us. But we thought that He was sitting somewhere outside in some golden temple or some other place. We were

looking for Him everywhere outside, but our Beloved Master showered grace upon us and He showed us how God Almighty is within us. With His grace we have got the eyes and now we can see everything which is happening in the three worlds. Dear ones, often I have said that in the inner world, in the within, we can see things in a much clearer way, much clearer than what we can see here outside.

So He is praising His Master Guru Ramdas. He asks, "With Whose grace was I able to see everything in the three worlds, and with Whose grace was I able to go in all these three worlds?" He says, "[It is] only due to the grace of my Master, Guru Ramdas."

I have listened to the glory of
the company of the Saints.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj very lovingly says, "Dear Ones, what can I tell you [of] the glory and how can I sing the praise and importance of the company of the Sadhu? Because only those who have been in the company of the perfect Sadhus know how valuable the company of that Sadhu is."

Kabir Sahib says, "One moment or even half a moment, or even half of a half moment — whoever has spent even that much time in the company of the Beloved of God, he gets to the other side."

Kabir Sahib says, "O Kabir, by going in the company of the Sadhu or the Master, you go on improving, you go on growing a lot, whereas if you go in the company of the worldly people, you go on reducing."

Kabir Sahib says, "We should do the company of the Sadhu Who helps us at the end-time."

Lovingly He says that we should do the company of the Sadhu, because only the company of the Sadhu is going to help us in the end, whereas the company of the worldly people will lead us to destruction. So never go in the company of the worldly person, always be in the company of the Sadhu.

God Kirpal told me about the Satsang. He said, "As long as I can move my body in the bed, I should not give up the Satsang, I should do the Satsang." That is why He used to say that you should give up hundreds of important works and attend the Satsang.

After losing the dirt of millions
of karmas,
One becomes clean and his
within becomes pure.

When Saints and Mahatmas lovingly tell us about our shortcomings and faults in the Satsang, we do realize, we do acknowledge that we have those faults and shortcomings, and our mind says, "Yes, we do have this, and we will not do this again." We even touch our ears and promise that we will not repeat these mis-

takes again, that we will give up the shortcomings. When we are able to do that, then from our soul all the dirt is removed and then we are able to do the devotion of God.

Such is the devotion of the Lord that even the ant can conquer the elephant.

Now He says, "I did the devotion of God Almighty, I did the devotion of the Master; see how much strength I have gotten from doing the devotion of the Master! My soul had become very weak. She was burdened under the heavy load of the karmas. She had become as feeble and as small as an ant, and the mind had become very mighty, very strong, just like an elephant. And wherever mind wanted he was forcing my soul, just like the elephant can force the ant to go anywhere. In the same way, my mind was forcing my soul to do anything. But by doing the devotion of the Master I got so much strength in my within, my soul became so strong, that now this ant has become more powerful than the elephant."

He has given the gift of immortality to the one He has made His own.

Any jiva who comes to the Master — it doesn't matter if he is the righteous person or a sinner — but once he comes to and has been accepted by the Master, [once he] has been given the Initiation, after that he should not do or not repeat the faults and the mistakes which he used to do before he came to the Master. When anyone goes to the Master and when the Master accepts him, He accepts the jiva only after forgiving all the earlier faults, all the earlier bad deeds which the [jiva] has done.

He is told, "Dear One, now you have been put on the Path, and now you should not look back, you should not do the same things which you were doing before you came to me. You have been forgiven for all that you have done in the past, and now you should not repeat those things again."

When anyone goes to school, you know that the teacher has his reponsibilities. At the same time, the student who goes to the teacher also has certain obligations, certain responsibilities to attend to. Those students who surrender to the teachers, those students who take care of and attend to their responsibilities, they do their studies and become successful in school. But if the students don't do what the teachers expect and ask them to do, what is the fault of the teacher? Just as the teacher has his responsibility — it is his job to teach — at the same time, the student also has to study, and if he does not do his part, then how can you blame the teacher? Kabir Sahib says, "What can the poor Master do if all the faults are with the student?

If the student has become like a hollow pipe which does not store any air in it, what can the teacher do? No matter how competent the teacher is, still the student will not gain from him if the student does not do his responsibility."

Charity or donation of every kind has an importance in its own way. Some people feed the poor and hungry ones; some people give clothes to the needy ones; some people make houses for the homeless; and some people do other kinds of charitable things, they give some other kind of donation. So every person who is donating or doing some charity [gets] its value, but the donation or the charity which the Masters do for us is the greatest of all, because They give us Their own life impulse. They give us the donation of Their Own Self, and that cannot be compared with any other donation.

The donation which the Master gives to us is such that no wind can blow it away, no thief can steal it, no fire can burn it. And the donation which we receive from the Master is such which protects us in this world and also goes with us when we go in the beyond. The donation of the Master is such that even after giving us so much They do not make us feel that They have done anything for us. Just as nature provides air and water free, in the same way, the Masters also give us Their life impulse, Their donation, free of charge. They do not charge any fees for what They do for us.

Guru Sahib says, "Naam is a precious jewel and it is with the Master. Those who devote themselves to the Master, the Master gives them that jewel."

The cat can become a lion,
And from a straw one can become as big as the Sumer mountain.

Now He says, "The mind who was like a tiger and was not allowing us to go within, with the grace of the Master, now that tiger-like mind has become like a cat and we are able to go within. Earlier we were looking at that big mountain and we were wondering how will we be able to climb that mountain, how will we be able to cross over that mountain? Now with the grace of the Master that mountain seems to be like just a small piece of wood and we feel that we can easily go there and climb over it."

Paltu Sahib says, "When a devotee does his devotion, he develops the constant quality in his within and the devotion becomes like a constant flow of oil or liquid. Whenever he closes his eyes he is in his within, even when he opens his eyes he is always in the within. His devotion becomes very constant."

The poor one, exhausted from hard work, can become rich and learned.

Now He says, "With the grace of the Master, the beggars who used to beg pennies have become wealthy." Earlier, before coming to the Master, we used to go from door to door performing rites and rituals, doing the austerities, going from one place to another searching for Him, but now with the grace of the Master, He has made us wealthy sitting in our own home; He has made us wealthy by giving us the immense wealth of the devotion.

Dear Ones, the Masters are gracious to the poor. Master used to say, "Saints are always gracious on the poor, but one gets the grace from the Master only when he becomes the poor one."

My Guru Dev Kirpal gave me much honor, and this was His own Will; I didn't have any say in that. It was all His Will that He gave me so much honor, but still I always understood myself as a dog of the home of my beloved Lord Kirpal. You know how the dog is: he will come back to you even if you have hit him. If you love him, if you call him, he will come and he will lie at your feet and he will kiss your feet. Even if you hit him, he will just go and stay in the back, and after that if you call him he will come to you. So, like that, I always understood myself as the dog of the home of my Beloved Lord Kirpal.

Humbly, like a child, I had wept in front of my Beloved Lord, I had told Him, "Master, the world has not spared even You. You are great, and still they did not spare You because such is the world. So what will be my condition? You tell me that I should give the message of Truth. Just consider my condition, and just imagine what will happen to me." This is very true that at that time He embraced me and He told me, "When a bad person does not stop doing his bad deeds, why should a good person stop doing his good deeds? So you should continue giving the message of Truth to the people."

Many Masters have given the example of the dog, that we should become like the dog of the Master. The Masters say that when we become like the dog, when our quality becomes like that of the dog, then we become the devotee. Guru Sahib says, "Just as the dog does not leave the door of the owner, even if he is rejected, he comes back to that door. In the same way, if with one mind and with one attention we do the devotion of God Almighty, we become successful."

Kabir Sahib said, "I have become the dog of the Lord, and my name is Moti. Wherever He pulls my string, I always go there." He says, "I have become the dog of my Master and now my control is in His hand. Wherever He pulls me, I go only there."

What praise can we say about
You,
As You have limitless qualities?

"What can I say in the glory of that Master Who has brought me, the one with very bad intellect, to His home, and has given me the place in His home? I can only say that You are the Limitless One, and it is very difficult, it is impossible to reach Your limit. No matter how many writers get together, but still they cannot write Your praises enough. No matter if we use the water of the whole world, the water of all the oceans, and make it into ink, still we cannot write Your praises. Even if we use the whole world as paper, still we cannot write Your praise, because You are limitless."

Showering grace on me, give me the Naam.
Nanak is the slave at Your door.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj makes this request at the Feet of His Beloved Master. He says, "When we know that we do not have any companion, we do not have any friend except that of the Naam, first of all kindly give me Your Naam, and after that do not let me be without Your darshan. Graciously give me Your darshan, shower grace upon me, so that I can always have Your darshan."

Dear Ones, when we know the glory of the darshan, then everything is gained. Our meditation and everything is included in that understanding of the glory of the darshan. Because if we have not had the appreciation, if we have not known the glory of the darshan outside, how can we go within? Because when we go in the within, we have to do the same darshan inside.

I have often said, as Master Kirpal Singh Ji used to say, that the Truth is never completely finished: always the seed of the Truth remains. In the same way, in the sangat also there are many dear ones who know the value of, and who know the glory of, the darshan. They value and they appreciate the darshan even more than the words.

Even though at the time of Initiation the Masters say, "Respect my words more," but only he who appreciates and understands the glory of the darshan will respect the words of the Master.

Once some dear ones went to Ahmedabad from the West. You know that in the groups which go to India, on one day we sing the bhajans, the other day we have the Satsang, and on the third day we have the questions and answers. So in that group, on the day of the questions and answers, when Pappu asked the dear ones, "If there is any question, you may ask it," they all got together and said, "All the questions have ended. Let us have the darshan. Let us sit here quietly and have the darshan of the Master." So you see how much love they had for the darshan; they all wanted to drink the nectar of the darshan.

So this is why Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj here says, "O Gracious Beloved Master, if You are showering grace upon me, first of all give me Your Naam, then give me Your darshan."

Ever since I got the company of the Sadhu all the jealousy of others has vanished.

In the beginning I had said that Saints and Mahatmas do not come into this world to form any new religions, nor do They come to break or condemn any of the existing religions, because They understand the whole world as Their home, They understand all the religions and communities as Their very own.

You know that this happens with everyone. Before people are initiated, when they come, one says, "I am a Sikh," someone says, "I am a Brahmin," another says, "I am a Muslim," someone else says, "I am a Catholic." And they all understand that their religion is superior to the other religions, and naturally they hate and they don't appreciate the other people's religion.

Someone says, "I am American," someone says, "I am Indian," someone says, "I am Columbian," someone says, "I am Canadian." But when we go in the company of the Master, when we go in the sangat of the Master and get ourselves connected with that Naam, after that we look only at the soul, and then we do not say that we are Indian, American, or Columbian, because after we are connected with the Naam, we always look at the soul.

When we go to the perfect Masters and do the meditation according to the instructions of the Master, when we withdraw our attention from all the nine openings of the body and bring it to the Eye Center, we feel happiness. We still ourselves over there and we feel bliss. Furthermore, when we are able to withdraw from the physical body and are able to go into the astral plane, there we get even more bliss. And after that when we are able to withdraw from the astral plane and go into Par Brahm, only after reaching there do we get the perfect bliss, and then we come to realize that we all are souls. The soul who has gone in the Par Brahm, the soul which has risen above the first and second planes, when she has removed the third veil, then that soul sees that no one is American, no one is Indian or Columbian: it is only the soul. The soul is the essence of God Almighty and when God Almighty does not have any particular religion or any caste, the soul also does not have any particular religion or caste, and then such a soul sees only a soul like the other one. Just like God Almighty does not have any emnity towards anyone, does not have any jealousy or hatred towards anyone, in the same way, the soul which has removed the third veil and gone into

Par Brahm also becomes like that.

So here Guru Sahib says, "How did that jealousy fly away from my within? It was only because of the effect of the company of the Masters that the jealousy went away from my within."

No one is my enemy, no one is a stranger.
I am friends with everyone.

Dear ones, this is not a matter of just talking, or a matter of reading and learning. This is a matter of practising. When we go within, then we realize that we all belong to the same Father; the other souls are not made by anyone else, they are also made by the same Father, the same God Almighty Who has created us.

Whatever God has done I accept it as good;
This good understanding I have got from the Sadhu.

Earlier, what is our condition? If we have any problem of the unemployment, or if someone has died in our family, or if anything has gone wrong with us, we always find fault in the Master. But once we are able to withdraw ourselves from all the nine openings of the body, and when we are able to go within and see the glory of the Master within, after that even if we were to sacrifice everything, even if we were to lose everything for the Master, we do not find any fault in the Master. Instead we become very content and we say that everything that is happening is happening in the will of God, because then we realize that not even a leaf can turn outside the will of the Master.

"Whatever God Almighty has done, I accept that as the good one. I got such understanding only by going in the company of the Sadhu."

Dear Ones, it is very easy to say this, but it is very hard to follow this and practice this without doing the meditation. Because even though we know that we are getting [the results of] whatever we have done [in our past lives], but still it is very difficult for us to follow. Whenever we face any hardships or problems in our life, whatever happens in our life, it is very difficult for us to understand and accept that. Even though we know that the karmas are such that without doing the [actions] we do not get affected, and once we have made the karmas, we cannot get rid of the debt without paying for it.

One God resides within all.
Seeing this, Nanak becomes amazed.

Now He says, "When we rise above our mind and the organs of senses, and when we remove all the three covers from our soul and reach the Par Brahm, then the understanding and realization comes to us that God

Almighty is present everywhere. Just as there is color in the leaves, there is fragrance in the flowers, and there is fire in the stone, in the same way, God Almighty is present everywhere, and He is present within me. Looking at this I become amazed, it surprises me, it makes me very happy, and it is very amazing, and I think [about] how God Almighty is present within all of us."

Guru Teg Bahadur Ji also says, "All the Masters have all said that God Almighty is residing within all of us." Masters even say, "O my dear friend, the beloved Lord is present within all of us, there is no within where He is not present."

"There is no within which is without the presence of God Almighty, but I sacrifice myself on that one who has manifested that God Almighty within him, who has removed all the other things and who has realized Him in his within."

So in today's Satsang Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj lovingly explained to us how we were the crippled ones, how we were the blind ones, we did not have legs, we did not have eyes, but the Beloved Master gave us legs, He gave us eyes, and we were able to climb on that mountain, we were able to reach Sach Khand. And, with the grace of the Master, we were given the spritual eyes and we were able to see everything which is happening in all the three worlds.

Further, Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj said, "How did all that become possible? With Whose grace did this become possible? It was only due to the grace of my Beloved Master that I was able to see what is happening in the three worlds, and I was able to climb that mountain of Sach Khand."

Then, in the end, Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj lovingly said, "God Almighty is present within all of us. Just as the fragrance is present in the flower, in the same way He is present within everyone." So when we know, when we have seen that God Almighty is present within all of us, whom can we criticize? Because if we are criticizing any particular community or religion, if we are criticizing anyone, we are not criticizing them, we are criticizing God Almighty. So Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj lovingly explained to us that God Almighty is present within everyone, people of all the religions and communities.

Ten Drops of Eternity

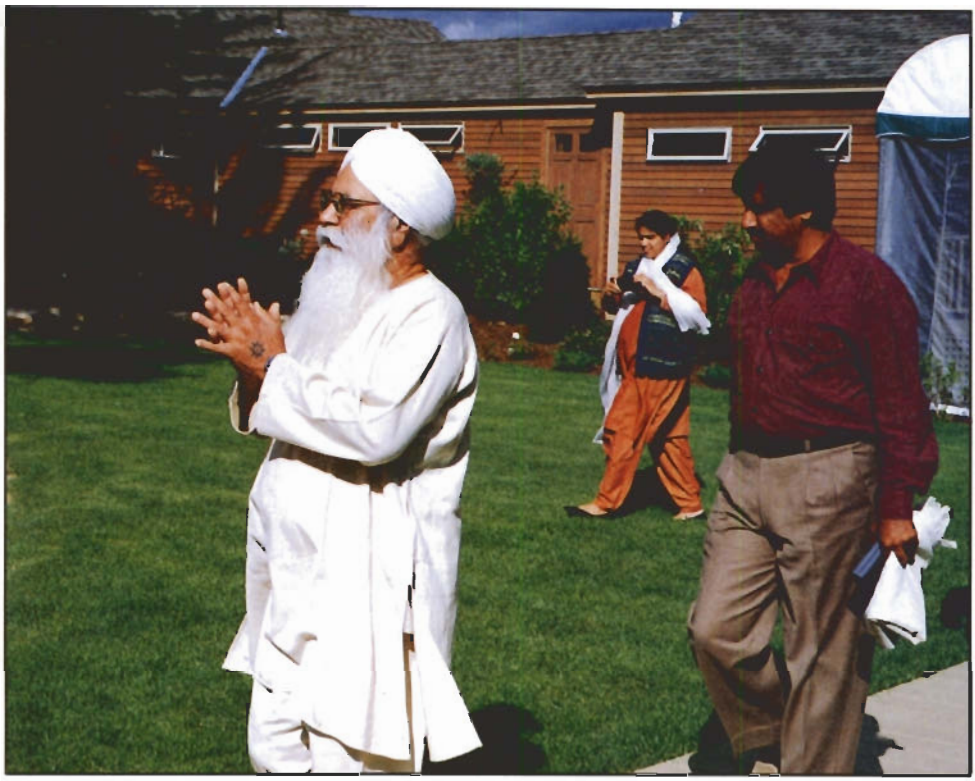
Sant Ajaib Singh's 1996 Visit to the West

RUSSELL PERKINS

We had worked and prepared and anticipated for over a year; and then when it happened it was infinitely better than any of us had dreamed. The Master came and touched our lives, walked among us for ten days, and all of us fortunate enough to participate found ourselves transfigured. We will never be the same.

The Master had told us to prepare for more people than ever before, and He was right: at the peak day (Wednesday, July 24), the langar served approximately three thousand people, one thousand more than on any previous Tour in North America. But still, despite the huge crowd and all the logistics that the numbers imply, the meaning and point of Master's visit lay in the one-on-one impact of His life and love on us; and it is perhaps the ultimate sign of His grace and power that, despite the numbers, He reached person after person in the most immediate and transforming way, and changed their lives.

He arrived at Sant Bani Ashram on Friday, July 19, 1996, and gave darshan to everyone who had arrived in the



TOP: *Sant Ji leaving His house.* BOTTOM: *giving Satsang to the children*

Sant Ji blessed the mid-day meal every day and gave darshan

Big Tent, which had been erected on the School playing field. The following day He toured the Ashram, paying special attention to the new facilities, and greeted everyone at the langar. Meanwhile, work was being completed on the tent, construction of which had been badly, almost disastrously, delayed by the weather. (It had collapsed the previous Sunday; when two-thirds set up, a violent rainstorm deposited gallons of water in the slack canvas, smashing five poles and tearing fabric.) Then, with His grace, the work being done, the program began as scheduled on Sunday, July 21, with morning meditation in the Big Tent.

Every morning the bell rang at 3 a.m. At 7:00 the Master came to the Tent and sat with us for an hour; at 8:00 He did children's Satsang in the Satsang Hall for the hundreds of kids who were there. From 9:30 to 11 a.m. each day He saw hundreds of people in private darshan. At 1:00 p.m. He went to the langar, blessed the food, and greeted everyone there, walking slowly up and down the rows of seated dear ones. In the afternoons, most days, He rested, and then at 5 p.m. He went back to the Big Tent for evening Satsang, giving discourses lasting up to an hour and a half.

On several days the basic schedule was varied: on Wednesday, July 24, the Master addressed the Sant Bani School family, including students, alumni, faculty, parents,

Sant Ji getting into His car, after walking among the dear ones in the tent

Sant Ji stopped and waved as He left the evening Satsang

trustees, etc., giving a beautiful discourse in which He spoke movingly of the history of the School, invoking its continuity and staying power and the sacrifices and contributions of the staff, and urged the students to make their lives pure, to serve their nation, and not to forget what they had been given here. On this occasion also a beautiful plaque was unveiled with the names of all the alumni, from the first graduating class in 1978 down to the present, with room for expansion.

On Thursday, July 25, Initiation was given in the Satsang Hall to approximately two hundred people, mostly in English (approximately 160), but also in Spanish, French, Hindi, Punjabi, and Japanese. The Master did not physically attend the Initiation — the Instructions were conveyed through Representatives — but continued the program as usual, only shifting the Children's satsang from the Hall to the Children's House. At the conclusion of the Initiation, He came and addressed the new initiates.

On Saturday, July 27, Baba Sawan Singh's birthday and the last day of the program, the Master saw a number of groups, including His Representatives; the Boards of Directors of both Sant Bani Ashram and Shamaz Meditation Retreat (where He will be going next summer, God willing); all the workers in the Prison Project, which works with inmates across the country; and

Sant Ji giving Satsang in Italy

a large group of Satsangis who are involved in twelve-step programs.

The next morning, Sunday, July 28, all His dear ones lined up along the road, and He gave darshan as He was driven slowly by. Even after leaving the vicinity of the ashram, groups of local Satsangis were waiting for Him all the way to the entrance of the Interstate.

That night He flew to Rome, after spending the day resting in Acton, Massachusetts, where He also held Satsang briefly in tribute to the memory of "Mother Millie" Prendergast, as He explained movingly.

The Tour concluded with a three-day program in Terni, Italy, attended by several hundred people, mostly from Europe. Here forty people were given Initiation, in seven different languages: Italian, English, French, German, Spanish, Hungarian, and Punjabi. Again the Master continued the program while the Initiation was going on, coming to address the dear ones at the end. On Friday, August 2, He flew to India.

* * *

Words do not exist to describe the beauty of this Tour. My heart melts and tears well up every time I walk around the ashram; every tree, every building, every blade of grass sings His Love. What a treasure He has left us! May we never forget what happened here in the summer of 1996.

The Tent Saga

STEVE OLSON

Nearly one year ago I was quite concerned about my ability to do any seva during Sant Ji's visit to Sant Bani, since I had injured my back some time earlier and was unable to do much physical labor. So I was quite relieved when Fletcher called me last Fall to ask me if I could locate and arrange for the rental of a tent: it was something I could easily do. Or so I thought at the time.

After several meetings of the Tour planning committee and a number of contacts with tent rental businesses from various locations around the U.S., we signed a rental agreement with a company from Florida for a 200' x 350' tent which would cover a good portion of the Sant Bani School soccer field. This agreement was reached early in the year, giving plenty of time to consider plans for the space beneath the tent: where should the dais be located? how many chairs would be needed? would we have enough lighting? would we have enough ventilation? And on the questions went . . .

Roughly ten days before Sant Ji was to arrive, the tent and a crew of six workers arrived at the Ashram. We realized fairly quickly that in order to erect the tent in any timely way, the crew would need some help. As a result, a number of sevadars dropped what they were doing and assisted the tent crew with the project. Some mishaps in the beginning could have been disastrous, but as it turned out, they were just close calls. (At one point a huge pole crashed to the ground between the Ashram tractor and a man standing next to it, narrowly missing them both.) But on Sunday, July 14, as the last stages of the installation were being finished early in the evening, the Bobcat loader used to lift and position the tent poles ran out of gas.

It was time for a break anyway, so the tent crew went to get some dinner and fuel (not knowing the Ashram had plenty on site). The rest of us took time out for the evening meal which was being served. After the meal, the tent crew seemed to have things pretty well in order, so sevadars went about their business with other projects, and several of us met inside the school building to discuss the lighting system for the dais.

Then suddenly a very intense thunderstorm was upon us, and it dropped an enormous amount of rain on the tent. Since the tent ropes had not been completely tightened, the roof was sagging and collected much of the water. After a relatively short period of time, the entire tent collapsed from the weight.

Those of us who were nearby went down to the soccer field to inspect the damage. It was not a pretty sight. We could still walk under the tent in some areas, and as we did so, we stared in disbelief and dismay at the carnage and ruin left behind by the storm. In front of us, four of the five 50' center poles were twisted and bent in every direction. Above us, the torn and tattered

shreds of what remained of the ceiling profiled a grim, grey and darkening sky. The water that had collected on the tent roof had torn through the vinyl ceiling panels, causing irreparable damage to two of them. The tent poles that had collapsed were clearly beyond repair. Our hearts sank: *"It is late at night, and the tent is unpitched."* *

Several of us huddled for awhile to review our options, and we saw three possibilities: a) repair the tent, b) remove the 50' center section and put the tent back together in a 150' x 350' configuration, or c) replace the damaged tent with a new one.

There were questions about all three options, and we all went home that evening to think it over. It was a long night. But the next morning, a glimmer of hope began to emerge: at 7:00 a.m. I spoke to another tent company from Massachusetts, and they indicated that a replacement tent could be installed at our site in two days if we could remove the one that was there.

At 8:00 a.m., several of us met to review our plans and to consider any suggestions or recommendations that came to mind. It was clear that the preferred option was to repair the tent, but no one knew if it could be done. The replacement tent was much smaller, and the 150' x 350' configuration wasn't much better. We wanted a 200 foot-wide tent! We adjourned while we gathered more information: Could we find 5" aluminum pipes that could be used for tent poles? Would we be able to get replacement ceiling panels from the Florida tent company, and how soon? Just as important: was the tent crew from Florida willing to continue with the job, given the extremely difficult circumstances they had encountered?

After adjourning, we went about attempting to find answers to our questions: Yes, a local supplier of aluminum pipes could give us what we needed to repair the collapsed poles, and the tent company agreed to send us the replacement ceiling panels via air freight. When we reconvened at 11:00 a.m., we discussed the situation with the crew foreman, and made the decision to go ahead with the repairs — to "go for broke" as he put it. It was a relief to all of us to have a recovery plan in place.

On Tuesday the aluminum pipes were delivered and the replacement panels arrived at Logan Airport [in Boston]. The tent was lowered, the damaged poles and ceiling panels were removed, and the tent crew began the process of repairing torn or damaged sections of the tent as best they could. On Tuesday evening, the most beautiful rainbow I have ever seen appeared in the eastern sky. Depending on one's viewing location, one end appeared to touch down directly onto the tent!

Everything seemed to be coming together very well. By Wednesday evening, the tent had been completely re-erected, and the weather was cooperating. By Thursday afternoon, the sidewalls had been put in place, all the ropes and cables had been tightened, and the job was complete. Then, to our

* During the Tour, Gurmel sang a new bhajan by Sant Ji which contained this verse!

surprise, the tent crew left and went back to Florida! With Sant Ji arriving the next day, we had plenty of other things to think about, so we went about our preparations with considerable enthusiasm and didn't let the absence of those who knew how to manage a tent of this size overly concern us.

On Friday, July 19th, sevadars were putting the finishing touches on the dais just moments before Sant Ji arrived. When He stood on the dais and greeted us, it seemed to me that no matter how much trouble we had gone through, the tent would have served its purpose well even if it blew away as soon as He walked off the dais. I had no idea my thoughts would turn out to be so nearly prophetic.

Later that evening, a strong, gusty wind came up. Not knowing what else to do, several of us started lowering the sidewalls, which seemed to help. But even with them down, each gust of wind would cause the interior of the tent to billow upwards, raising the ceiling several feet and taking the tent poles with it! I'll never forget the sight I witnessed at approximately 1:00 a.m. that night: the winds were gusting between 40 and 50 mph, and with each gust, every pole (except for the 10 largest poles) inside the tent was lifted off the ground and would dangle from the ceiling, waving back and forth, until the wind subsided. I went outside the tent, to see if more rain or lightning appeared imminent. As I watched the clouds boil, my Simran became very loud in my mind, and I began to repeat it enthusiastically, passionately, aerobically, thinking that somehow it would lessen the severity of the storm. It didn't. I went back inside the tent, and as I looked upwards, some of the ceiling panels were also beginning to come

unlaced and separate. It appeared as if the whole world was coming apart literally at the seams, and there wasn't a thing I could do about it.

I walked around the tent from the outside, inspecting the stakes that were keeping the tent from blowing away, and there were a few that had come loose. It didn't appear too serious, and by 2:00 a.m. the wind appeared to be lessening somewhat, so I went home to get some sleep. Just after I went to bed, I got a phone call from a dear brother who told me that the tent was nearly lost: all the stakes on the north side of the tent had been severely loosened, and the wind had become even stronger than before. But I shouldn't worry, he said, because sevadars were working to re-position the stakes and tighten the ropes. Well, after realizing my complete helplessness in the situation, I submitted a prayer to the Master and tried to get some sleep.

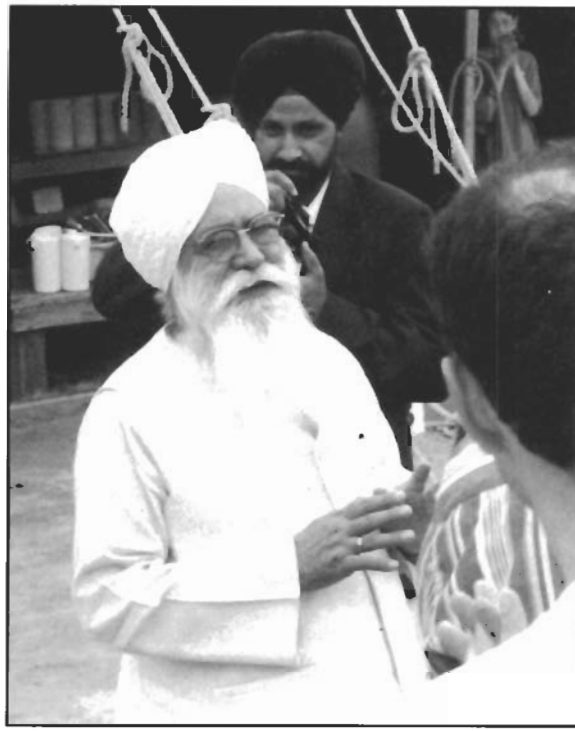
About three hours later I got up, feeling somehow much better about everything, and went to see if the tent was still standing. It was, thanks to the efforts of Ted Box and a crew of determined sevadars who worked very hard for several long hours to overcome the effects of the wind.

Later that day the wind had subsided somewhat, but was still strong enough to cause a fair amount of concern, especially when gusts would lift the interior poles off the ground while people were sitting nearby! During the noon meal, Sant Ji came to see us and bless the food. As He walked through the tent, His presence gave me a great deal of relief and reassurance. When His car drove away, it didn't return directly to His house; instead, He rode completely around the tent on the track surrounding the soccer field! Russell told me later that He wanted to visit the Information Booth, but I took it as an indication that my troubles with the tent were over, that He had personally taken charge of the situation, and there was nothing to worry about. Of course, this was the case all along, but it took me until that moment to realize it.

And indeed, from that point forward, from my point of view, things did go extremely well. A representative from the tent company arrived late Saturday night, and with help from many hard-working sevadars over the next two days, the tent was stabilized and the poles anchored firmly to the ground. We all breathed a tentative sigh of relief.

On Wednesday, as parshad was being distributed to more than 3000 people, it seemed that the entire space under the tent was completely filled with Him, and the ground on which we sat had become the most beautiful and sacred ground on Earth. I was very moved and struck by the beauty of the moment as He stood on the dais. It was a scene that could have been staged in Heaven: the Lord had come to shower His grace on the multitudes, who, in response, could do nothing but sing His praises.

After that, all the troubles I had experienced with the tent seemed so very small. He was holding it all together with a big skyhook anchored in Sach Khand, and we just had to play out the role He had given us.



Friday morning, it rained very hard during the morning meditation, and the tent was not shedding all the water. This had happened before, when there were not as many people present, and the only thing we could think of to do then was punch holes in the ceiling to drain the water that had collected in overhead pools. With hundreds of people inside the tent, this didn't seem practical, and my concerns began to grow in direct proportion to the size of the pools that were appearing that morning on the tent roof. I suddenly realized that with the proper amount of garden hose, we could siphon the water off the roof. Several sevadars located some hose and climbed onto the roof during the meditation period, and in a few moments another "crisis" was over. Just like that — only this time, with none of the anguish and worry to accompany the seva. It was a joy and a great honor just to be able to play the role, and let Him orchestrate the movements.

There are many lessons that can be drawn from this experience. Perhaps the most significant for me is the concept of surrender. When I stood under the tent, many nights ago, with the wind seemingly determined to thwart every effort made to prevent the tent from blowing away, I realized there was absolutely nothing I could do to prevent it. In spite of myself, I was forced to drop the problem directly in the Master's lap and leave it to Him. This should have been the obvious thing to do from the start, but I kept thinking: "I have to DO something about this!" The Master was quite determined to point out the obvious to me, and it finally registered at the darkest hour. This was indeed a true test of faith, and even though I failed miserably, I gained immeasurably. I am extremely grateful to my Master for the opportunities He has given me to do His seva — it seems as though He uses seva as an excuse to give us something more of Himself.

My Master has taught me one lesson:
He is the Lord of everything, may I never forget Him.

from the Jap Ji

If We Take the Master Power With Us

Sant Ajaib Singh Ji

Salutations unto the Feet of Supreme Fathers Lord Almighty Sawan and Kirpal, Who after coming to this earth have planted the plants of Their love. The plants of love which They planted now have grown up, and I'm very pleased to see those grown up plants. In 1977 when I came here for the first time the school didn't have many buildings and there were not so many teachers, and not so many students.

Kent Bicknell, the principal, has worked very hard. Without getting tired, he has taken along with him all the families which came along his way, all the students, all the teachers. He worked very hard. He kept me posted with every single thing which was happening at the school. And this is the reality, that if we take the Guru Power, the Master Power along with us, whatever work we do taking refuge at His Feet and taking the Master Power along with us, we definitely prosper and become successful in it. He has even kept me informed about the dear ones who have supported the school. Right from the very beginning, those families, those dear ones who have come forward and have donated a lot and have supported the school over the years – he has told me about them, and he has [introduced] me to them. And I have always appreciated them, and once again I would like to express my gratitude. I would like to thank them for all that they have done for the school.

Regarding the education, you know that those children who have passed this school and who have gone to the other schools for higher education, they have glorified the name of this school. And as you know, children are the wealth of the nation. They are the ones who are going to take care of the nation, the ones who are going to lead this nation and this society. So unless the children have a good education, unless their foundation is strong, they cannot be the leaders of society, they cannot run the nation. So in this school you know that a lot of emphasis is put upon building up the character and a good foundation is made for the children. In this school a lot has been taught about character and a good education is given so that when they go out to the other schools they glorify the name of this school. They can glorify the name of this school only if they have gotten a good education. So I am very

pleased that the children who have gone to higher schools after finishing their schooling here have glorified the name of this school.

I hope that the families who have been helping will continue supporting the school and Kent Bicknell. I also hope that the children who are here for the education will get a good education and that when they go on to the other schools they will glorify the name of the school and they will also make their lives and glorify themselves.

Dear Ones, you know that the Saints have all the qualities and They also have the quality of service to Their nation in abundance within Them. Wherever They are born They always do those things which glorify the name of Their nation. They always serve Their nation. You know that Master Sawan Singh and Master Kirpal Singh were born in India; They spread the seeds of Naam everywhere in the world. They did the meditation of Naam and They spread Naam everywhere whether it was the forest or the ocean or on the mountains. They took the message of Naam everywhere and only because of that now we are inclined towards India and we say that They have come from India. So the Saints have this quality of serving the nation and They teach that to all of us.

The other precious quality which the Masters have within Them is service to the souls. They serve the souls, They do the meditation and They teach the souls what They have done Themselves by obeying the orders of Their Master. They do not let Their soul become dirty in the dirt of the worldly passions and the pleasures and They do the devotion of God Almighty with Their soul and They teach us that and They make us do that. So They don't allow Themselves to be dirty in the dirt of this world. They always serve the souls. The qualities which the Masters have and what the Masters have taught us first, is that we should serve our nation, and then that we should serve the souls. We should always remember these qualities and we should try to be like Them.

The special message which I have for the students is that they should abstain from using drugs. You know that in the present time the use of drugs and intoxicants is spread everywhere, and it affects the body very badly. In the schools and colleges, students use drugs a lot, so that is why I would like to tell all the dear children that you should abstain from the drugs and the intoxicants because they have a very bad effect on your body, and that effect stays there for a long time in your life. It ruins your life. So that is why you should abstain from all kinds of drugs and intoxicants.

Sant Ji also did a Satsang for the children in Acton, Massachusetts.

I would also like to tell the dear teachers that they should explain to the students the bad effects of the drugs and intoxicants on their body. They should do this very lovingly. Those dear ones who have consumed marijuana or any kind of intoxicant, even if they have done it once, and whether they are young or old, bring them to me and I will at once recognize that they have used this intoxicant or they have used this drug. Because if they have used it, it goes into their eyes, and you can see very clearly in their eyes, because their eyebrows tend to go upwards. It shows on their face and in their eyes. So if you bring anyone who has consumed it even for once, I can easily tell you that he has consumed it because it affects our brain and it affects our body.

Dear Ones, you may laugh hearing this, but I will tell you that there are certain areas of your country where a lot of drugs and intoxicants are being used, and the people who live in those areas are easy to recognize when they come to see me. When I came here for the first time I saw that, I recognized it, and even now when the people from those areas come to me, I don't need to ask them where they are from; I tell Pappu that this person has come from that area. So Dear Children, this brief message which I have given to you, I have said that because I have much mercy for you. In my heart I have

much sympathy and much love for you and that is why I have said this. I hope that you will appreciate this, that you will take advantage of this. I hope that you will abstain from the drugs and you will make your life pure and healthy.

In the end I would like to tell all the dear children who were in this school before and who have passed out of this school that they should maintain the discipline and maintain the teachings which they were taught over here. No matter where they are, no matter where they go, they should maintain the discipline, and they should always remember the teachings which they have received here. They should always remain connected with the Satsang so that they may glorify the name of this school. I would also like to tell Kent Bicknell that just as up until now he has taken along all the dear ones, all the families who have supported the school, in the same way, that he will continue doing this and that he will do all possible things to make this school successful.

I pray to Lord Almighty Kirpal that He may shower His grace upon all of you and that with His grace this school may progress by leaps and bounds and your soul may also come closer to God Almighty, that your soul may also progress.

I appreciate the teachers who are teaching here. There are many dear ones, many teachers who have been teaching here for a very long time, even though I know that here they are not paid very much salary, but they are doing this work as a seva, and I have much appreciation and respect for their seva which they are doing here for the children.

At Satsang

I'd like to gaze upon the living flame of your face,
forever.
It's almost worth having you turn away
just to watch my breath catch when you turn back.
Years of tears cleanse the eye of the heart, the mind;
Wings of concentration daily grow stronger, braver.
O Pyare, source of all my joy —
I never dreamed I'd find this dying
to be so sweet.

Tracy Leddy

Re-Entry

We came from everywhere
by plane, train, bus, car, foot
As if magnetized from within
by the giant pull of our own Being
An olympic village of Spirit
thrown together, by the Mighty Master
Exhausted and care-worn
He drew us to Him
Into another dimension
and every second, every undercurrent
of karma, was in His hands.
We drank, midst the daily chores
Then, in His Will
We all dispersed, the little village
collapsed.
And we all were sent back into
the world
So dense, so painful to our awakened
oneness, ambrosia of the inner hours
Imprinted forever in our hearts.

Janet Ginger

a little country night song

Sometimes at night
when I cannot sleep
I remember You
climbing the stairs
in Rajasthan.

I remember how slowly You climbed
giving us a time to capture
held in waiting
behind our world-wounded eyes
till we want to remember You
the Lightgiver — healing the black
spaces of our fleeting lives,
the Forgiver — pulling us free
from the gyres of our imperfections,
so that we, strengthened, may begin again.

I remember You
standing at the top of the stairs.
You held us in Your glance
then looked far away
across the distant fields of sand and time
Your eyes
innocent and infinite
Your beauty
held in the curve of pure space and evening star
for one quiet hesitation of the heart.

You are the silence behind the song
which all the music rests upon.

I remember You
and the heartaches begin.

Louise Rivard

The Whole Secret Lies Inside

Baba Sawan Singh Ji

You have expressed your inner feelings so clearly. You ask, "Why did you ever accept such an individual?" Dear soul, the Master makes no mistakes in selecting persons for Initiation. Only they receive the Initiation whom their Maker wishes to bring back to Him. He reveals the secret of the Sound Current to His chosen few.

The number one sign of His being merciful to anyone is that He creates in him dissatisfaction with the worldly routine and a longing to seek the Truth. The second sign is that He brings him in touch with a Master. The third sign is that the Master imparts to him the secret of the Sound Current. The fourth sign is that the Initiate works diligently and faithfully on the Sound Current and starts his spiritual journey. In the presence of these signs, where is the room for feeling self-disgusted?

The world is a thick forest, thickly populated, where all have lost their way and are ceaselessly and aimlessly running about, life after life, harassed by the great dacoits: Lust, Greed, Anger, Attachment and Pride. The remarkable thing about these dacoits is that people associate with them joyfully and, knowing that the result of their association is suffering, have not the courage to dissociate themselves from them. They eat the poison, cry and eat the poison again. Lucky is he who begins to understand the game of these dacoits, luckier is he who tries to dissociate himself from them, and luckiest is he who meets a Master guide and is put by Him on the Path of the Sound Current that leads him out of this wilderness to his Eternal Home of Peace and Bliss in Sach Khand.

By and by, with the increase of time in Simran and the hearing of the Sound Current, the scattered attention will vacate the body and come in concentration in the Eye Center. There will come a time when these dacoits will be met with inwardly in the form of young, handsome boys. No attention is to be paid to them. Their presence is to be ignored and attention is to be kept in Repetition or the Sound Current. The boys will go out from the body one by one and, when leaving, will give notice that the owner of the house is now awake and alert and Sound Current fills the house, so there is no room for them now. Describing this state of development, Guru Nanak

says: "I am lucky to escape from these dacoits and they are lucky to escape from me." Meaning thereby: "In the beginning they were strong and had the upper hand, and when they left me I considered myself lucky. Now that I am stronger and more powerful, they consider themselves lucky to have escaped me in time."

So with love and faith, continue your practices and watch that, when in practice, the mind stays inside and does not run out, and if it runs out, put it back in Simran or the Sound Current as the case may be. Everything will turn out all right. When you notice the coming of anger, begin the repetition of the Names. As your meditation will improve, the anger and ego will also disappear.

You are right when you say that the intellectual side of the science is far less important that the meditation. The whole secret—the knowledge, the substance and the cherished Treasure—lies inside, and without going inside It cannot be had, and the eye that is to see It is also inside.

Reading of scriptures, discussion of philosophies and recitation of prayers is like churning of water from which nothing but foam comes out. Going within and rising on the Sound Current is the churning of milk from which butter comes out. The primary effort of man, therefore, should be to vacate the body below the eyes and sit inside, in the Eye Center, and dig up the hidden Treasure.

The Master, from the time of Initiation, is within you and watches you and gives necessary guidance, all of which you do not see. When you will go with Him and cross the stars, the sun and the moon, and meet the Radiant Form of the Master, He will talk to you as we talk to each other outside, and He will be with you always and answer all your enquiries.

"Should we attempt to meditate when ill?" Poor health interferes in meditation but it does not mean that we are to give up effort. The Sound Current does not stop during illness. It is the soul that has to meditate, and hear the Sound Current, and the soul never gets ill. It is the body that suffers. In fact, during illness the blessing of the Supreme Father is extraordinary. The Sound Current becomes clearer. During illness, if sitting in posture is not possible, meditate while lying down. In no case is meditation to be neglected. If Kal interferes, you ignore him. Let him do what he likes, you do your duty.

I am glad that you meditate for about an hour in the posture. When adopting the posture to hear the Sound Current, you can put some cushion under your buttocks in the beginning. After a month or so this necessity will disappear. The meditation will improve gradually. Have patience. I am very pleased with you.

The light will gradually become stationary. The light does not disappear. It is the mind that shakes. With the increase in concentration, the sound will leave the right ear and appear at the forehead, where you listen to it eventually.

While taking a bath there is slight concentration and so immediately after it the Sound becomes clearer.

The repetition of the Five Names by the mind in the Eye Center brings in concentration, the contemplation on the Radiant Form of the Master inside gives the power to stay there, and the Sound Current lifts upward. Therefore, give more time to repetition so long as the Radiant Form of the Master has not been contacted. When the Form appears, then give up repetition and concentrate on the Form, and then the Sound Current will lead you upward, the Radiant Form acting as the guide.

"Must concentration become complete before we can reach the first region?" Yes. The attention should vacate the body and go inside. Then it will look as if the body is not yours. It is a corpse of someone else and you are separate from it. The same attention which was previously working within the physical body, below the eyes, now works inside on the astral plane. Without going into the astral plane, one cannot see what lies therein.

The duty of the parents toward their children ceases when they become self-supporting. The parents should help them to become independent.

Hindu society does not countenance divorce or separation. Sant Mat does not interfere with social customs. The relation of a Master with His disciples is spiritual.

The fate karma undoubtedly is strong. It has to be borne, and there is no escape from it. But, through meditation, the will power becomes so strong that a person does not feel or mind either its favorable or adverse effects. If meditation has taken us above the point from where the fate karma works on us, we become indifferent to its effect. Therefore, meditation is the antidote to karma.

Illness, consultation of doctors and getting their treatment is also a part of karma. It is the way the debt of the doctor and of the druggist is cleared. Again, when a patient is getting treatment his relations and friends cease making remarks and criticising or bothering the patient, and the patient also has the satisfaction of having taken medicine.

The disciple's material welfare and his success or failure in business ventures is a matter of karma. Before he was born his life course was all chalked out. The number of breaths he is to take, the steps he is to move, the morsels of food he is to take, his pain and pleasures, his poverty and riches, his success and failure were determined beforehand. He himself was the maker of his fate.

What he had sown he is reaping now, and what he will sow now he will reap hereafter. If he remains worldly now, he will come back to this world, but if he changes over to the Master and the Word, he will go where the Master goes and where the Word comes from.

Only these two—the Master and the Word—are our real companions who go with us here as well as hereafter. All others associate with us with selfish motives, and their association brings us back in this world. How could such a benefactor as the Master, therefore, be a silent observer of what is happening with His disciple in life? He is giving necessary guidance and help as He thinks proper. If a child suffers from a boil, the mother herself takes the child to a doctor to have the boil opened. The child cries, but the mother sees to the benefit of the child and not to its cries, and has the boil opened and dressed. Hence, what ordinarily is called a misfortune is a blessing in disguise. It is a way of clearing an old account. It lightens the karmic load, and the Master is not unaware of it. The Master is playing His part and, if the disciple plays his part well, the work of both is smoothened.

Please do not think of coming to India in the near future. We are having a lot of unrest at present. You may come over when times are better.

— *Spiritual Gems,* Letter #28

Sant Ji at the children's Satsang in Italy