Sat Sandesh

the message of the Masters

January 1970

Sat sandesh

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The God-like Life

A Circular Letter from the Master

November 5, 1969

Dear Ones:

IN MY circular letter of June 13, it was explained in detail what is the responsibility of each and every initiate, the true meaning of Initiation and the life to be led by one who wishes to progress on the Path.

In continuation, I should like to say a few words on "Sadachar" or the righteous life, without which one cannot sit in the quiet of his own self and, with concentrated attention, pierce through the inner darkness.

To achieve true spiritual progress, one must lead "the good life," I may even say a "God-like life," before much inner progress can be made. At the same time, one must be fully dutiful to regular meditations, as both are essential. To lead a good life without devoting time to one's spiritual practices will not raise the attention to the seat of the soul. Similarly, devoting hours to meditation without eliminating bad habits and cultivating good ones in their place, will not get one anywhere. Purity of life is essential for fruitful meditations.

What is "the good life?" It is to have good thoughts, good words and good deeds. Sadachar is a life of continued rightness from beginning to end. It is for each initiate to occasionally pause and introspect as to how far he has succeeded in molding his life in accordance with the commandments of the Master. We talk of God, hear of God, and read of God, but we seldom practice God in our daily life. It is the practice of the Presence of God that matters and we can only have the awareness of this Presence by leading a God-like life; there are no short cuts on the way back to God.

Truth is higher than everything but higher still is true living. Truth and true living are not exclusive of each other but go together; one supplements the other and their combination forms the God-like life. One who practices true living will always earn his living by the sweat of his brow and feed himself and his family on rightly procured foods consisting of fruits, vegetables, nuts, cereals and permitted dairy products. Furthermore, he will be honest and aboveboard in his dealings with others. These three aspects of conduct are indispensable aids to true living. One can gauge his or her spiritual progress by the measure of conscious control that he or she has

over their thought pattern. One who has in some measure achieved this control will not be swayed or upset by outer conditions, stresses and strains that his environment may place on him. **If one cannot rise above, be in full control of and handle with ease the circumstances of his outer environment, he will never be able to succeed in the way of Spirituality.**

So the important thing is to first learn to handle your outer environment, consisting of your home and/or work life. We are to be judged by our actions and not by our words. It is from the abundance of our heart that all actions result, whether physical, emotional or intellectual. The mind is an index and reflecting mirror and it truly depicts one's inner state. A measure of success in how well you are succeeding in handling your outer environment will be a gradual awareness that you are becoming the master of your own thoughts. It is to achieve this success that I introduced the self-introspective diaries. How many really keep their diaries properly? Very few, if any, I am sorry to say. If the diaries were to be taken advantage of, you would see a change in your behavior, your mode of thinking and consequently, you would progress spiritually by leaps and bounds. The purpose of the diary is to reflect your own inner state, so that you know where you stand. It is a tool, which if used properly, will chisel you into a receptacle fit for the manifestation of the Master within you. You should put just as much devotion and attention into keeping your diary as you put into your meditations. The following points will give you the right understanding on the sublime purpose behind and benefits to be had from keeping the diary:

(1) When, at the end of the day, you recall your failures in thought, word and deed, in which direction will your mind be turned? Naturally, it will go to the One who has asked you to keep it. So keeping the diary is also remembrance of the Master; you are saying something to Him. If you remember Him, well, He remembers you, and in time, you will develop receptivity to Him wherever you may be. There can be no true spiritual progress without receptivity, and the daily maintenance of the diary with full attention and a true yearning to be freed from the lapses which are recorded therein goes a long way to developing this receptivity.

(2) In the Christian religion, I understand that those who wish may make a confession of their lapses before a priest. They may go once a month or weekly, but generally not more often than once a week. But by keeping the diaries, you are making a confession every day. Let your confessions be honestly and openly recorded

in the various columns, so that you know where you stand and can take rectifying action. The best and easiest way to cure your ills is to yearn to be free of them and, as mentioned above, to have sweet remembrance of the Master at the time you are filling in your diary.

(3) Last and just as important as the foregoing, keeping the diary should not be allowed to stagnate into a mere recording of failures, which tends to become mechanical if done with little or no attention. The true purpose of putting these failures down in front of you is to make yourself aware of them so that they may be weeded out. To weed them out, it is not sufficient to cut off one or two branches, you must uproot the cause. Once you become aware of a failure, you should be able to trace it to a certain situation, and this situation will help you to identify the cause of the weakness in you that has to be strengthened. By and by, the very cause of the failure will drop off by itself.

Another important aspect of "the good life" concerns outer behavior, which should be natural to the society into which one is born; no acting or posing is required. There are some dear ones who believe that they should adopt the outer symbols of dress and name that characterize the society into which the Master was born, in the belief that this is pleasing to Him. The life of the spirit does not call for conversion to outer modes of living in name, appearance or apparel. The Masters do not come to make or unmake social orders. Their mission is just to fulfill the law of God, which is to redeem His lost children. They simply ask us to convert ourselves inwardly, to be poor in spirit and pure at heart. We should cultivate true humility, which is neither servile nor assertive. These are the things that will please the Master and make us receptive to the gracious Master Power working overhead. If you live a life of humility and simplicity, you will have peace of mind. After all, what is there on earth that belongs to you? Why be attached to the vanities of the world when the treasures of divinity lie within you? If you live for God, all things shall work out in your best interests, not only spiritually but also materially. This is the fundamental law of God and can be realized by all who will practice true living.

The reward of true living will be that you will become receptive to the Master Power working over your head. No real progress can be had unless this receptivity is developed. By receptivity a disciple is cast into the same mold as the Master, but before one can become receptive, he must have

right understanding. This is given either by word of mouth by the Master at the Satsangs conducted personally by Him or through His writings in the form of the many books and circular letters to those who live afar. Right understanding by word of mouth or through His writings consititutes only one third of the teachings of the Master; the other two thirds are achieved through developing receptivity. Christ said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."

The first sign that a branch is receptive to the life-giving sap that rises in the body of the vine will be blossoms, and the second by the fruit that it will bear. If a branch cuts itself off from the sap, then . . . ? It will become but a dead piece of wood, fit only for the pruning shears of the gardener. The vine gets its food through its roots which are intertwined and embedded in the nutriment-giving soil. Therefore, the branch that is receptive or attached to the body of the vine gets the same food. Similarly, the Master's roots are embedded and intertwined in the Godhead. So the disciple who is attached to or becomes receptive to the Master can not only be fed by the life-giving sap of the Master but can actually pass through His roots until he too becomes embedded or intertwined in the Godhead, and this can only be done by developing receptivity. To attempt to gain the Godhead without being receptive to the Master Power is fraught with danger. Maulana Rumi says, "Do not go within without the Master, as there are many dangers inside." If one should happen to rise above body consciousness without being receptive to the Master Power, he will become hopelessly lost in the lower astral planes and runs a great risk in being deceived by the many manifestations of the Negative Power. There have been instances where even great Rishis have fallen because they relied on their own power to carry them over the dangers that abound in the inner regions.

So receptivity is important for success in all phases of life, both mundane and spiritual, and it can be achieved by following the right understanding given above. First, one must lead a God-like life; second, the spiritual diaries must be maintained in the accurate way as already explained, and third, you must learn to develop receptivity. If you succeed in the first two, the third will follow of itself.

With all love and best wishes,

Yours affectionately,

KIRPAL SINGH

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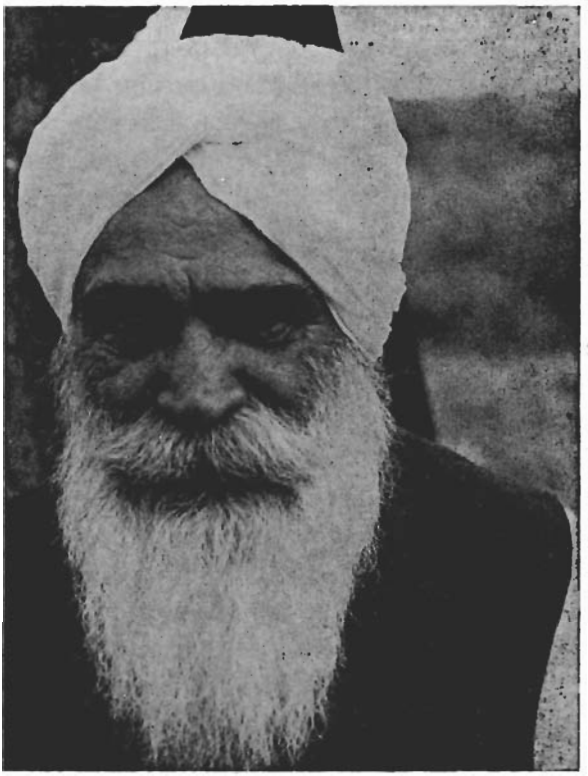


The Master's Talk:

Out of Bondage

GOD IS known as *Sat* (ever-existing), and the world is *Asat* (changing). In the Hindu holy scriptures it states that the world is all Asat, and only the soul is Sat. Why is the soul called Sat? Because it is made of one substance only, and that is All Consciousness. If anything is made of one substance, there is no question of its disintegrating.

Why is the world Asat? Because it is made of matter in the form of elements, which in turn are broken down into atoms, neutrons, protons, etc., and any admixture of substances is subject to disintegration. Our body is an exact copy of the Brahmand or the three divisions of creation, for we have three bodies within us, corresponding to the physical, astral and causal planes. God has given us a body made of matter, through which we are working in this world, which is also made of matter. At the time of death, we leave this body and use the astral body which works in the next plane, sometimes known as the "other world." Ahead of this there is the causal body. The purpose of these bodily coverings is to enable us to work in all three worlds whenever we

in the right light and are going along in are so inclined, and if we feel like it, to take off all three coverings and go into God's lap.

When we come to this world the greatest knowledge we can have is that only in the physical form can we realize the Truth or God. How can we know God? He cannot be known through the senses, mind, intellect or through the pranas (vital airs). If God is to be realized, only the soul can do it. When can the soul get this experience of realization? When it has freed itself from the mind and the senses.

What is the condition of the soul at present? The soul is everlasting and cannot die, but because it has come under the influence of the mind, it has become *jiva* (soul with coverings), and as such it must therefore travel on the cycle of birth and death. Furthermore, by the connection with the senses and outer enjoyments it has identified itself with the body and the world, so much so that it has forgotten its true self and God the creator. We are the soul, in human form: all consciousness, having a physical covering. In this human form we can realize God, but only when we first come to know ourselves. As long as we do not know who we are, we cannot comprehend what God is. Just consider, that this body is the temple of God, and it maintains its glory while the soul is in it; but we are imprisoned in the body — imprisoned!

In the Upanishads the question is asked, "Who is the maker of this wonderful body?" It has got two eyes, two nostrils, two ears, mouth, genital and excretory orifices, and yet the "indweller" cannot run out of it. The breath goes out, but it does not stay out. Some power pushes it back into the body. It is *that* power which we have to know, and that is the power we call God. While we are with the body, it is glorious, and for how long are we with it? For as long as that power keeps us with it. When that power leaves, we must leave also. This very same power is controlling all levels of creation — there are innumerable planets, stars, etc. It is obvious that they are all working with perfect rhythm and control and do not crash into one another. When that power leaves the different levels of creation, dissolution and also grand dissolution occurs.

So all rishis and saints, no matter from which country, caste or creed they came, have advised mankind in similar words. "Oh brothers, this body has been given to you that you might know yourselves!" The Upanishads and other scriptures state, "Know thyself." There are many different ways of doing so. Some people just say, "I am not the body," but merely repeating the fact does not give knowledge of it. They are drawing inferences that they are not the body. They repeat, "This is my body, this is my mind; I am not the body, I am not the mind." "I have got intellect, but I am not the intellect." Such people should also ask themselves, "If this is mine, can I take it off? Can I separate myself from this?" It is one thing to feel that one is not the body, mind, intellect and pranas, but has one ever separated oneself from them? For example, this is my watch; I take it off and leave it there. This is my handkerchief, and I put it aside. This is my book — I can place it where I like; and all these things, because they are mine. This body is also mine. Can I take it off? Can I separate myself from it at will?

On death we do separate from the body, but if we could leave it while living we would see everything with correct perception. As it is, we do not see things

an illusion. When we do not know ourselves — what I mean is, the soul has to free itself from the mind and the senses, and thereby know itself — if this does not happen, we have not done anything in life.

To see is something different, for it is not enough to use the intellect to state, "I am not this — I am not that." One may still the intellect by doing so, but one cannot get out of the forgetfulness. That power which controls us, whom we call God, also resides in this body with us, but to see God is impossible unless we first know ourselves. So you see, the question of whether we can or cannot see God is a very specialized subject.

Before going further into this talk, I want to explain that this spiritual science is not any particular sect or religion. Whatever religion you belong to, I congratulate you, and you should stay in it. All religions are like schools into which we have been admitted. What was the reason for our admission? Was it not to realize God? Naturally, that school is best from which more boys graduate. Say that a certain school is very well built, with beautiful playing fields and smart uniforms for the boys to wear, but no boy graduates from that school — what is the use of that?

How did all the various religions come into being? Always when a self-realized and God-realized man came, who had analyzed himself from the mind and the senses and had experienced the Lord. Just as I can see you and you can see me, so they saw God. Whoever came into close contact with them became capable of seeing the same, after freeing themselves of the mind and senses. I have just given an example about *my* body, *my* mind, and, that one has to rise above this to experience the Lord. In this way they became the ones who could see the Life Sustainer. When they left the world, the religions were formed in order to keep their teachings fresh, but up to then they themselves had formed no sect or religion.

The real purpose of forming a sect was to enable everyone to sit together to realize God, as that particular Master had taught them. Is that not so? Man is a social being, and so the social organizations or sects were formed. However, when the sects were formed, customs, rites and rituals were also introduced, and these come under *apara vidya* or exoteric knowledge. All this is useful as preparation of the ground. If one's deeds are good, then one will gain a reward. But the cycle of life and death will not cease in this way. It can only finish when one is able to see that "He is the doer and not I." If a person continues to consider that he is doing everything, then whatever he sows he will reap, and good deeds will bring forth good fruit, bad deeds the opposite. Lord Krishna said that both these types of karmas are like gold or iron chains which bind.

So the subject is one of self-analysis in a practical way, and when you have come to know yourself, then only will you see God. When we think that we see and understand something, we really only see through the eyes of some past Master, by reading his words in the scriptures. They all say, "We have seen God." Have we also seen Him? This is the question we must put to ourselves.

When you ask a small child, "Who are you?" he gets confused, opens his eyes and mouth wide, and tries to concentrate. He has some awareness of consciousness, but as he grows older the *sanskaras* or outer impressions have their influence on him. Then he starts saying,

"I am Singh, Khan, Jones, Smith," etc. Ask him who he is a few years later and he will say, "I am a Hindu, Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, Jain," and so on. Isn't that forgetfulness? A small child is more conscious of his true nature.

Who are we? We are conscious entities. All Masters in the past have said that we should know ourselves and then think about getting to know the Ultimate Reality. Whenever they come they tell us, "Oh man, this body has been given to you through great good fortune." The *devi* and *devta,* rulers of the various upper regions, are striving to get back into a human form, so how fortunate we are to have that for which such exalted souls are yearning.

Have we realized God? If so, it is good, but how many can say that they do see, and can also make others see the Light of God? There are very few. We have merely bookish knowledge, or knowledge through hearsay. A Master's greatness lies in the fact that He sees and can show others what he sees. How? He withdraws our attention from the outer environments and takes it above the mind and the senses. He then makes us realize that we are not the physical body. This is what is called an inner experience. Through the intellect we have been declaring that we are not the body, but in truth we must *see* the fact, and not just say so. We must separate ourselves from the physical, astral and causal bodies. On rising above all three, one will know that "I am the soul." One is then capable of seeing the Controlling Power called God. Even rising above the physical body alone will bring the knowledge that "It is not I, but He who is the doer."

It is most important to have this practical experience. Our minds are like huge libraries full of books containing the words of past Masters, throughout which is written that this Master said this, that Master said that. No doubt, all Masters have spoken the truth, and they wrote what they saw, but have we seen anything? Have we, in truth, separated the Life from the matter? Words cannot fill an empty stomach. The food for the hungry soul is the Holy NAAM (God-into-Expression Power), and the food for the body is bread and water. Food for the intellect is to read, write and reason. Even those who sincerely try to understand God through books are very few in number. So neither feelings, emotions nor inferences will help us.

There is some power in control, which is called God. Saints or Masters have called that power NAAM (Name). That Naam is the Controlling Power or God-into-Expression Power. It is that power which is upholding us and has tied us to this body. The past Masters have expressed in the books the helping factors and the hindrances on the spiritual path. Such books are most valuable, and we are blessed that we can read about their experiences. However if you go to one who sees, he will say, "Come, sit down and I will show you what I have seen," which is vastly different.

There have always been very few such spiritual Masters in the world at any time, and even now there are not many. However, the world is not without them. For feeding the intellect one can find many masters. To be very frank, if a person has not broken free from the delusion, how can he give Light to anyone? He will say, "It is either this, or it is that" — but in truth, what *is* it? No one can give an experience unless they are themselves connected. ". . . And no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and

he to whom the Son will reveal him." (Luke 10:22)

These are the facts about True Masters. They also ask, "How was your body made?" Have you ever thought about it? Just from one small sperm. And what is the power that makes the form in the womb of the mother? The eyes are made, nose is made, hair, etc.; everything perfectly made. Is there not some power doing all this? There must also be a power, a maker of this world. Have we seen that power? Just think, there are millions of stars in the sky and in what rhythmical control they are moving! There are some planets which are seen by man only after the passage of five thousand years. To consider all this, one's intellect reels! These stars do not collide with one another, for there is some power which is holding them in their correct positions. The same power is holding us. What is that power? The Masters say that you may want the answer to this great mystery, and you will get it, but you have to know *yourself* first.

Kabir Sahib, a past Master, said that there is no difference between the soul and God. God is all-consciousness, and the soul is a drop of that consciousness. With one thought from that all-powerful consciousness, millions of worlds were created. Our soul is also very powerful, but can it even make one small city? What is the reason for this? We are micro-gods too, but we have become so weak and helpless. We have come under the influence of the mind and the senses, and all our power is scattered outwardly. If we could but control it, withdraw it, and release ourselves from the mind and senses, to become single-pointed, then our soul would be very powerful. This is a practical subject. We have got such power that we could give strength to others, but we have become the body, we have become the senses and the mind. So all Masters have said again and again, "Man, know thyself."

Both Kabir Sahib and Tulsi Sahib in almost identical words have said that God and the soul are one and the same. The soul is eternal — *surat* or attention, is full of bliss, just as God is. It has the same quality as God — on a miniature scale it is a reflection of God. I will give you an example to illustrate this. Many times we have helped to take dead bodies to the cremation ground by carrying them on our shoulders, and have perhaps lighted the fire with our own hands, but even then we cannot seem to realize that we also have to go. Why is this? Because this body contains the reflection of God. If there is a big fool among other fools, he will think there is none more clever than himself, because of that reflection of God in him. Everyone is eternal in himself because he is the same as God. The Masters say that we are so much in God that our soul is in God and God is in our soul.

When we meet a spiritual Master, we begin to understand what *Sat* or Truth is. He gives us an experience of the Beyond. An experience means that he frees us from the mind and the senses and makes us *see* who we are — not through intellect or feelings. First we should know who we are. We are conscious entities. We are the children of a lion and have great strength but we have made ourselves weak and helpless. For another example: the rays of the sun do not burn us, but if we pass them through a convex lens, those rays become concentrated and can burn anything upon which they fall. So we have got that power of God, but it is not concentrated. If it is concen-

trated it can become the mouthpiece of God.

All Masters have confirmed Guru Nanak's words: "It is not I who speaks, but I say whatever God makes me say." They become the mouthpiece of God. Hazrat Mussa, a Muslim prophet, has said, "I do not speak, but whatever He asks me to say, I utter those words." They become the conscious co-workers of the Divine Plan, and in all clearness see God doing everything, thereby knowing they are not the doers themselves. We also say that we are not the doers, but we do not see the fact. It does not matter how often we declare this, for in the end we will still feel that we are doing everything — we just cannot believe it. We must break this I-hood, otherwise we will achieve nothing.

Karmas or actions come under the heading of Karma Yoga, which means being bound by our own actions. How can we go through action without getting a reaction? Only when we truly see that self is not the doer, but God is. It is useless to merely say, "I am not doing it, I am not doing it"— who *is* doing it? Deep in folds upon folds of the mind we are thinking that we are the doers, and while this continues we will have to continue to pay for our actions. If you sow a chili seed, the plant which sprouts forth will bear hundreds of chilies. Similarly, if you plant a mango sapling in the same ground, you will get mangoes. Therefore the sharpness of the chilis and the sweetness of the mangoes will come out from the same soil. Whatever you sow, you will have to accept the similar fruit, and there is no escape for anyone, as long as we do not become reactionless in action. Only that person who enjoys the inner experience of the Holy Naam will come to see that God is doing all, and not himself. He will then be called *neh-karma* which is to be actionless in action, as a conscious co-worker with the power of God, in accordance with the Divine plan.

One Muslim fakir said that the great wrong we have done to ourselves could not even be done by one who is not only blind without eyes, but blind in reasoning also. That wrong is that we have forgotten the owner of this house — we, the soul, the indweller of the body. That which is controlling us in the body is called God, so God and the soul are both residing in the same house. When one starts seeing the Truth, one's I-hood will break away from one's heart. We have forgotten ourselves in the Maya (illusion) of forgetfulness, which started when we became conscious of the physical body. This consciousness of the body quickly developed into acceptance of the body as our identity. From then on we regarded the world from the level of the body.

Now, the body is changing and the world is changing at the same minutely slow speed. Having decided that we are the body, we consider that this is the Truth and nothing is changing. What a great forgetfulness! The literate and illiterate, the rich and poor, are all affected alike. For an example, a boat containing a number of people is drifting on the river. The speed of the boat and the water are both the same. One man gets out and stands on the shore. He shouts, "Oh brothers, come out quickly, for the boat is drifting away!" The people gaze at the water and at the boat, and think they are at a standstill, so they shout back, "What nonsense are you saying? We are not moving at all!" If only we would come out of our worldly "boat" and see that in truth we are drifting away! The Masters tell us, "You are building castles out of sand," for they have seen

the Truth and we only draw inferences.

Those who have seen continue to admonish with such words: "You are the soul, a part of God who is residing within you. Through the illusion of the body you also became attached to material objects, and the result is that wherever your attention is, so you become that. You are under the influence of the mind and senses, are feeding the senses through the outgoing faculties, and the more you feed them the harder the mind will work and the more strength it will get."

As the mind is surrounding the soul, the soul must take the consequences and suffer. It is true that the soul never dies, but because it is tied to the mind it has to be responsible. This knot has to be untied, and then it will know who it truly is. This human being is really both attention and awakened attention. Outward expression of soul is called *surat* — attention, or *dhyan.*

There is no doubt that we have got this human form through very high destiny. In this form we can do that great work, and in no other form. What is that great work? To realize God. We know so much about the body: how to keep it healthy and how it becomes sick. There are many kinds of doctors attending on it. The ayurvedic practice is the oldest, then unani came, and after that the allopathic system, homeopathy, electric and radiation treatment, naturopathy, etc. On how to keep the body fit, our knowledge is vast.

Intellectually, we have also advanced with amazing strides. A dog has circled the world in one and one-quarter hours. Across thousands of miles we can hear and see things, through radio and television. This is all due to the intellect. In olden days, when blind King Dhritarashtra could not see the progress on the battlefield during the *Mahabharata* war, Sanjay, an advisor, related the proceedings to the king in his own palace many miles away. This proves that there was radio and television in those times, but all that advanced science was destroyed in that great battle, and the process of learning had to begin again. Day by day the world is becoming smaller through the accomplishments of the intellect. A plane has been designed recently which can reputedly travel from America to India in a few hours. You can breakfast in America and dine in India. The question is, however, has all this brought us any happiness? Most definitely not, and the reason? The third part of us, the soul, is extremely weak. We are the true picture of consciousness, but having lost our identity in forgetfulness we have become one with the body, and regard all things from this level. The result is attachment!

This human form is also known as an action ground. Christ said, "As ye sow, so shall ye reap." All Masters have said the same thing in their various languages. Guru Nanak said, "This body is the field of tomorrow — whatever you sow, you will have to harvest yourself." Tulsi Sahib said, "You will have to taste the fruit of your actions in whichever way you plant them." Those who have solved the riddle have to repeat the same thing again and again, for Truth is One. All spiritual aspirants should think of this life as a field, and should sow carefully whatever they desire to harvest.

As I mentioned at first, there is no special caste or creed here. We have taken the first step — that is, we have entered a school. I congratulate you for that, and no matter what thought has led you to this step forward to realize God, you should now do your best to succeed. For good reason, this Ashram is called

Ruhani Satsang, which means a spiritual school. There is no need to change anything, either religion, name, outer appearances, etc. Having taken the first step, the second should be to see the true "doer" so that you may become action-free. Good actions will no doubt bring their reward, but you will still be a prisoner. Perhaps some will go into a Class A prison, some Class B, some Class C. Some might get the pleasures of this world, and some the pleasures of the other worlds. Heaven and hell will come again and again, for this circle cannot be broken unless one gets out of the illusion.

A woman saint, Sahjo Bai, said that all living species of the land, sea and air are under the Law of Karma. Just look at the lower expressions of life; for instance, the dog. Some dogs are starving, without even a piece of bread, and some are looked after like princes with two or more servants to care for them. See the life of a camel: his nose is pierced and a rope drawn through it with which to control him. In the deserts he is pulled from place to place, be it very hot or very cold, and he has to suffer all this. Take the donkey, who has so much weight loaded upon his back, and is driven around by the stick. When he gets tired he is then pulled and made to work. The whole world is in a sorrowful state, all through the results of karmas.

The human form, because of the soul within it, is the highest in all creation, and is accepted as the form next to God. It is next to God, a part of God, having the same nature, is itself a conscious entity, and yet with all this it is full of misery. Having tied itself to the mind, the passions and attachments of the senses are dragging it from one place to another. The pleasures of the world control the senses, the senses control the mind and the mind controls the intellect. This process is called *kam* (passionate desires and other appetites). Kam also means work, and if we put this desire or drive into reverse and become engaged in the opposite type of work, then we will achieve the true peace of being. A true Master always prays, "Oh Lord, keep my intellect in Your control."

At present the whole system is wrong, for the horse should have been pulling the cart, but instead the cart is in front. The soul should be giving strength to the mind as and how it wishes, but the mind, intellect and senses are stealing the strength, with the soul a helpless slave to them. It is all wrong. That is why Masters have advised to "Know thyself," for it is the only way to cut the evil from the root. Have you been able to control your senses and make them do whatever you wish, stopping their action whenever you desire to? Have you reached that stage? A certain piece of machinery has an electric motor which is connected to the powerhouse. There are many sections comprising this machine, and one can switch off any section in a second. Similarly, we should be in control of our being, and be able to switch off our whole machinery if we wish to.

Sometimes with our eyes open we do not see, and with ears open we do not hear. Many people have experienced this. We may be sitting deep in thought and someone calls once, twice, three times, but we do not hear a word. At last when the person says, "I have been shouting at you, why do you not hear me?" the reply would be something like, "My attention was engaged somewhere else." So this attention works wherever it connects itself. If the attention is not in the ears, we will not hear a sound. The

ears may belong to us, but if we do not give life to them, they are as dead. Sometimes our eyes are open and someone passes in front of us, but we do not see them. A person can sit down beside us, and after a while get up and leave, and we would not even know they had been there. Anything might happen behind our back, but we cannot see it because our attention is not there, our eyes are not directed there. When we look in front of us with attention, we can see. This all indicates that we, as soul, are giving strength to everything.

We can control ourselves if only we will withdraw ourselves from the outgoing faculties, for the world is attractive only as long as our attention is on it. If we withdraw our attention and know what we are, we will then be able to see God within us.

The overflowing pen of God writes our fate according to our present and past actions; so whatever seed we have sown will bear that kind of fruit. If we can see the God-into-Expression Power, that seed can be destroyed, even after sowing, by being conscious of the Divine plan.

There are many kinds of karmas or actions. One type is our everyday actions — that is, the new seeds we are sowing. When we got this human form it was through the *prarabdha* or fate karmas. Some people are poor, others rich — some are happy and some unhappy, and all this is due to the prarabdha or destiny of each. There are also those karmas called *sanchit* which are accounts of deeds in past lives upon lives, lying in store and hanging over our heads.

It is said that when King Dhritarashtra was asked what he had done to be blind from birth, he stated that for one hundred lives back he knew by yogic power that he had done nothing to cause such affliction. Then Lord Krishna gave him power by which he was able to see that in the one hundred and sixth life back he had committed that action for which he was now paying with his blindness. This shows us that the load on our head is heavy with the karmas of life upon life. We can only be rid of these sanchit karmas when we get a human form and succeed in seeing the Reality within. Otherwise the account will remain and we will continue to add to it.

When the Masters come they wind up our karmas. How do they do it? By drawing a line across the account, and advising that in future one should cease further transgressions. They advise the dear seekers to adopt the way of true living; do not lie, cheat or steal, do not take anything by fraud or squeeze anyone's blood for self-gain.

It is most important to be truthful. If you have read the account of the *Mahabharata,* you will know that when the five Pandav princes went to school, their teacher, Dronacharya, once gave them the lesson that they should speak and live the truth. The next day four of the princes came to school, but the fifth, Yudhishthira, did not attend. After four or five days of non-attendance the teacher asked, "Why is he not coming?" Word was sent to Yudhishthira who sent back the reply, "I am studying the lesson you gave me." After many days he came to school and reported, "I have learned this lesson about the truth." This is really the way to learn. They say that through his whole life he never told a lie.

The Masters say that one should have true living, and also lead a chaste life in thought, word and deed. All human beings are the temples of God, in which God resides. All are His own children, so we

should never look down on anyone with hatred or dislike. Through their karmas, some people are sitting on chairs while others run around to bring chairs for them. Very often, because a man is more learned or rich, or in authority, it goes up like wine to his head and he starts to look down on others. This should not happen.

Masters also tell us that as God is residing in every human being, we should do selfless service toward each other. If someone is physically sick, look after them. If a person is starving or thirsty or has no clothes, then share with them whatever you possess yourself. Through thoughts, words and actions we should not be violent toward anyone.

Thoughts are very potent. There is a story about King Akbar, who had a minister named Birbal. Once, Birbal was telling the king that thoughts are very potent, and whatever one thinks will affect the other person. The king demanded that Birbal should prove this, so Birbal led the way and they went out of the town. The king's head was uncovered at the time. When Birbal saw a man walking toward them, he said, "Your majesty, think something about this man." The king did not utter a word but in his mind he thought, "I would like to shoot him." When the man came near, the king said to him, "Speak truthfully and you will be forgiven for whatever you say, but tell me, what were your thoughts when you saw me?" The man replied, "The truth is, your majesty, that when I saw your bare head I felt like smashing it with my fist." This was the result of a thought.

One should never regard anyone by thought, and even by tongue no wrong should be spoken against any person. No harm should be done through actions. If we really want to realize God we should consider how unlikely it is that He will appear to us if we are harming His children. Which father would?

When Masters come they do not disturb the prarabdha karmas, although in one way they do: they start giving food to the soul. To feed the physical form we have to eat and drink. To strengthen the intellect we read, write and think. All these words are food for the intellect. The soul is fed only with the Bread of Life, which is experience of the Beyond. With such food the soul becomes very strong, and though unhappiness and sorrow may come it will not have so much effect. If there is a thorny road to travel and one puts on heavy boots, then one will not feel the thorns. Say there are ten people, and they get beaten up physically. One of them is very weak, and after a slight beating he collapses. The others admit they were beaten up, but did not feel it much. Similarly, if the soul is strong, happiness or unhappiness may come, but will not have any drastic effects.

"Oh Supreme Master, what is the use of calling you my Teacher, if my karmas have not been wiped out?" A guru's work is to wind up the karmas. It is also said, "What is the use of going to a lion for protection when even the howling of a jackal can frighten you?" A guru's work is very important — such work that no one else can take over. Only a true guru can do it, because God works through him — because his soul has become one with God and he has become the mouthpiece of God. There is no difference between him and God.

Perfect Saints always show us a way to lead our lives so that we are freed from bondage, that we may never return again to this world. They make us wear strong shoes, that the thorns may not

prick us on life's journey. There are two kinds of Masters who come: one is called a *sant* or saint, the other an *avatar*. Both work with the same power, just as electricity can give us both fire and ice, even though the source remains the same.

The avatars explain, "Whenever there is more sin in the world, and righteous living is gone, then I appear." So you can see that the working of that power is different. They are not bound by karmas, but come only for a great purpose. That is why they advise that one should not meditate on the outer form of the Master but on the true form of the Master — Word made flesh. The avatars' work is such that they sometimes have to take a sword in hand to further their task of punishing the wicked and upholding the righteous. They must keep the world in proper balance.

The saints say, "Whosoever comes to me, I will connect him back to God." The difference between saints and avatars can be further illustrated by taking an emperor who has a viceroy ruling the affairs of one of his countries, and a commander-in-chief over the army. Both these men have different ways of dealing with matters. The viceroy will never order anyone directly but will say, "In the name of the emperor, I order you to do this," while the commander-in-chief will say, "I order you to fire." The latter knows that he is under the emperor, but is in complete control of the army, giving promotion or demotion, and will never allow anyone to go out of his jurisdiction. The viceroy never orders, but says that he is announcing the wishes of the emperor.

Kabir Sahib says, "I know the Truth, but I have come to tell you the wishes of my Lord." So avatars improve the condition of the world by giving punishment and reward, and saints give salvation. There are many prisons in the world, and supposing a man visits one of them to give an uplifting talk to the inmates. He notices the lack of good food there, and so makes arrangement for the food to be improved at his own expense. Another man also visits the same prison and seeing that the prisoners' clothes are torn and ragged, he kindly supplies large quantities of new clothing for their use. A third visitor finds that the prisoners' cells are dark and unventilated, and so he volunteers to remodel the buildings to provide better living quarters. All these things have vastly improved the life of the prisoners, but unfortunately they are still prisoners. Finally another man comes, and he opens the gates of the prison saying, "You are all free, I release you." Who do you think was the greatest benefactor out of all these men?

When true Masters come, they release the soul from the wheel of births and deaths. A perfect Master is not a small thing. He is the Supreme Power, because God Himself is working in him. Though one can see that the voice is coming from his physical form, it is not he who is speaking but God in him.

Kabir Sahib says, "Leave this world and go to Sat Lok. That is your true home." Swamiji Maharaj says, "Your true home is an imperishable place, but you have tied yourself to this earth, which is merely perishable matter." He continues, "Go to your own home — why do you want to stay where you do not belong?" We do not belong to this place. With great kismet or fortune, this body has ben given to us for just a few days. It is the highest form in all the 8,400,000 species. During this life we must unfold

(Continued on Page 21)

The Master's Message for

December 9, 1969

Dear Ones:

I SEND MY best wishes to each one of you, on this auspicious occasion of the sweet remembrance of Lord Jesus who brought Light to the world. Those who came to Him never walked in darkness. Jesus said that you should take up your cross daily so as to be reborn. To do this, the Master or Guru demonstrates the Light within you at the time of Initiation. The word "Guru" means one who can give you Light within. Let the year 1969 end by taking your cross daily so that you can start the New Year by taking a new birth. One birth is in the physical body and true rebirth is into the Beyond. This has also been given out by other Masters to make you twice born.

You are fortunate to have been taught how to take up your cross daily so as to rise above body-consciousness and be reborn into the Kingdom of God which is within you. Learn to stay longer in the Beyond and enjoy the bliss of the Kingdom of God within you.

All beauty and glory lie within you. There are so many mansions in the house of our Father, each one more beautiful and glorious than the other. The macrocosm is in the microcosm. The astral plane is more beautiful and glorious than the physical plane, and the causal plane still more beautiful. The bliss and glory of the spiritual planes are even more beautiful. The Masters who came in the past spoke of all these. Saint Tulsi Das says when he transcended into the Brahmand (macrocosm), he was very much enamored of the beauty of that place, but when he transcended and entered the pure spiritual plane, he spoke of the glory and intoxication enjoyed there, as making the other seem just like a soul was living in a latrine.

These teachings of the Masters were handed down from posterity to posterity like a sealed book. For want of practical teachers, the beauty of them could not be enjoyed.

You are fortunate that you have been given an access into the Beyond for enjoying that bliss by rising above body-consciousness or taking your

Christmas and the New Year

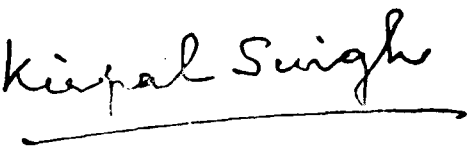
cross daily — as St. Paul said, "I die daily." In Luke 10:24, it is said, "For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."

You have that sonorous or ringing radiant light within you and should enjoy it as much as you can in this physical body. Also, when a light is lit, let it not be put under a bushel, but put it in a place that will attract the eyes of those who are seeking the light.

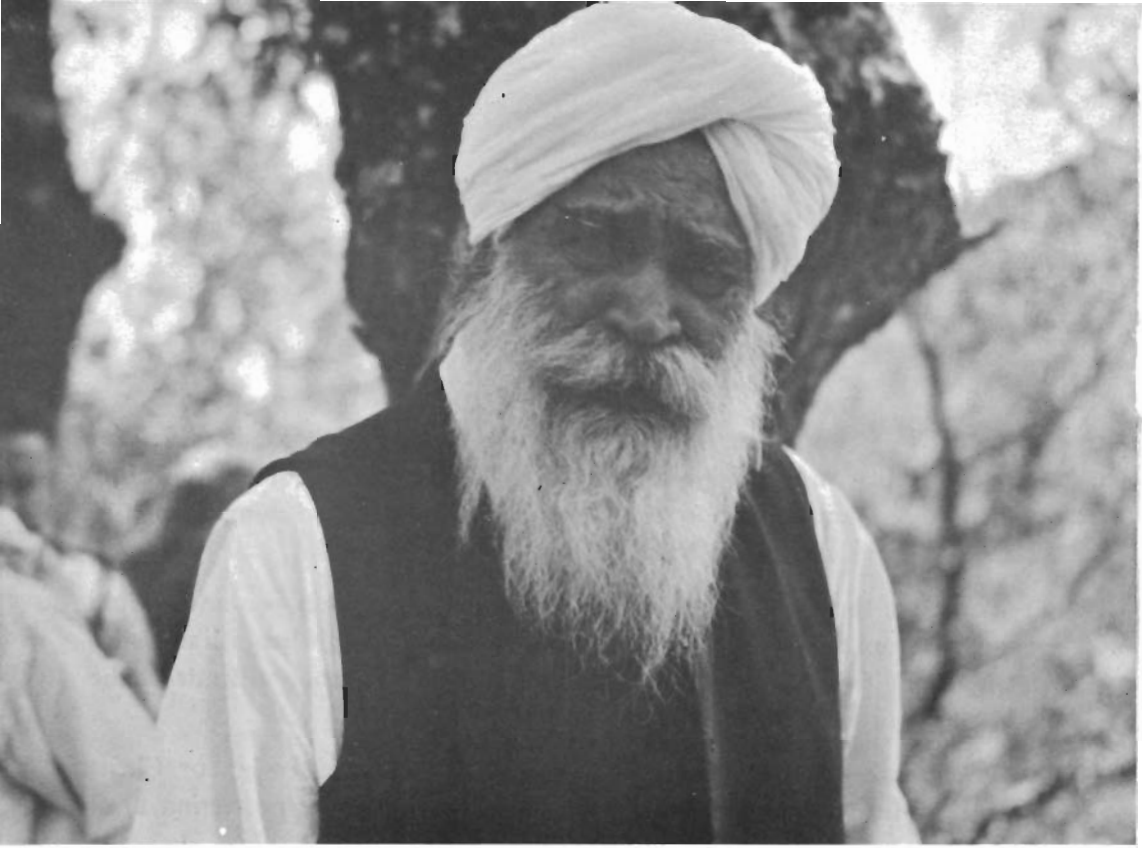
I wish you all God speed. The Master Power, God Power or Christ Power within you will be extending all feasible help and protection until you are completely attuned into the sweetness of your Father.

With all love and best wishes,

Yours affectionately,



KIRPAL SINGH



O Master

Unless my eyes gleam with Your light, blind me.
If Your words are not on my tongue, make me dumb.
Let me be still if not moving with You.
Keep me kind and caring, even toward those who wish
me brought low, or keep me alone.
Centered in You, this world can cause me no pain.
Strengthen that center, I beg you, for it often wavers.

Tracy Leddy

(Continued from Page 16)
the Truth within us, and find some way of getting out of the body while living.

Maulana Rumi Sahib has said that this human form is a prison and we are all prisoners; that the body is alive, but we are the Life; and that we should make a hole in the top of the prison and climb out! He is referring to the nine holes in the body and the tenth which lies hidden in between and behind the two eyebrows, to where the soul withdraws at the time of death. These Masters desire us to know that this is the only way out of the body to realize the true bliss.

Kabir Sahib says, "I have not seen anyone who has got a body and who is happy." Again, "The mendicants are unhappy; the whole world is full of unhappiness. The ascetic's sorrow is double that of others. Hopes and ambitions — no one is without them. Only a saint who has conquered his mind is enjoying true peace and happiness." Guru Nanak similarly says, "We are all true students in one class or other, but we cannot get that bliss without conquering the mind."

How can we win the mind around to surrender itself? This is a thing which we have to understand fully before we can proceed further on the spiritual path. The mind is a lover of attractive and delicious things. Guru Nanak explains this by saying, "Oh man, you are eating a sweetmeat which is coated with sugar, but is bitterly poisonous inside." The consequences are very bad and we come again and again to this world. The real happiness is inside. The more we search for happines, the more unhappy we become. We are all bliss. If we get any happiness at all here, it is because for a short time we place our attention upon a certain thing, and are with that thing itself, which plainly indicates that the attention and the happiness lie within. If we separate ourselves from the mind and the senses, all these illusory things will lose their meaning. This separation, combined with the connection to the Lord within us, will bring true and permanent happiness. Our attention is on small and insignificant things, and when these are taken from us, we become unhappy. Those who desire the permanent happiness will only find it at the feet of the Lord.

Where is God? There is no place that is without Him but He is most near to us in our own temple of the human body. We are in it, and God is also. The true cause of our misery is that God is within and we are scattered outwardly. Our very soul is a part of Him — His own nature, but the soul and the mind are tied together. The poor soul does not know how to untie himself, and so, more unhappiness results.

The holy scriptures contain wise counsel on helping factors and hindrances given by those who have not only untied this knot but have realized themselves and God. We can say that these scriptures are the past Masters speaking through books. Their words are invaluable, but to understand them correctly we have to approach a true spiritual Master, for if an intellectual man reads something he will draw inferences through his intellect. I am placing before you, that everlasting happiness is within all human beings, but the attention is on things which are perishable. Through the great forgetfulness, we are entrapped in attachment and cannot find any way out. Such a heavy imprisonment — first the world, and then this body!

As I have related, we have to go out via the tenth door, the knowledge of which we do not possess. The beautiful

soul has forgotten that God Himself is sitting at the tenth door awaiting her, but the poor thing is frantically lost in the maze of the other nine doors, and cannot experience her Lord. This body is in truth the real temple of the Lord. The outer temples have been made as copies of this human temple, and in those we also light lamps and ring bells. They were made to remind us that the light is brightly shining within us. He who lights this inner lamp while living becomes the one who sees the Reality. That Reality, we can say, is God which has expressed Himself, for the Ultimate God no one can see. He is Nameless and Formless, and is the one with whom we must unite and become One.

The God within is the God of all — Muslim, Hindu, Christian, etc. All human beings are one and the same. We may have labeled ourselves variously, but first we are human beings, with the same soul, the same caste, as God above.

That religion is the highest into which more true devotees of God are born, but in truth we are all children of God. All Masters have said the same thing in their own languages. The Muslim fakirs have said in their language, that all human beings have got such a close relationship with each other just like different parts of one body; and all are born in the same way. When will man realize that to have this human life is a golden opportunity, for in this form and in no other form is it possible to know oneself and to know God.

(This is an English translation of a talk delivered in Hindi by the Master Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj at a satsang in India.)

A Diwali Wish

The Diwali lamps shine bright, but
they shall soon die out.
O! Kindle the lamp within, whose
flame illumines forever.
And this day make free that wine, whose
fire knows no abating.
May Thy tavern continue forever and
Thou its Cup-bearer!

Darshan

Guru Nanak and His Teachings

Kirpal Singh

This article was written by the Master at the request of the Indian Government on the five hundredth anniversary of Guru Nanak's birth, and originally appeared in newspapers and magazines all over India

GURU NANAK is not the sole monopoly of the Sikhs nor of India alone. He belongs to all mankind. He belongs to the world and the world belongs to him. He bore witness to the glory of one God, one brotherhood, one law, the law of human fellowship and love. He came to reconcile all religions and all faiths. He came to harmonise all the scriptures of the world. He came to announce the ancient truth in the common man's language, the one wisdom that is so eloquent in the teachings of all the prophets, the apostles, the sages and the seers; and to show that one flame of love shone in all the temples and shrines and sacraments of man.

The love of God and the love of man were the very core of the message of Guru Nanak. We need to learn to serve the poor gently, quietly, unostentatiously, and to have reverence for all the saints of the past. This is the first great teaching of the Guru. When he went to Multan, the land of pirs and fakirs, the latter sent him a bowl brimming over with milk, implying that the place was already full of saintly souls and there was hardly any room for more. Nanak, who knew the implication in the offer made, just took a jasmine flower and placing it on the surface of the milk returned the bowl, meaning thereby that he would float as lightly as the flower and give fragrance to all of them. The true saints, as a rule, have no quarrel with anybody. They talk gently and work quietly in the service of God and man.

He traveled far and wide unlike any other prophet who trod the earth before him. He undertook four long and arduous journeys on foot, each extending over a number of years: one, to the north into and across the snow-capped Himalayas where he met the Lamas, the Sidhas and the Naths, the Tibetans and the Chinese; the second, eastward into the modern states of United Provinces, Bengal and Burma; the third, to the South as far as Sangla Dwip or the modern Ceylon; and the fourth, to the middle-east countries of Baluchistan, Afganistan, Persia, Arabia as far as Mecca, and Jerusalem, Turkistan, Egypt, Turkey; all these journeys covering well nigh 30 years in times when there were no satisfactory communications and transport worth the name.

Guru Nanak's teachings revolutionised people in diverse ways. His teachings are of great interest today as they were in his own time. The nascent Republic

of India needs his inspiration in the task of rebulding the nation on a sound footing, for India is still bristling with many problems and its freedom is yet far from complete.

Guru Nanak came at a crucial time in the history of India. The country, torn as it was by factional fights, was fast slipping into the hands of the Mughals. We get a glimpse of the chaotic conditions prevailing at the time from the words of no less an authority than the Guru himself: "Kings are butchers. They treat their subjects with gruesome cruelty. The sense of duty has taken wings and vanished. Falsehood is rampant over the land as a thick veil of darkness, darkness darker than the darkest night, hiding the face of the moon of Truth." The Hindus and the Muslims were bitterly opposed to one another. The very semblance of religion had degenerated into formalism, and the spirit in man was stifled and suffocated by rites and rituals and by creeds and ceremonies. Too much importance was attached to the outer husk and shell at the cost of the kernel within. Casteism and untouchability were waxing like anything. The people were losing faith in themselves. The political and the social conditions in the country had reached the lowest ebb. The chaotic conditions could not be more chaotic. In the blessed name of religion, all kinds of atrocities were being perpetrated by those in power, swayed as they were by incontinence, greed, lust and immorality. Mistrust and hatred were the order of the day. Both the rulers and the ruled had lost all sense of shame and decorum.

In such a dark hour of history, Nanak appeared to set the house in order and to shape the destiny of millions of Indians. He went about preaching in the name of God, asking nothing for himself, but anxious only to serve the people and save them from degradation and downright damnation.

Nanak saw the deep tragedy that was menacing the country. He saw the world caught in the pernicious web of suffering and woe. Moved by the piteous cries of the helpless and the afflicted people in their deep agony, he prayed for the grace of God: "O Lord, the whole world is being consumed in the invisible flames of fire. O save the world in this hour of darkness. Raise all unto Thee. Raise them in whatever and however a way Thou mayest." On coming in contact with Babar, the Mughal king requested the Guru to ask for some favour. He politely and yet firmly declined the offer saying: "Hear O King! Foolish would be the fakir who would beg of kings, for God is the only giver munificent beyond all measure;" significantly adding: "Nanak hungers for God alone and he asks for naught."

Babar had great respect for all men of piety. Once, when he came to know that Nanak had been put behind bars, he ordered his immediate release. On request from the king, the Guru gave his advice, called *Nasihat Nama,* in which he counseled the king to worship God everyday and to be just and kind to everyone. He told him that the NAAM, the *Sat Naam,* the holy Word of God or the *Kalma,* was a panacea for all ills of life, here and in the hereafter. It was *Kalam-e-kadim,* the most ancient song of God, singing in the heart of all, and could be heard only by the pure ones. "Be pure," said the Guru, "and Truth would reveal itself to thee. Have love of God uppermost in thy heart and hurt not the feelings of His creatures."

Once, this great soul, great in humility and love of God, asked a school

teacher: "Sir, what have you learned?" The school teacher replied: "I am proficient in all branches of knowledge. I have read the sacred lore of all the religions. I know quite a lot of everything." Then Nanak humbly enquired of the school master what he had actually gained thereby. In a passage of exquisite beauty and wisdom, Nanak sang of the secret of true education:

Burn worldly thoughts and their ashes rub,
And of these ashes make thine ink,
And let the paper on which ye write,
Be the paper of faith;
And write thou the Name of God.

When put to school, he told Gopal Pandhe, his teacher to "make the heart your pen, and with the pen of love write again and again the Name of the Lord."

The current system of education in India ignores the vital injunction "make the heart your pen," and "make an ink of the worldly intellect." Worldly attainments, of whatever type, are not sufficient in themselves, if one does not know God. We need a system of education which includes in its curriculum the eternal values of life. We have instead a commercialised course of cramming books and texts-made-easy, just for securing diplomas and degrees and getting jobs. The number of schools, colleges and universities has increased in India and elsewhere but the moral fiber of the so-called educated people has not grown by a millimeter. "What does it profit a man if he gains possession of the whole world and loses his own soul?"

Democracies have failed, but a democracy can live, survive and triumph when two conditions are fulfilled: (1) When sectarianism and fanaticism perish; and (2) when States bow in reverence to a superior law, the law of fellowship and human sympathy, and above all to the Infinite whose Voice rings from end to end "Children of the Earth, ye all are one!" Nanak came to proclaim this twofold truth.

The real and lasting freedom cannot be achieved without faith in solidarity and freedom of humanity. How? By:

(1) Faith more than mere knowledge of books;
(2) Solidarity more than schemes of reform;
(3) Service of humanity more than anything else.

Guru Nanak found the basic remedy for true solidarity and the integration of man in the love of God and in the love and service of God-in-man. Once when he came out of a trance in the water, he explained: "There is no Hindu and no Musalman," meaning thereby that there was no basic difference between the two.

God made man with the same privileges all the world over. All are born equal. They come into the world in the same way after a fixed period of gestation. All men have the same outer and inner construction in the matter of limbs and various instruments and organs like hands and feet, lungs, liver and stomach and the like. Everyday the human machinery throws filth out of the body. One is first man and then takes on the outer badge of one or the other specific social order or formation in which he is born and brought up and these he accepts and adopts as his own — Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam or Christianity; Buddhism or Jainism, or any other "ism"— and tries to

solve the mystery of life, each in his own way.

A man is man first and man last, besides anything else in between. He belongs to the universal religion of God with the hall mark of man based on birth and surroundings. The entire mankind consists of embodied beings like so many beads on the string of a rosary. All, being equal in the sight of God, enjoy God's gifts equally and freely. None is high or low by birth alone. Further, he is soul, a conscious entity which enlivens the whole body. This soul, a drop of the ocean of all-consciousness, is of the same essence as that of God. As such we are all brothers and sisters in God, irrespective of our social badges. And then the same power, the NAAM or Word or *Kalma*, keeps in order the entirely disparate constituents of the body and then the soul; the one material and the other ethereal. On account of this controlling power, we cannot run out of the wonderful house of the body in which we live, however hard we may try. The outgoing breath is pushed back and cannot remain outside for any length of time. Our body works as long as the life-principle runs in the body. This process goes on as long as the controlling power keeps the body and the life-principle together. When that is withdrawn, the spirit in us has perforce to leave the body. So the whole machinery of the body is being run by the indwelling spirit that we are. If we could learn to withdraw at will from the body, while remaining in the body, we can then know the nature of our real self, the animating life-impulse in us. This has been the teachings of all the rishis and munis of yore and the spiritual teachers of the East and the West. It is all a matter of practical self-analysis. And it can be experienced directly and immediately with the active help and guidance of an adept or a Master of *Para-Vidya* or the knowledge of the beyond — the knowledge that lies beyond the senses, mind and intellect. It is a regular science of soul, knowing which, everything else becomes known and nothing remains to be known. We can then become a master in our own house, able to direct it as we like.

The same NAAM, the *Sat Naam,* the Word or the God-into-Expression Power is keeping the whole creation under its control. When this is withdrawn, the result is dissolution or grand dissolution as the case may be.

This body is verily the temple of God in which we reside and in which God also dwells. The whole universe is the abode of God and God dwells therein. All this can be experienced at the level of the spirit with the grace of a competent spiritual guide or mentor.

As long as we do not perceive this unity of man, physically, mentally and spiritually and by the same controlling power within all of us, there can be no true integration and solidarity of humankind.

A GREAT PREACHER OF PEACE AND HARMONY:

One day, the Guru went into the river Ravi for a bath. A voice came to him from the music of the waters saying, "O Nanak! I am with thee. I have given thee my Name. To this Name be thou dedicated. Repeat my Name — *Sat Naam*. Mingle thou with men uncontaminated by the world. Worship my spirit and power. Meditate on my glory. And serve the poor and the needy as thyself."

No sooner had he the call, he, like Buddha and Mahavira, left his hearth and home to bring men nearer to God so

that they might enjoy in fullness the ecstatic bliss lying untapped within. People wondered why he was forsaking his wife and children. To their taunts the Guru replied: "I am leaving them to the care of Him who cares for all of us. The world is in the grip of deadly flames, and I go to extinguish the invisible fire which is enveloping all mankind."

If we look critically with the eye illumined by the Master, we will find that we are living in the holy hill of God. All places of worship have been made on the pattern of the human body, the God-made temple for our worship. The Hindu temples are dome-shaped at the top in the likeness of the human head. The mosques besides the central and side domes have arches in the shape of forehead. The churches and synagogues have steeples, tapering upward in the formation of a nose. Again, the faithful in the various religions believe that God is Light and Sound. The symbols of this inner Light and Sound adorn all our places of worship in imitation of the Reality within. But the true worship lies in opening the inward eye, the single eye or *Shiv-netre* to see the divine light and in unstopping the inner ears to hear the divine music, the *Akash Bani* or the *Bang-e-Ilahi*. The outer performances, without having a glimpse of the Spirit and Power of God (the Light and Sound principle), are just like a blind man saying, "God is Light," though he has never known what Light is. The manifestation of the *Jyoti* or *Noor* within is a vision of God, or having a *darshan,* as it is called. All this and much more comes through the grace of a competent Master. With this right perception and right understanding there follow right speech and right actions all on their own. The Kingdom of God for which we so fervently pray, day in and day out, will then actually come on the earth-plane. "It comes not by observation, Lo! it is within thee," say all the sages and seers.

Guru Nanak wanted to reform religion — to lift it from the formal and conventional to the simple and the practical. Etymologically the term "religion" comes from the roots, *re* (back) and *ligio* or *ligore* (to bind). Religion then is something that binds and unites the soul to Oversoul or God. When Masters come, those who meet them and come into their close contact, derive the maximum benefit of getting their souls linked with the manifested Light and Sound of God. The social religions come into being after the Masters pass away. They are made, no doubt, with a noble purpose, the purpose of keeping the teachings of their Founders alive. As long as practical men remain in the social orders, the followers continue to get the benefit as before. Later on, for want of such practical men, these social orders acquire rigid formations and the very institutions set up with the noblest of intentions and the best of motives, become iron-clad prison houses and begin to stagnate and stink with hair-splitting polemics in which the spirit gets lost under the mass of dead verbiage.

The purpose of religious education is to draw out the best in man and make him an integrated whole, physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually. That religion is the best which turns out more and more ideal persons with a harmonious development in all their parts. The highest objective of Sikh religion is to turn out *Khalsas*. A Khalsa is one who witnesses within him the *Pooran Jyoti* (the supreme Light of God in full effulgence). Similarly, a Hindu is one who makes manifest in him

the *Jyoti* of Ishvara and listens to the unending and unstruck music of the soul *(Anhad* and *Anhat Nad),* the symbols of which he adores and worships outside in his temples and shrines by lighting candles and striking bells. A true Muslim is one who sees the *Noor* of Allah or the Light of God and hears the *Kalam-e-Kadim* (the Voice of God, the most ancient music or song ceaselessly going on within him). A true Christian likewise is one who bears testimony to the Light of God and hears the Sound of God which transforms him into an awakened spirit at the mount of transfiguration.

Nanak put great emphasis on direct experience of the divinity that lies within us; for mere reading of the scriptures and observing the rites and rituals of worship, cannot take the place of the Reality. These are the elementary steps but not enough in themselves. Nanak was a poet-saint and a bard of the open secret, a preacher of the Spirit and Power of God enlivening the humankind. He went from place to place, chanting the sacred "Name" and preaching the love of God. He visited Hindu places of pilgrimages, the Muslim shrines, and other holy places. "Closer is He than the very life-breath and nearer than the hands and feet." As Laotse said: "Without going out of doors, we may yet know (the essence) of the world." This essence is called the NAAM, the *Sat Naam,* the eternal Word. His life was dedicated to preaching the practice of the holy Word. He taught the people that in the holy Word was hidden a great healing power which healed all the ills of life.

He loved the Hindus and the Muslims alike. Speaking to the Hindus, he said: "Praise and glorify God five times, as the Muslims offer prayers to Allah five times a day." Speaking to the Muslims he said: "Make the will of Allah your rosary. Be ye a real Musalman after renouncing your little self." At this, quite a few Muslims involuntarily cried aloud: "God is speaking to us in Nanak." Even when in Mecca he taught the doctrine of strict monism or the unity of Godhead. Interpreting the wisdom of the prophet, he uttered the name "Allah" with the same reverence as he did the name of "Hari." On seeing him, Shaikh Farid greeted Nanak with the words: *Allah Hu* or "Thou art Allah." The Guru replied: "Allah is the only aim of my life, O Farid! Allah is the very essence of my being." All call on the one God by different names, may be *Ram, Rahim, Allah, Wah-e-guru* and the like.

There are many lovers of God, and He is the life-giving force to all of them. Although bearing the badge of different religion, all have the same ideal before them — to worship the indwelling spirit called by so many names.

"There is no caste," said the Guru, "for we claim brotherhood with all." Each one of his followers was lovingly addressed as a *Bhai* or a brother. All are "Bhais" (brethren), whether kings or slaves, the rich or the poor. "No caste and creed counts in the court of the Lord. He who worships Him is dear unto Him," said the Guru. He mingled freely with the poor, the down-trodden, the outcaste and the neglected. He accepted the invitations from the poor in preference to those of the rich, who, he knew, invited him for self-glorification, and whose earnings were anything but righteous.

He considered that there was no sin greater than the spirit of separateness which went against the solidarity of life in the brotherhood of man and worked for disruption in society. This prophet

of unity and oneness saw the higher harmony in all the faiths in the Religion of Man — the worship of God and the service of God-in-man. He wanted the followers of all faiths to sit together as seekers after Truth, seeking communion with the Almighty. The highest religion teaches us to reverently study and experience in full consciousness the living presence of God, as like-minded students in a class. When questioned at Mecca as to whether he was a Hindu or a Muslim, he frankly and fearlessly declared that he was neither the one nor the other in particular because he discerned the spirit of God in both. When asked which of the two religions, Hinduism or Islam, was superior, he said: "Without good acts, the professors of both the religions shall perish." In one of his hymns, he says: "To him whose delusion of the mind is gone, Hindu and Muslim are alike." At Baghdad, the people questioned him as to which sect he belonged; he replied, "I have renounced all sects. I only know the one True God, the Supreme Being who is on the earth, in the heaven and in between, and in all directions." On being further pressed as to who he actually was, he replied: "This body, compounded as it is of the five elements, is being illumined by the Light of God and is just addressed as Nanak."

Again and again, he warned his disciples against the sin of separateness. In a beautiful passage he declared: "Numberless are Thy worshippers and numberless Thy lovers, numberless Thy *Bhaktas* and saints, who lovingly fix their thoughts on Thee. Numberless the musical instruments and the sound thereof and so are Thy musicians."

In the course of his travels, he had with him two attendants, one a Hindu and the other a Muslim: Bhai Bala and Bhai Mardana. He poured his love to all, setting at naught all conventions, creeds, castes, and color bars. He was a brother of the poor, the criminal and the persecuted. His socialism was vibrant with love born of God and not atheistic in character. Growing out of a vision of God's love, it flowed into the hearts of men as brothers in God.

A new Indian nation can be built even now, but not in blind imitation of the West. We must accept the vital message of the seers, the prophets and the saints of the East who are well conversant with the conditions of our society, and have a rich spiritual heritage behind them.

Guru Nanak — God-Intoxicated:

From a very early age, Nanak was fond of meditation. He would go to a forest and for long hours sit there in rapt silence. He would meditate on the great mystery of life — a mystifying mystery indeed. Where does life come from? How does it work in us? How does the great Controlling Power sustain us from day to day? Is it possible to contact this Power? These were the vital questions that he posited for himself. Nanak's father tended to regard his son as insane. One day he called a physician to attend upon him. As the latter felt the pulse Nanak said, "O physician! I am not mad. I am only smitten with the pangs of love for God. They call me mad, but I am not. I am simply God-intoxicated."

Nanak was overflowing with the love and glory of God. He radiated love of God to all who came in contact with him. He was verily Word-made-flesh and dwelt amongst us. He opened the inner eye of those who came to him and enabled them to witness the light of God within them. He was the light of the

the world as long as he remained in the world.

The light manifested itself in him and he guided the tottering humanity with that light. This light never vanishes but always remains in each one of us. We have to break the stone walls of our passions and prejudices, of separateness and sectarianism, in order to have a vision of the divine light in full splendor. The Guru, like all other Masters, advised: "Kindle the light which is within you. Ye are the children of light. Be ye lamps unto yourselves." India and all other countries of the world need heaven's light for their guidance. This was the universal call of Nanak to the whole humanity.

He offered the water of life and the bread of life (the light and the *Nad*) as food to the starving souls of the people, having which, nothing else remained to be had. God is love, and love is God, and the way back to God is also through love. He was love personified, and inspired love in everyone. He always sang:

Teach me how to live
immersed in Thy meditation,
day and night.
Grant, O Lord, that I may
never think of aught save Thee,
And that I may sing of Thee
ever and evermore.

Again:

O my heart! Love God as the
lotus loves the water,
The more it is beaten by the waves,
the more its love enkindles;
Having received its life from water,
it dieth without water,
O my heart! Love God as the
chatrik loves the rain drops,
Who even when fountains are
full and the land greên,
Is not satisfied as long as it
cannot get a drop of rain.

And again:

Whichever side I cast mine eyes,
there Thou art!
Parted from Thee, I crack and die.

To reach God, teaches Guru Nanak, one must walk the way of love. Love God alone, and if you love others — your children and friends and relatives, love them for His sake. Yearn for Him. Develop within you an intense longing for Him. And when you feel restless for Him, know that it will not be long before He will reveal Himself to you.

He was the prophet of the "inner life," and urged that the inner should be expressed, not in creeds and dogmas, rites and rituals, but in humble service of the poor and the lowly. And this service must be inspired by the love of God and NAAM — the Spirit and Power of God.

Nanak says:

O Man! How canst thou be free
without love?
For the Word of God — the Naam
Will reveal to thee the Lord within
thee,
And grant thee the treasure of love,
Love-filled, let the seeker become
the Bridegroom's bride!
Filled with Bhakti, the disciple be
dyed
In the true color of love.
Such a bride shall never be a
widow!
For she abideth in the Satguru.
On her free head is the jewel of
love!
And except the Bridegroom she
knoweth none.
Awake! Awake, O seeker, Awake!

Renounce the little wisdom of the "ego."
Love-filled, think ever of His Lotus-feet!
Do as He biddeth thee to do,
Surrender thy body and thy soul to Him!
Surrender thyself, so mayest thou meet thy Lord!

Guru Nanak was a true mystic, in communion with God, and perceiving His all-pervading munificent grace. He exclaimed "Nanak sees the Lord in all His glory." Intoxicated with the love of the Lord, he remained in a state of perpetual ecstasy.

Once Babar offered Nanak a cup of hemp. The Guru politely declined, saying: "O Emperor, the intoxication of this substance is just of an ephemeral nature, but I am ever in a state of divine inebriation under the powerful influence of the Holy Naam."

For meditation, Nanak prescribed a regular course of spiritual discipline for without it one could not progress on the path. The first is the devotion to Naam. In the opening lines of *Jap Ji*, the daily morning prayer of the Sikhs, the God-power is termed as *Sat Naam*, or the Eternal Truth. It is in the Name that the life of religion is rooted. "Sow the Name. Now is the season to throw away all doubts and misgivings. Burn to ashes all your silk and velvet fineries, if they take you away from the Name of the Lord."

The Guru then sums up the qualities required of a devotee on the spiritual path. Purity of thought, speech and deed is the first prerequisite for the dawn of Higher Life. Christ too said: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Purity is verily the key that unlocks the door of meditation, leading to the mansion of the Lord.

Secondly, one must develop patience and perseverance to bear cheerfully whatever good or evil may befall, as a reaction to our actions.

Thirdly, one must have control over one's thoughts, casting away all desires so as to ensure equilibrium of the mind.

Fourthly, a steady practice every day of the presence of the Living God by communion with the Word in full faith in the Master Power above.

Fifthly, one must live in holy awe of His presence, stimulating one to untiring effort to achieve ultimate union with Him.

And above all, one must love God with such an intensity as may burn up all dross in us, leaving us free to proceed unhampered to His Kingdom.

An Ideal Farmer:

A lover of freedom, Guru Nanak spent his early days in the freedom of the farm and the open air of the countryside. As he grew older, he travelled far and wide, exhorting the people to free their minds of conventional thoughts and convivialities of life.

On his return from his far flung travels, he settled down at Kartarpur as a farmer. He was a true son of the soil, a passionate peasant who had cultivated much harder things than earth — the mind and the intellect, etc. After "man-making" and "man-service," he engaged himself in land-service, for to grow a blade of grass and to raise a stalk bearing an ear of grain was to him much better than the work of a mere priest or a preacher. He set an example of hard labor by bringing under cultivation the barren lands of Kartarpur for feeding the poor and the needy on the produce thereof.

He also set up at Kartarpur the institution of *langar* or a system of free community feeding, where both bread and broth were distributed freely to all according to the needs of each. "Bread was the Lord," the Guru declared, and "the bread which the Lord gave was His *prashad* (God-given)." "Bread and water belong to the Guru," echoed the followers. And the Guru said that the Beloved was in the people.

His disciples came from far-off places like Baluchistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia and included, among others, the Brahmins and the Sufis, the high-caste Kshatriyas and the low-caste Chandalas, the Sidhas and the Naths. Thus his following was a conglomeration of all sorts of people, knit together in the bonds of loving devotion to the holy cause and vying with each other in the labor of love for the fallen and the down-trodden. Nanak, their spiritual Father, now advanced in age, moved on foot every day, laboring in the farms and singing hymns of Naam and breathing the benediction of love. The Guru was a picture of humility, and his followers in a spirit of dedication worked as humble servants of the Lord, worshiping God without any pomp and show, in the stillness of Nature.

From Kartarpur spread the fire of the love of God and love of man, all over the Punjab. Guru Nanak's face shone with the simplicity and serenity born of the saintliness in him. He was a laborer, a tiller of the soil, a servant of the poor and lowly. The life at Kartarpur was a blend of willing work and worship, love and labor, silence and song.

On being asked by his father as to what was real farming, Nanak replied: "The body is the field, the mind is the ploughshare, and modesty is the life-giving water for the field. I sow the seed of the Divine Name in the field of the body, leveled and furrowed by contentment, after pulverizing the encrusted clods of pride into true humility. In a soil prepared like this, the seed of love will prosper and seated in the abode of Truth, I behold the glory of God in the rich harvest before me. Oh Father! Mammon accompanies no man. The world is just deluded by the glamour of riches. It is just a few who escape the delusion with the aid of discriminating wisdom."

Guru Nanak had a deep-rooted penchant for silence. He frequently merged himself in the silence of God, the Sat Naam, the Eternal Word; in the silence of Nature, the silence that shines in the starry sky and dwells in the lonely hillside and murmurs in the flowing waters; and in the silence of *Sangat sewa* or unostentatious service of the community of the faithful and of the *sewaks* (servers) alike, who stayed with the Guru and whom he always addressed as *Bhais* (brothers).

The Way of Life:

He prescribed a methodology for achieving success in life. Absorbed in the Lord of Love the disciple grows in the sewa of *Sadh Sangat*, the selfless and loving service of all. In such supreme and selfless service, many a *Koda Rakhshas* and *Sajjan thug* were redeemed during his ministry.

He exhorted the people to earn their living through honest and fair means. This was a rule not for the disciples and the laity only, but even for real teachers and preachers. He went to the length of saying: "Bow not unto him who, claiming to be a Godman, lives on the charity of others. He who earns his living with

the sweat of his brow and shares it with all, can know the way to God."

That which belongs to another is not to be wished and craved for, much less grabbed, for it is as odious and noxious as pork is to a Muslim and beef to a Hindu.

He forbade people from encroaching upon the rights of others. Those who thrive on ill-gotten gains can never have a pure heart.

Time and again he stressed the purity of heart through virtuous deeds performed in the love of the Lord. It is only the deeds that count and not the religious hallmarks that one may bear.

The chanting of the Name of the Lord was a necessity but with a pure heart and a clean tongue for without these all our prayers, however loud and long, would never bear any fruit. "It is the deeds alone that are weighed in the divine scales and determine one's place in relation to God." It is with the alchemy of God's love that one can transform hardened criminals into men of piety.

Nanak never advocated ostentatious renunciation as a means of God-realization. He taught that salvation was possible for a householder, as for any other person, through proper rendering of his duties and obligations with faith in God. He believed in the efficacy of prayers not only for all mankind but for animals, birds and all other creatures. He himself always prayed for peace unto all the world under the Divine Will.

Nanak emphasized developing the life of the Spirit for all true men and women. Such persons live not for themselves alone but for others.

To live for others is the highest norm,
He alone liveth who liveth for others.

He defined a truly great man as one who renounced all his desires and cared not for the fruits of his actions.

The seeker after God was enjoined to cultivate purity of heart above anything else. "He who is so much identified with the body and is engrossed head and ears in the lusts of the flesh, could never be picked up by the Lord as His own."

He who blesses others is blessed in return. A seeker after happiness must make others happy.

The Guru stressed the need of prayer. Where all human efforts fail, there prayer succeeds. Sit in silence each day and pray to God or God manfested in man, to draw you nearer to Him from day to day and grant you the company of those who are dear to Him.

LAST DAYS:

The day came when Nanak was about to depart. In humility and love Nanak bowed to his devoted disciple Angad, who had by now become a very part of his being, as the name indicates. The latter was one in spirit with his Master and the two were blended together in Him. The Guru then asked for his blessings and he sang a song of *vijay* or victory at the hour of his departure, asking all who were around him to join him in the chorus.

Sing ye my comrades! sing ye all!
Sing now my wedding song.
Sing ye the song of His praise.
May I be a sacrifice to Him — the Beloved.
The blessed day hath dawned,
The hour of consummation draweth nigh.
Come ye, my comrades, come!
And consecrate me with your blessings.

Behold ye the Bride uniting with the Bridegroom.

Many of the disciples shed bitter tears of sorrow and grief. With deep agony in their hearts, they inquired: "Leaving us, you go! What rites should we perform? Shall we lit the customary earthen lamp when you depart? Should we cast your ashes and charred bones in the sacred waters of the Ganges, according to the prevailing custom?"

To all these queries, the Guru characteristically replied:

Yes, light ye the lamp!
The Lamp of the Name of God.

Let my funeral rites be
The remembrance of the Name of God.

Know ye that He, the Lord above,
Is my support, here and in the hereafter.

Sing ye the Name of God!
That shall be my Ganga and my Kashi.

Let my soul bathe in the water of His Name!
For that alone is the true bath.

And offer unto me the grace of God,
And sing ye the glory of God, night and day.

The Hindu disciples asked, "Shall we cremate your body?" And the Muslim disciples: "Shall we bury your body?" The Guru replied, "Quarrel not over my remains. Let Hindus and Muslims bring flowers and place them on each side of my body. And then let each do what they like. But see that the flowers remain fresh and green." The Guru was indifferent to ceremonial disposal of the body either by cremation or burial. He only asked that the flowers should remain fresh and fragrant. What then were these flowers? The flowers of faith and love.

It is in vain that the people look for the Guru in a tomb or on the cremation ground. The Living Guru is ever in the hearts of those who keep the flowers of faith and love fresh and fragrant. He came for all. He lived for all. His teachings remain for all.

He founded no new sect. He revered all religions. He respected the saints of all times and places. He taught no new creed. He preached love, faith and noble deeds. For him all the people were of God. In the Hindus and in the Muslims, he saw the Vision of God in Man. In all the nations of the world, he beheld an endless procession of the race of man. To all countries and to all people, he sang the song of NAAM or the Holy Word.

Nanak was the prophet of peace and good will, harmony and unity. He was the prophet of Light and gave Light to all for seventy long years (1469-1539). His work of loving service to humankind, as manifestation of the Unmanifest, was carried on vigorously by his successors. Guru Arjan, the fifth in the line of succession to Nanak, compiled the sayings of the Gurus in the Holy Granth, the Bible of the Sikhs; including therein the sayings of several other saints of other religions as well as could easily be collected for the purpose. Thus in the holy book, he laid the foundation of a great banquet hall and offered therein choice and dainty dishes of divine wisdom coming down through the ages. This in a way serves as a model for the World Fellowship of Religions.

Love knows no reward. It is a reward in itself. Service and sacrifice characterize love. The last two Gurus — Guru Teg Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh — sacrificed their all in the service of mankind for the love of God.

Thoughts on Spirituality

B. Sena

The Deathless dwells in the heart of death,
When Man bursts his mortal bounds,
the Boundless stands revealed.

Tagore

All forms, all things, all objects, all phenomena are so many manifestations, varied as they may be, of the spirit indwelling in the heart of them. "Life-force," say Bergson, "is ever expressing itself through matter. The sensory phenomena are the visible formations of the life-force, yet they are not the life-force itself. The life-force though immanent in all forms transcends them all." It is through the gross and the material that we come to know of the life-force as it works in and upon nature, shaping with kaleidoscopic rapidity the warp and woof of life as we see it in and around us. The enchanting colors and the bewitching smell of the roses, the freshness of the dew-fed verdure in the garden are visible signs and symbols of the spirit of spring.

The vast universe with so many solar systems, inter-planetary relationships, earths and heavens, mountains and rivers, is an interplay of spirit in matter, regardless of how gross or subtle the matter may be. The spirit cannot but attract matter and manipulate it as it thinks best, acording to certain laws. Matter is to the spirit just as clay to a potter who makes out pots, deep or shallow, flat or round, small or big, according to his needs.

There is a subtle relationship between spirit and matter. In fact, matter itself is nothing but congealed energy. The spirit, on the other hand, is active energy, a life-force. By the law of affinity like attracts like. The higher energy of the spirit or the energizing principle cannot but act upon the hidden and dormant energy in matter, activating it into what we call life — physical life, no matter at what level.

Everyone, man, beast, bird, insect, even herbs and shrubs, have in them a seed-bearing fruit each of its own kind which blossoms forth in due time. Thus goes on the wheel of life, up and down by the force of its own momentum lodged in the innermost depths of each being and brought into fruition by the Oversoul or the Spirit of God as it activates and quickens the dormant life impulse in the center of each.

So is the case with man, but with a difference. Man occupies the top rung in the ladder of life. It is given to him to be able to know his Self and to know his God. Both reside in the human body. But while He lives in us, we do not live in Him. The tragedy of life is that the individual self-consciousness sunders the individual from the cosmic consciousness — all-pervading and all-permeating — the source of all life on all the planes of existence, the eternal and the deathless principle, that outlives all forms, colors and designs.

It is only on the deathbed that something of the Reality dawns as life is forcibly drawn out of the tabernacle of the flesh. "When Man bursts the mortal bounds the Boundless stands revealed." But does this fleeting glimpse benefit us in any way? No. The spirit clothed in astral matter passes out of the physical to the great deep from where it came.

Is there then no way of God-realization? There is a way, say the sages. Besides the involuntary bursting of the bounds, there is a voluntary way of disrobing the Boundless by a practical process of self-analysis whereby one can, while in the body, rise above body consciousness, transcending the bodily adjuncts. Those who are initiated into the mysteries of the beyond have to pass through experiences similar to that of death, but with a difference: for then one rises into higher consciousness instead of sinking into unconsciousness; and then the vision is of the Light of Life and not darkness as when clothed in raiments of astral and mental material. This bursting of the bounds is absolutely necessary for God-realization; and we can do it, and have a vision of the glory of the Boundless in full awareness, with the help and guidance of a Word-personified Saint.

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