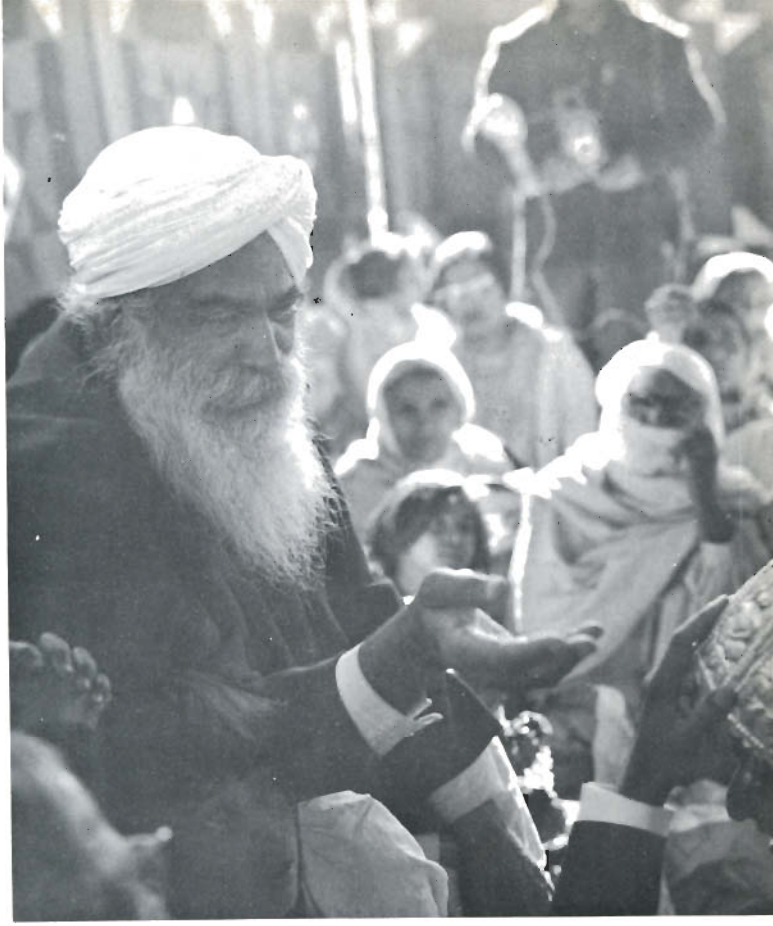
In the Garden of Love



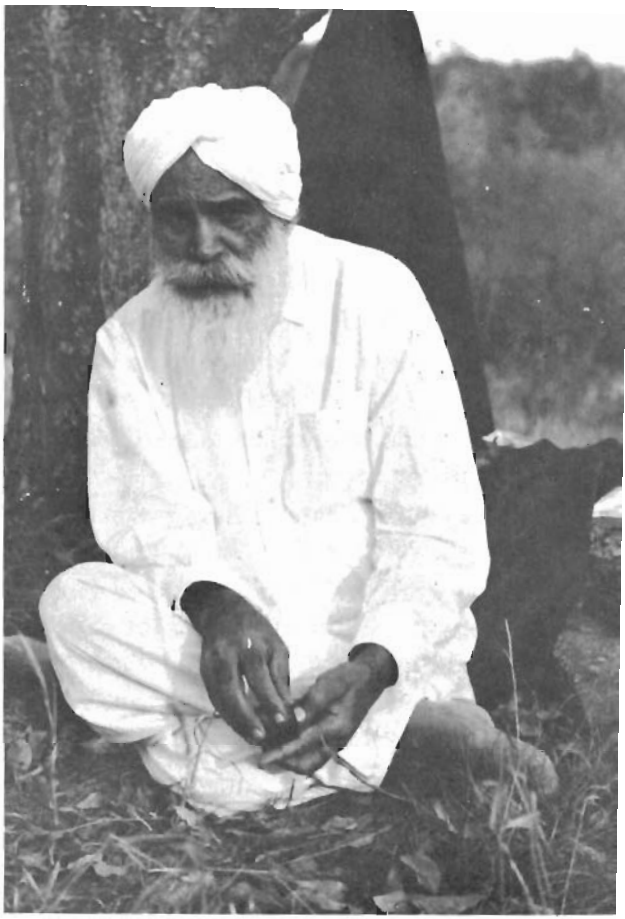
Sat Sandesh

the message of the Masters

January 1972

THE MASTER'S MESSAGE

for Christmas and the New Year



Dear Ones,

THIS BLESSED DAY of 25th December, 1971, is celebrated in the sweet remembrance of Christ when He manifested at the human pole of Jesus —for the guidance of the child humanity.

He was the Light of the world as long as he was in the world (John 9:5). He gave the Light of Life to whosoever came in contact with Him.

Each of the prophets and messiahs who is sent into the world carries on His work of uniting souls to God. The law of supply and demand is always working in nature: there is food for the hungry and water for the thirsty; where there is fire, oxygen of its own comes to its aid. When He fulfils His mission, He is recalled, gathered up, and passes away from the scene of His activity on the earth plane.

Those in search of God are ultimately led by the God Power to the feet of the Master Saint—the "Word made flesh"—for the journey back to God.

"No man can come to me except the Father which has sent me, draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:44). "Last day" means the

last day of the earthly life, when the sensory currents are withdrawn from the body.

You are taught to rise above body-consciousness by daily spiritual practices and meet the Master within. It is only when the outward man perishes that the inward man (spirit) is renewed.

"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Luke 9:24).

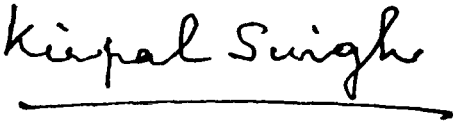
It is a pity that we have made wonderful progress in all walks of life but woefully lack self-knowledge and God-knowledge.

"What does it profit a man to gain the possessions of the whole world and lose his own soul?"

We are fortunate to have the man body—which is the highest in all creation—in which we can know our selves and develop God-consciousness.

The word "religion" is derived from a Latin word, "ligare," which, with its derivative, "ligament," means to bind. "Re" denotes "again," so it means to bind back the soul to God, which is a common heritage of all mankind.

Time and tide wait for no man. We should do our utmost to achieve the object before us.—And my best wishes are with each one of you.



KIRPAL SINGH

Sat sandesh

January 1972 volume five number one

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THE MASTER'S TALK

Life is a Game of Chaupar

DURING A MEETING with Madame Blavatsky, founder of the Theosophical Society, the learned professors of Lahore (then part of India) were most skeptical over many of her statements. A particular professor remarked, "Madame, what you are saying is a mere rigmarole and as impossible as flowers raining down from the ceiling." Madame Blavatsky calmly replied, "Professor, do you think that is impossible?" and at once, showers of flowers began to fall from above, and the table became covered with fragrant blooms. Naturally, the professors and others present were amazed, but Madame Blavatsky smiled and explained, "You see, it is all in accordance with the laws of Nature, which are hidden from most of us as yet."

Chaupar is an Eastern counterboard game, something like parcheesi.

Many of Nature's laws are not known to the common man. For instance, one's length of sleep can be decreased by natural law as much as you like, if one has the knowledge of that law. This also applies to the intake of food, which can be decreased to a bare minimum—one can decrease it to a single grain of rice, for instance. As for rest, actual sleep is normally not more than a minute anyhow. When Prophet Mohammed was asked if he slept, he replied, "No, I do not sleep—my soul is ever awake—but my body sleeps." In meditation, when you rise above body consciousness, the

body gets complete rest, and your consciousness increases. When you resume the body, it is recharged and gets a fresh lease on life.

In 1912, I saw an interesting example of the use of Nature's laws. There was a Muslim fakir, by the name of Abdul Vahab, who allowed no one to remain in his room at night, yet he permitted me to come and go freely. In meditation, his body would rise to an elevated position, several feet from the floor. You must have heard also about the famous devotees, Dhruv and Prahlad, who it is said used to elevate their bodies. It is purely a matter of knowing the laws of Nature. If both positive sides meet, they will separate and rise above. Usually people have no knowledge of these things and term them miracles, but it is a wrong term; they are according to the hidden laws of Nature. Many such incidents occur in the lives of Saints, and if we also live as they do, and according to their instructions, we will also become as knowledgeable as they, for every Saint has his past and every sinner a future. One can say that whoever is a Master today, was like us yesterday. The man with an M.A. degree was studying in the first class at one time. So those on the first rung of the ladder will reach the top one day, if they go the right way about it.

The present conditions of the world are not at all new—discord has ever been present in one degree or another, but it is the Masters and other sages who see the condition as it truly is, in this critical stage. This land of rishis and munis has ever been protected by the Lord, and always will be; but nevertheless, upheaval will come, and for that the only answer is to love one another. Our religions are like schools and colleges, and blessed are they, so remain in your own formations, for when Masters come they all give the same advice: to sit together and try to understand each other.

Guru Arjan Sahib was here at a very difficult time in the religious history of India, and during those drastic days he collected the words of the true Masters into a comprehensive omnibus—a work which can truly be called a banquet hall of Spirituality. He named it the *Sri Adi Granth* [i.e., "supreme sacred scripture"] although it is now called the *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. This monumental work serves as proof that although they spoke in different languages, yet all Masters have said the same things, and have given the same teaching to mankind: that all human beings are one, for God Himself made man, giving the same privileges to all; so none are different. It is man who has made the religions and encompassed them in a variety of customs and rituals. Whenever Masters came, they revised the ordinances to meet the mode of the age, thereby affording continuance of their missions; and as long as these realized souls were here, peace and happiness lasted. Unrest and unhappiness returned some time after they left the scene. For want of them, the formations which were made for a noble purpose dwindled down into stagnation, which resulted in deterioration.

Truly, when we enter any religion we join the Army of God, and thus all become God's people, with no difference one from another. While the Master is here, there is right understanding that first we are human beings, and also that each one is a soul in the human form. Furthermore, the soul's caste is that of God, only He is the Life Sustainer, and we are all His devotees. As long as this right understanding was prevalent, man

had right thoughts, which followed through with right speech and right actions, and peace reigned because of it. When man forgets this right understanding, the only solution is for the Master to come again to revive it; it is the saving grace.

During the religious troubles of the Muslims and Hindus in India, Kabir, Guru Nanak, Guru Arjan, and others came. The need is none the less great today, for in those days there were principally two religions, whereas today they are numerous: one on top of another. But, *He who sees becomes one in thought.* Regardless of language or mode of expression, whoever has seen the Truth will say the same thing, for the subject remains the same.

There is a hymn of Guru Arjan Sahib which deals with this subject, which I will now take:

Get together and become one, my brothers;
Put aside your differences, with love.

Masters think of all as brothers, being the children of God, and therefore all are brothers and sisters in God. Guru Arjan Sahib is explaining that our duality or diversity is the root cause of all our misery, and while this remains, how can we expect to be happy? One person's rigid thought against another's—this dogmatic attitude incites conflict. All variance should be removed, but how?—for each one stubbornly sticks in pride to his own views and insists that everyone else is wrong. True understanding of one's religion is the only cure, for deep in each religion one will find that every Master's teaching was the same: for the purpose of helping man to come nearer to God. All true Masters awakened mankind to the realization of oneness.

When I visited Rome, I met the bishop in charge of the Roman Catholic Church's relationships with other religions. We had a heart to heart talk, and he said, "What we can all understand by sitting together, cannot otherwise be understood at all." It stands to reason, if there are two charged bodies opposite to each other, there will be sparks. If they become blended in one, there will be no sparks. Sitting together in oneness avoids all that. What does it matter how many different religions, sects or dogmas there are—we are all men, and brothers and sisters in God, are we not? This is a complete and natural relationship which can never be broken, but we have forgotten it because when formations are made, the same good old customs corrupt themselves. The formations stagnate, and also the devotees of the formations deteriorate them; when this happens, another Master comes to revive the pure Truth. It is then discovered that he says the same as other Masters have said. The very same message continues to be given to the same children, age after age. *The world is a room wherein the Truth dwells.* But man forgets again and again. Guru Arjan Sahib's wonderful collection of the words of the Masters is one of the world's most valuable possessions, for each one gave out the right understanding to all mankind; but on what grounds can all men sit together?

Get together in God's Name
And sit in the Gurumukh's company.

What does this mean? It means that our attention should be connected to the Lord—each one of us. This is the goal of all religion. Our attention should be

constantly directed toward Him, no matter what customs or rites we daily perform, for it is He who has given us birth, and we are all in the same human form. We are embodied souls and God resides in each human form; the Sustainer of all life. When any man prays, does not the thought go out to God? Put the attention on Him more and more until even the body is forgotten completely. While the attention, even a minute part of it, remains in the body, the mind's directional attitude is divided.

So the Name of God is the only suitable ground upon which all men can sit together; and what is this *Hari Naam* or God's Name? *Hari is the Supreme Name through which all creation came about.* How does this help? In the company of the Gurumukh, whose face is turned to the Lord, who has the right understanding, who has experience of Him, and has become the very expression of that Name, the souls can be directed to God. We are in fact all one in His Name, although not as far as customs and rituals are concerned. And yet, if we look deeply into the customs and rituals, we find that the meaning and purpose remain the same. For instance, in Arabia there is usually a dearth of water, and they say that the *namaz* [Islamic prayer] may be read by first washing only the hands and face with water. In places where water is more scarce, people perform their namaz by first cleaning the hands with sand, which is called *taumam*. The meaning in this action is to be wide awake for the prayer. In India where there is no shortage of water, they say that devotions cannot be truly performed without first taking a full bath. Again the meaning is to sit in His remembrance fully awake and refreshed. In Sikh temples, it is the custom for men to enter with their heads covered, whereas in churches gentlemen enter with bare heads; they are gestures of respect to the Lord, but are different in each religion. Customs also change with climatic variations, but all have the same purpose: that is, to show respect, to sit in God's remembrance quite wide awake in a respectful attitude. Only in the Gurumukh's company can this single-pointed attention on the Lord, with all thoughts of the body and its surroundings abandoned, be achieved and the duality removed.

They asked Guru Nanak, "Who are you?" and he replied, "I am neither Hindu nor Muslim; Allah and Ram are the very breath of my body." But they persisted in their questioning, and he enlarged on this: "If I say I am a Hindu, you will kill me, and Muslim I also am not." He meant that by outward appearances he looked like a Hindu, and through narrow-mindedness they might kill him. It also indicated that their idea of a true Muslim was one who paid attention to outer form only. We face the world always, even though our mode of dress may indicate that we profess to follow the Lord in a certain way. We may hoodwink the world, but no one can deceive the Lord, who resides in every being and sees everything. So, Guru Nanak explained that he was not their kind of Muslim. Then they asked, "But who *are* you?" and he said, "I am a puppet made of five elements, called Nanak." Even the name *Nanak* is not specifically Hindu or Muslim. They pressed him further, to think deeply and try to explain exactly what he was, and finally he said, "A puppet of five elements, in which the Invisible is playing."

Our real aim is to realize the Lord—He who resides in every being. With this understanding we can have a sympathetic attitude toward each other—then

who will be an enemy? It is a truly spiritual ground upon which we can all sit together in loving harmony. There *is* an underlying unison, of which the Masters remind us when they come. In this age, Baba Sawan Singh Ji also came, and he said, "Make me a common ground on which brothers of all religions can sit together." It is the crying need of the hour, when there have sprung up many different branches and sects out of the few original religions. However, little opportunity is available to do this, for in the temples you will find only Hindus, and in the mosques only Muslims, and in the churches only Christians, and so on; what chance do the people have for sitting together? There is so much narrow-mindedness. By God's grace, people have started mixing together a little in this age; whereas before, one sect would dislike to see even the faces of another.

So to sit together in the Name of God is the only way and the only cure to eradicate all divisions. To be born into this human form is really a great blessing, for only in this form can the Truth be realized. If all sit together without any attention on outer forms, the attention will rise and see the inner sky. How can this be seen when we are all imprisoned within four walls? Man is a social being and must have social bodies in which to live, which are called religions, and which are already so many. In the word "religion," *re* means "back," and *ligio* means "to bind"; so the full meaning of religion is to bind our soul back to God. To remain in one's own religion is necessary, otherwise corruption will spread; but while in that religion one should seek out a Gurumukh—an awakened soul—one who has come into full realization already. Without such right company, right understanding cannot be gained. *Meeting one through whom all durmat* [wrong understanding] *goes; He is our True Friend.* If you search the whole world, such a friend you will rarely find.

Masters are also born into some religion or sect, but they rise above all forms and formularies, and can see everyone at the level of the soul. *Whatever the Master says is equally for all.* When all men live as one, diversity and divisions vanish. All difficulties can be lessened by sharing them, one with another. Each would share his food with one who is without, and we need not depend on foreign aid for food supplement. A man would eat a little less to share with his needy brother. Some time ago there was a shortage of wheat, and it was rationed by the government who appealed to everyone to give up one day's ration to help the areas in need. Someone mentioned this to me, and I asked the people during Satsang to give up one day's ration each. At my single request that day, thousands gave; which shows that when all are sitting together in sympathy, need or misery as well as joy will be instantly shared. When woes and misery are shared they become less. Wrong understanding or dogmatic attitude only tends to increase the bad condition; all differences, whether social, political or religious, can be removed if all sit together in the company of an awakened person in whose radiant presence all blend in harmony and oneness.

When a person's spiritual foundation has been established and his soul is fed daily with spiritual food, anyone who comes into his contact feels uplifted and everything becomes beautiful—because of his radiance. Without this upliftment the pressure of life's misery weighs upon a man in full measure. Two kinds of Gurumukh come to the world—one is called an Avatar, and the other a Sant

—but both do the Lord's important work. When they meet, both highly respect each other; but their work is different. The Avatar is like a Commander-in-Chief, without whom the world would be in a topsy-turvy state; so his work is very necessary. He works at the outer level, when Man's righteousness is at stake, punishing the wrongdoers and rewarding the righteous; but the Sant's mission is to unite Man with God at the level of the soul. *Whosoever meets them, becomes at once connected back to God.*

When Guru Gobind Singh announced that he required an offering of heads as a sacrifice, how many people came forward to give their lives? Only those few whose spiritual background had been established—actually five in number. He did not cut off their heads, but made them his five generals in charge, and called them the *khalsas* [true and pure disciples, in whom God's Light is effulgent]. When the spiritual background is firm, no matter what happens in life, or what a man must do, the spiritual strength remains. If the background is not developed, then temporary upliftment can be had, but it dies out. If Mahatma Gandhi achieved success, it was because of this spiritual basis. So sit together and share each others' joys and sorrows. We usually think only of our own comfort and advantage, without even a care for others, and the result of all this selfishness is all-round misery—in the home and in religion too.

O braves, adopt this means and repeat the Name as given by the Godman day and night;
When the end comes, you will not feel the sting of death.

Follow the way referred to above, by which all unhappiness and pain of the sting of death will subside. Just try this for a while, putting all your attention into your meditation: you will forget your body and the soul will withdraw. Attraction to God can only be developed by full concentration on Naam. The man who learns to control his attention by turning it towards the Lord within, acquires great power. The Greater Attention which is God, through whose single word all creation came into being, is all-powerful; and our soul is of the same essence and therefore has great power also—but our scattered attention has rendered us very weak. Single-pointed attention can be gained by turning one's face towards Him; then outer thoughts will go and even awareness of the body will not remain.

At the time of death, what happens? The soul withdraws from all parts of the body, and gathers at a place behind the eyes. Rising above like this, at will, drives away all fear of death; but this can only be done through development of love for the Lord. With such spiritual advancement we see clearly a glimpse of Him in each and every being—whom then would we wish to hurt or hate? How could we then covet the possessions of others? Or squeeze the blood of our brothers for our own greedy gain? The Masters speak with brevity, placing the clear Truth before us in a few concise words.

Think of karma and dharma as a game of Chaupar,
And you become the counters.

Life in this world is just like a game of Chaupar—a game with four sides. The *jiva* [embodied soul] is born in four kinds of species: *sethaj* [born of moisture]; *uthbuj* [growing from the earth]; *andaj* [born through eggs]; and *jeraj* [born through the womb]. We are all counters in this game of life, and just as

the game is played, we all have to reach Home. The nearer one is to reaching Home, the less likelihood there is of being knocked off the board, and having to begin again. If we have a guiding principle at the back of us—the Gurumukh—we will be able to go through our journey unharmed. In the game of life, lust, greed, anger, attachment, and ego are causing our downfall daily, but with the aid of a true companion there is a chance of reaching Home. And if we can reach Home in this life, we will have achieved our true purpose—otherwise we will have to go round the board again. In the game, if two counters of a kind stand together, the other players cannot knock them off the board; similarly, if we have the company of an awakened soul we will be able to qualify for the higher expression of life, instead of losing whatever we have gained. When we learn how to rise above the body-consciousness and its environments at will, this enables us to reach our True Home. *The kingdom of God cometh not with observation . . . behold, the kingdom of God is within you.* God's kingdom cannot be had by Man, because his attention is constantly scattered outwards. *Conquer lust, anger, greed, attachment—This play is loved by the Lord.* The fifth, which is not mentioned here, is the ego.

What is lust? *All the mind's desires are called lust.* To protect one's chastity is the first task, and also to lessen all other desires. Be desireless. And how does anger occur? When there is a blockage in the path of one's desire and one does not get the desired thing, then anger results. When desire is pursued, any blockage in the way causes greed, which results in jealousy, hatred, backbiting, and many other unwanted traits. They are all basically due to desire or lust. If one does receive the object or subject of one's desire, this in turn becomes an attachment—you won't like to part with it. You will notice that if water is flowing very fast in some stream and a large rock is placed in the middle, two things occur—froth and noise. A man who is in the throes of anger cannot speak softly, and in his mouth foam begins to form. All because he insists that he *must* have his way. When he gets it, he asserts and enjoys—resulting in ego. So we must conquer these expressions of iniquity, and the only successful way is to place a higher desire in the path which will overcome the lower ones. The ego remains strong while in the body, but when you can leave it at will, you will be able to reach the True Home. But, unless we conquer the sinful side of our character, we will go on being dragged into the outer expressions of life.

A very broad view has been given: that life in the world is like a game, with four kinds of births. We are the counters, and we create our own karmas and dharma.

Rise and take a bath before sunrise;
Have the sweet remembrance all through sleep;
Small hours are best for communion with Naam.

Rise early every day, and do your meditation. *Rise before sunrise, and repeat the Naam; All negative effects will be mitigated, O Nanak.* Early morning is the most beneficial time for meditation. *Supreme oneness of thought upon the True Naam is had at the ambrosial small hours before dawn.* So rise early and shake off all feeling of sloth. Go into the remembrance of Him even if you are lying down—even at night, or when resting. Go to sleep with the same

thought, so that the very remembrance of Him will be the very beat of your pulse. When you arise in the morning, be awakened—have a bath or wake yourself by any means, but be really awake when you sit down for meditation. With these habits, even in sleep your meditation will continue, and when awake, even then you will have that meditative attitude all day. *He is always awake—never seen sleeping.*

Masters never sleep. Our Hazur would retire to his bedroom at about midnight or 1 A.M., and at 3 A.M. would rise again. So this can become a habit. When the soul gets a connection with the Greater Consciousness, it gains strength and refreshment. If one removes the attention from the body and goes up, the body gets perfect rest. The law is that if one gets true sleep for just a few minutes, it is enough. For those who travel on this Path, reduction in sleep is a very frequent occurrence. But for those who have not progressed very far, it is something like a miracle to see a person awake all the time.

So when night comes along, be in His remembrance. Go into the Lord's lap and rest. If the night is used unwisely, the whole life is ruined, and those who use the nights to their advantage secure their whole future. Free your mind of all things and have but a single thought all night, and in the morning continue with that thought and sit in an awakened state; your soul will partake of the spiritual food, the very bread of life. With this, all gifts will be received.

My Satguru takes me across all the difficulties, here and hereafter;
Reaches me Home, safe and sound.

Outwardly, in the body and all its environments, and inwardly when one rises above—in both phases of life, He protects. He who is the very Form of Truth works here and there also. How can anyone be of any real help if he just gives a lecture and leaves us here? So it is said, *O Nanak, leave the company of these who are not constant and search for the true friend, the Sant; The former will leave you while living, the latter will be with you even after death.* It is also said, *Save for the True Satguru, who gives the True Protection? At the end, He comes to meet you.* All Masters say the same thing. A Muslim fakir says, *O brave man, catch hold of Someone's shirt-tail—One who is the Knower of this world and the Beyond.* The illusion of negativeness is very far-reaching, but the Positive Power, which is God's, will always protect.

The path to the True Home really starts when the soul is reborn, for the first birth is in the body, and the second above the body into the Beyond. Learn to die so that you may begin to live. *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* The meaning of meditation is to concentrate or meditate upon one thing, so much so that all other things are forgotten. Remain in any religion—in any country—it makes no difference, but sit in the company of a Gurumukh and gain the helpful upliftment that comes from His radiation.

The Lord Himself plays, and He Himself observes;
The Lord Himself designed all this.

The game of life is the play of the Lord, who has created it, and it is He who sees all this. The body is merely a shell, through which the soul works and is directed. If the trend of a man's mind is inclined to the soul, he becomes spiritual, and if it is inclined to the body through the senses and into the outer environment, then he becomes worldly.

If he is worldly, he creates such conditions for himself that he must come again and again into the worldly environment.

Those in the great Powerhouse know and say that without His orders, nothing can move, but those on lower levels think that all things are due to their own actions. If they would only come up to that higher level, they would see that it is not themselves but someone else in control, and their I-hood would depart. That is the stage when one becomes the conscious co-worker of the Divine plan, and one sees that on every level, according to the laws there, He is working throughout.

O Nanak, those who play in the company of a Gurumukh,
Will win the game and return Home.

In the Gurumukh's company this game of life can be won; and the winner returns to his Home. Those who unfortunately never meet the Gurumukh, continue round and round the everlasting circle of births and deaths. This hymn started with the words:

Get together and become one, my brothers,
Put aside your differences, with love;
Get together in God's Name,
And sit in the Gurumukh's company.

You will become the same as whatever company you keep; so an awakened soul will awaken you. An experienced person will give you an experience, and he who has right understanding will teach you that also. Remain in whatever religion you are in at present, for it is good to be born in a temple; but this does not fully benefit us or give us the full opportunity of the human birth if, while in that religion, one does not learn to rise above and become one with all life. When Masters come, they are born into various religions, but they rise higher and see that *With one Light the whole world came into being; Who is high and who is low?* They have this profound realization, and no matter what their country of residence is, they bring an awakening to the whole world.

This Great Light has ever gone from the East to the West. One well-known Archbishop was heard to remark, "Brothers, we await the Light from the East." And we of the East? Well, most of us are without it yet. India has always been fortunate to have those great souls with knowledge of the Beyond—this is a play of Nature—but the people must turn their faces toward the Truth to gain the benefit. So all truly spiritual teaching goes out from the East to the whole world, and the West has great respect for unity in all religions. Each really great spiritual voice has risen from the East, and we in India are highly blessed therefore. The unity already exists in all men, but Man has forgotten it; that is all. Under the present circumstances it is most necessary that everyone should sit together in love and share all weal and woe. If all are bound together in love, even in the worst conditions there will be no fear. Strive to give happiness to others, and you yourself will receive joy. When we selfishly want only our own happiness and care little for others, naturally it ends in fighting for it in one way or another, and the result is the very opposite of happiness.

Love knows service and sacrifice. If you desire to love God, then start by loving all, for He is in everyone, and in true love there is service and sacrifice.

Learn to give instead of taking always. If all, in love, were prepared to give their lives for others, then who would be unhappy in such a world? You will be living for me, and I will be living for you. *Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you.* Whom should we love? Not everyone, but the God in everyone—the Overself. If from outside some trouble is threatening, then let the government do whatever they must from their level —but we should sit together in love and help each other.

Both Avatars and Sants are necessary for the world's balance, but the cementing power is Spirituality, and there is a crying need for it at this time. Keep in the company of the awakened soul, and stay away from those who are still asleep, who are deep in narrow-mindedness, and therefore have no right understanding. This kind of company will drag you down.

Notice of Available Circulars

The following circulars (all written by the Master) are now available in bulk to Satsangs, Group Leaders, workers, etc., for free distribution to seekers after Truth:

4-PAGE CIRCULARS (6 x 9) at 1½ cents each, 100 for $1.50

Instructions for Seekers after Truth	Circular 29 (advice to workers)
By Love, Serve One Another	Meditation & Spiritual Progress
The Way of Love	Humility

8-PAGE CIRCULARS (6 x 9) at 3 cents each, 100 for $3

The Essence of Religion	World Peace in the Atomic Age
Sant/The Master	Circular 3 (ends and means)
Selections from Master's Letters	Circular 17 (on growth thru love)
Spiritual Aspect of Vegetarian Diet	Circular 22 (in memory of Hazur)

These circulars are reprinted from Sat Sandesh, and each one includes at least one picture of the Master, and addresses where books or further information can be obtained. The prices charged are just sufficient to cover the cost of printing.

Also available are "On Military Service," one page at 1 cent; "The Master on Marriage," one page at 1 cent; and "What to Eat: Hints for Beginning Vegetarians," (compiled by initiates—not written by Master), one page at one cent. Please order from:

SAT SANDESH BOOKS
Sant Bani Ashram, Franklin, N. H. 03235, U. S. A.

IN THE GARDEN OF LOVE

A reminiscence by Michael Raysson

We came before Him hungry for His glances. The air would become permeated with love at His approach till it overflowed like wine. And then He sat before us explaining the mystery of Life and death, and the tale of Love began to play in our hearts. His eyes were a magic bridge where the timeless peered out on time. All sickness and cares were soon forgotten (or else when they rose pitifully and poignantly before us, the heart wished nothing but that pristine purity that shone in all glory before us). In that enchantment the world would fall away and there was only the Beloved there.

Sometimes people would be leaving soon, and He would say, Would they not like to stretch the hours out so the time of leaving would be put off and those happy hours prolonged? And indeed the hours would stretch out. Alas, that time did come!

Would that something could be said of those eyes that danced before us or the beauty that ravished our hearts.

Once He spoke on the value of sitting before the Master. The words were so overladen with intoxication and love that though we caught only a drop our hearts were drowned with that madness of love. And when He spoke of His love for His Master we saw the tears flow from His eyes. Mother Taiji sang a

Love-song of the Master's and He asked someone to translate but she did not dare to speak.

Once He told the story of Gunga, the wrestler. He was the greatest wrestler. People thought that he had just grown that way naturally. He was a simpleton and as a boy his father would turn him out into the cold night with no clothes. He would send him to the river to bathe and in order to keep warm he would exercise all night long. In this way he grew strong and became a great wrestler. The Master was also at the river where He would spend the whole night in meditation. There He saw Gunga and so learned his story. "A strong man revels in his strength and a weak man wonders how he got it."

He told us that there were two ways —one very difficult and time-consuming, one very simple, very easy. The first is, "God helps those who help themselves," the second is "God helps those who do not help themselves"—the way of self-surrender to Him.

He once said that the greatness of His Master was that He would meet with everyone on his own level. And we saw the Master with so many people— He was always like that.

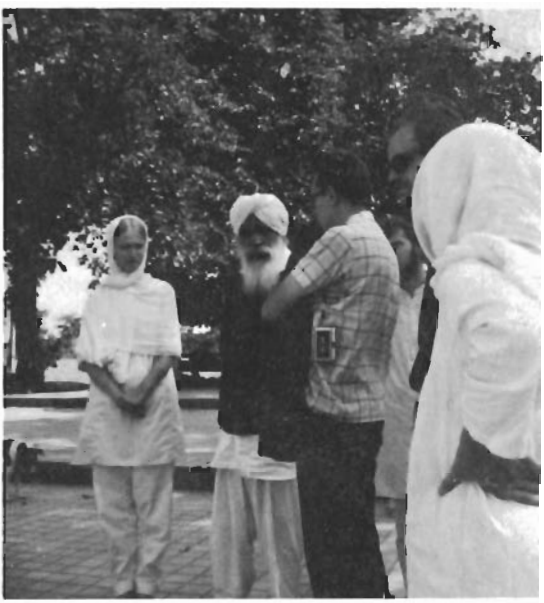
The more closely we looked, the more perfect He became, the more we saw everything was in His hands, the less we became. These things are true, of course, near or far, even across the seas.

At initiations hundreds of people would come to the Master. He would sit before them and explain the ancient science as Masters have done from time immemorial. Then time and place would dim and He would attach each one to the holy Naam.

It happened while we were there that one man from a rival faction came to an initiation in order to defame the Master. But when he was given a sitting he rose above body consciousness so much that he had to be revived. Still he began to defame the Master. So he was given a second sitting and finally he had to admit he had seen the Inner Light in abundance. The Master said, "He is in the jaws of a very strong Lion. He cannot get away."

Day by day He came before us in all His greatness. In spite of our lowness we were awe-struck and love-smitten. And He would say He was only a student. And one of us exclaimed, "Master! How can YOU *be only a student?" He is the great mystery.*

Among those who came from afar there was at that time one baby. The Master would shower her with love-parshad, all she could hold and more. And she would be happy, so happy. "A king with all his kingdoms was never so happy," said the Master. One time as He came out to us for evening Darshan she ran out to Him and grabbed His hand and He let her lead Him back toward His place. Then at last He turned her around and they returned. With the

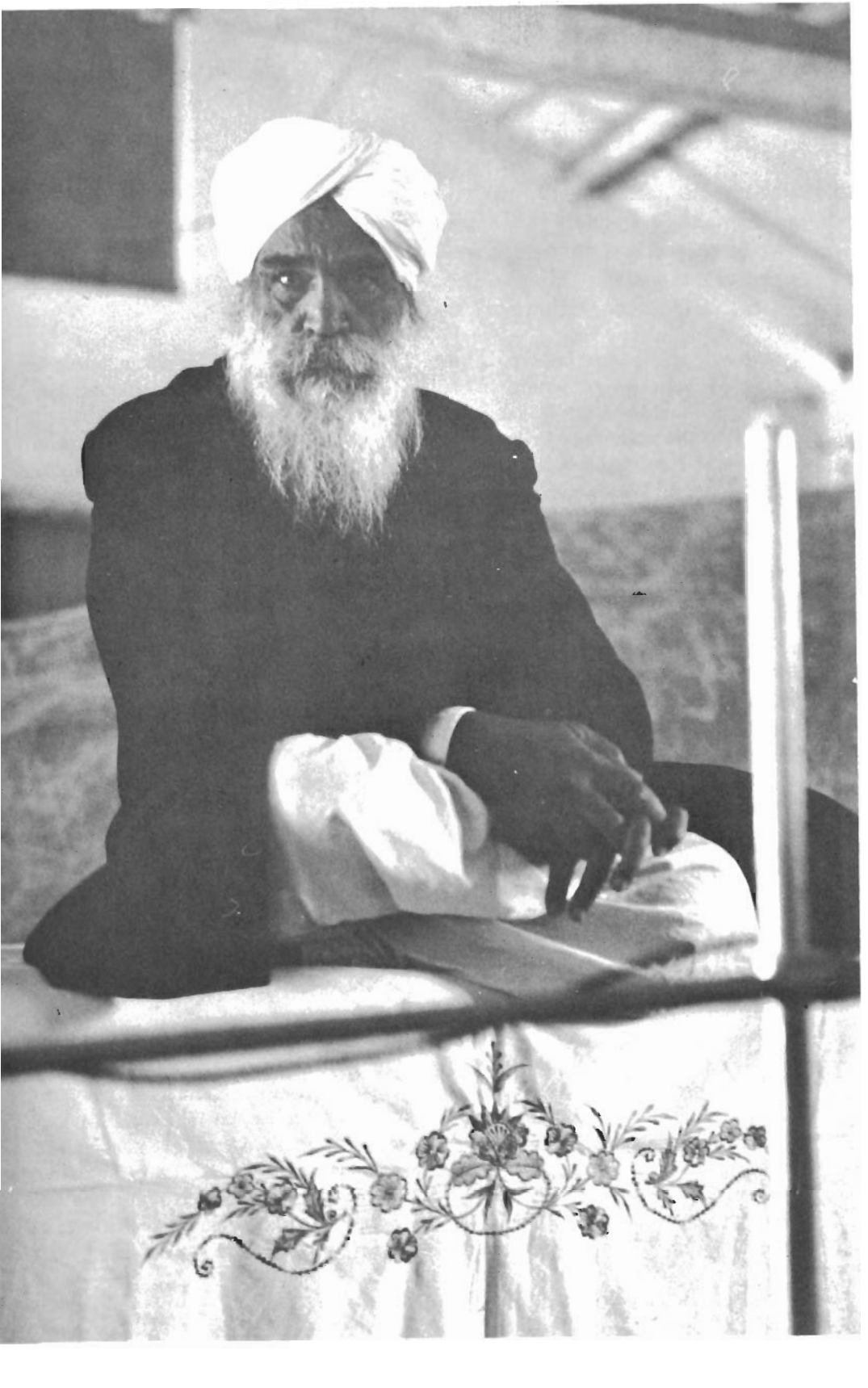


The Master gives the author parshad

loveliest of smiles He said, "Sometimes the Father becomes the child and the child the Father." The day she was leaving He gave her a dress. And when they put that dress on her she danced in ecstacy for hours just calling out His name.

One said, "He is like a hole through which the Universe is flowing." Another said, "He is so much! He is so much! How can we begin to take it in?" And another said, "He is the Ocean and we stand on the shore and try to catch little droplets." And He said to us that when He was a disciple someone asked Him how great His Master was and He simply said, "I don't know how great the Master is—but HE IS MORE THAN ENOUGH FOR ME."

So in the worldly sense that time came to an end and we too had to leave. He stabbed our hearts with the knife of Love and we felt the pain.



Circular No. 4

Instructions for Holding Satsang

This circular, first issued by the Master in December 1956, includes the basic guidelines laid down by Him for conducting Satsang meetings. Many of the specific injunctions have been modified or clarified by the Master in later writings, particularly "How to Develop Receptivity," which should be studied carefully in connection with this circular.

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

THE PURPOSE OF SATSANG

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

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

SATSANG APART FROM RITUALS

The "Science of Soul" is just like any other science, but more exact, more natural, more lasting, and the oldest of all the sciences. It is the Science of Realized Truth directly connected with the soul in man, and should therefore be kept distinct and apart from rites and rituals, forms and ceremonials; the performance or observance of which keeps one tied down to the plane of the senses, and as such must be strictly eschewed. Our

discourses and talks in Satsang should be confined only to explaining the Science itself in lucid terms, without any outer embellishment like lighting of candles, burning of incense, offering of flowers, tinkling of bells, exhibiting photographs and the like. Even though these may appear innocent and harmless in themselves, yet the seekers after Truth are likely to go astray by such symbolisms and forms, and may get entangled and lost.

SUBJECT AND SCOPE OF SATSANG

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

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

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

LOVE AND SERVICE THE BASIS OF SATSANG

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

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

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

[2] Master has since requested that the meditations take place *before* the Satsang commences. See *How to Develop Receptivity*, pages 16-17, for a complete explanation.

EXTRACTS FROM HAZUR'S LETTERS

"It is very beneficial for the Satsangis to meet with each other; it promotes their love and faith towards each other and the Holy Master; it also gives stimulus to the spiritual exercises. It helps to clear the doubts and difficulties of other Satsangis. Combined Satsang serves a useful purpose. It gives an opportunity for exchange of ideas. The Satsang time is especially valuable in this: that it increases love for the Master. In a large Satsang there are some advanced Satsangis also who speak from their personal experiences, and this helps in developing faith in others who may come into contact with them.

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

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

INDIVIDUAL MEDITATION

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

INITIATION—RECORDING OF INNER EXPERIENCES

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

The disciples should therefore be encouraged to wholeheartedly devote some time to the practice of spiritual disciplines; maintain regular diaries for introspection, showing lapses in daily life and conduct, the endeavors made and the results gained thereby; and they should be sent regularly, say after every three months,[3] for the inspection of the Master so that He may extend all feasible help and guide us on the Path. If an initiate has any difficulty or doubts, he or she should refer them directly to the Master, as and when needed, instead of discussing with others who are as ignorant as he or she is, and making the confusion worse confounded.[4]

[3] The Master has since requested that the diaries should be sent to Him every *four* months.

[4] But see *How to Develop Receptivity,* pp. 3-4, 15, and 17 for further clarification of this point.

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

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

KIRPAL SINGH

To All Group Leaders

In order to facilitate mailings, both of the magazine and also of special messages, circulars, etc., as received from time to time, and also for possible compilation of a world-wide directory of Master's centers to be published in Sat Sandesh as well as issued separately, the Sat Sandesh staff would greatly appreciate it if all Group Leaders and Representatives of the Master would send us the following information:

1. The Group Leader's name, address, and telephone number.
2. The time and place of Satsang meetings.
3. Information on any additional meetings or activities.
4. The average number of people attending Satsang.

We receive requests constantly from traveling Satsangis, and in many cases are unable to answer them satisfactorily due to lack of good, up-to-date information.

Please send your response to: SAT SANDESH, Sant Bani Ashram, Franklin, N. H. 03235, U. S. A. Your cooperation will be really appreciated, not only by us, but by all those who will benefit. Thank you.

KIRPAL SINGH AND CHRISTIAN INCARNATION

Rev. R. Stephen Drane, Ph.D.

FOR TOO LONG, Christian teachings about Incarnation have been only backward-looking. But today there is an intense search for values and loyalties. Some people develop a conservative reaction in facing current doubts and changes. Others, the majority, seem to reject all interest in older doctrines and dogmas as repressive. Christianity, along with all world religions, is affected by this current cultural turmoil. But hopefully, youth seem today to be searching for practical demonstrations of honesty and truth. It was hopeful for the writer in his own search to become acquainted with the person and teachings of Kirpal Singh, who pointed out demonstrated practical truths where only mental constructs were before in the Christian Western world. This blessing can be helpful to the agnostic, questioning majority of people who have no direction. Through Ruhani Satsang, the meeting of the seekers after personal spiritual truth, it can be shown and known that "God is not dead."

Many people within and without organized religion have given up, i.e., are agnostic by default in facing the frustrations of life. They became bitter when the theories and teachings of the faith were not demonstrated. This is one reason the writer sought work outside the institutional church. He needed to help himself and others in finding integrated self-awareness, before God-awareness could come about. The difficulty for many persons is a lack of a reference point, a guided experience, by which they can patiently learn to know the reality of their own inner spiritual life. Kirpal Singh's booklet, *Man, Know Thyself,* is very important as a beginning, along with his book, *Prayer.* Yet the experience itself, through Master's meditation practice, is the real knowledge.

Secondly, believing Christians usually stop on the surface with social and cultural benefits. Master Kirpal Singh would not criticize such service. He would encourage people to stay and serve. However, emphases for deepening one's spiritual life are often seen as "foreign," even with Western leaders. Glen Clark, Frank Laubach, E. Stanley Jones, Sam Shoemaker, and other Protestant spiritual leaders were often looked upon as "foreign." Yet it seems these and other Christians of great magnitude had an awareness of Jesus as an "Easterner," breaking cultural dogmas. E. Stanley Jones reflected this by beautifully calling his retreats in the United States "ashrams," from the spirit he found serving many years in India.

Another barrier in this search is the human problem of lethargy. The Western world, as all other civilizations, has fallen into the cultural traditions of its immediate past. Pitirim Sorokin, the Russian sociologist at Harvard a few years ago, said we have substituted another religion in the last two hundred

The writer, an ordained minister with the Disciples of Christ, served in three churches before his current work in a mental health center.

years in our "sensate culture": the religion of the "good neighbor." While this serves some social purpose, it does not endure in times of social turmoil as today.

Our institutions of religion, as in Jesus's time and *all* others, aren't able to produce the ideals set forth. Why? How might one renew one's faith in oneself or Christianity? Kirpal Singh has shown that the "human bridge" is the vital one: "Wanted—reformers; not of others but of yourself!" These are powerful words, like Jesus's: "By your fruits you are known." Kirpal Singh, again like Jesus, avoided all special privileges to divine right—the self-imposed hierarchies of false prophets—when he said, "God made man and man made religions." At this point the theoretical and doctrinal traps of religion are avoided, without discarding their eternal truths. No argument ever gave new life. With Kirpal Singh, non-violence would include non-argument. No one can be convinced of a truth if he or she isn't ready.

Confusions always come when theories or doctrines are added as rational attempts to "make sense" out of earlier positive experiences or events. We forget that beliefs are secondary to the experience, the Person, who acted in such a totally loving, extraordinary way. Jesus was called "the Christ" by Peter when he demonstrated such love. Later political allegiance or salvation was granted by the church on this second-hand belief structure with little feeling for and no contact with the living Christ. Now people confuse the man Jesus with the universal Christ power.

From many varied experiences and understandings, the writers in the early church developed the isolated doctrine of Christian Incarnation. The idea was not uniquely Christian, but often misused under political pressures, with a desire for group loyalty. Probably many in the New Testament times believed in reincarnation, as they thought Jesus was Elijah or Elisha returned. Yet, a narrow view has played havoc in the pressures for conversion in the Western world, with some of the greatest persecutions and scapegoating of all history. This persecution has run from Constantine to Hitler in our own times, often in the name of religion, "keeping the faith pure." Incarnation—the *exclusive* Christian application *only* to Jesus—somewhat like segregation in the Southern United States, has had much negative attachment. The West is just now awakening to its karma or guilt, its inability to get contact with its origins in a truly loving, giving, saintly person. Jesus also had to push aside the pious critics: "Why do you call me good (Master)—there is none good but the Father." His most frequently used term for himself was "son of man," yet most Christians overemphasize the later segregating doctrine of the Virgin Birth (implied *only* "Son of God"). Jesus, later in his ministry, told his disciples "greater things than these you shall do," but they did not take him seriously. It seems that men, in their spiritual poverty, reject the inner power possible through the Master Power. In man's rejection of his inner light, he persecutes others through his own blindness.

Some Christian writers have continually sought to overcome the separation of man from God. Some Catholic mystics throughout the centuries have called us to be "little Christs," to "practice the presence of God," to be "imitations of Christ." The recent theologian Paul Tillich talked of *the* Christ in Jesus as "the New Being." He emphasized, experientially, that the New Being was not

one person but an awakening, a rebirth, touching personal life and transforming it wherever and whenever it happened. Tillich sought, with this view, to help Christians to see the transforming experience as primary, the older focus on the historical Jesus as secondary. This was not to discount Jesus, but to find an inner Christ-event today, in order to have a living religion, instead of just historical traditions.

Jesus once was asked by his followers to criticize others for "casting out demons." He refused to criticize any doctors or workers for helping people. Kirpal Singh also refused to criticize other religious leaders in their work. His practical openness in doing one's own work shows the "spirit of Christ" today, a continuing incarnation in the way of the Masters, a "spiritual apostolic succession."

God in his providence is not cheap. He has given great Teachers to sincere seekers through the ages. We are fortunate today to have a living Master. Many Christians, in attempting to be faithful, avoid exploring through other teachers the depths of the living Christ today. This search, within and without, for the Christ, the Master of Life and Death, is not an easy one. It sometimes means criticism from those within strict traditions. Yet this writer feels that the truths shown by Kirpal Singh can do nothing but verify the original teachings of Jesus, within and beneath the overlays of the centuries.

Many people today in the West are seeking a new view of their religion and a vital faith for themselves. Ruhani Satsang offers this experience to all, Christian and secular alike. A Christian should find a special fulfillment, to find the true life through daily struggles, through the death in life—the "being born again" that Jesus spoke of. The ever living Christ spirit is the same.

Jesus would want us to fulfill ourselves, his Kingdom, in acknowledging the Christ, the New Being. We can discover him in spiritual leaders today. Kirpal Singh is a Godman, in the life of this writer. This is not giving up one Master for another. It is finding the Christian gospel fulfilled today in a living person, acknowledging the same God and Father.

Sorrow

The cup is deeper than we dream.
Each time we drink and think
we drain it, we find instead
an ocean in a golden bowl—
Love's fingers tip it up and up and up.

Tracy Leddy

DHARMA

by

Vimla S. Bhagat

THE TERM *dharma* (Pali *dhamma*) is one of those highly technical terms impossible to translate into English. With its varying meanings, depending on the place, time and environs of the people using it, it has acquired a significance as vast as the universe. To the Hindus, it includes rituals of the Vedic age and the traditions in the form of *Dharma Shastras* and *Dharma Sutras* of the later lawgivers like Manu and Yajnavalkya. The Jains regard it as the universal law of non-violence, essentially pure and eternally the same, based on the human principle of "Respect for Life" in all form. The Buddhists take it as self-discipline founded on the "Doctrine of Rightness" for Buddha truly set in motion the Wheel of the Cosmic Law of Rightness that led to *Nirvana* (a sublime state of conscious rest in Omniscience). "Love" is the central theme in the teachings of Jesus: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.* Islam, as the name indicates, stands for "peace" born of faith in the unity of God—peace with God through complete surrender and resignation to His Will, and peace with men as children of one God, making all mankind one. Nanak laid great stress on true living: *Truth is higher than everything, but higher still is true living,* that is, living truly by the Will of God already wrought in the pattern of our being.

Dharma is thus a compendium of ritualistic activities and ethical obligations, as well as ideals and higher values of life, as conceived from time to time for the well-being of mankind, with reference to the different walks and stages of life. It is a socio-religious code of moral conduct which aims at securing for man peace, power, plenty and prosperity here on earth and in the afterlife. In its all-embracing aspect, it is the Law of Life —the law that enriches human life to fullness, making it perfect as our "heavenly Father is perfect," and aiming at the entire transmutation of man into God (*Sat-Chit-Anand,* or all existence, consciousness and bliss).

From this, it becomes abundantly clear that real dharma is not something static, fixed and rigid, settled down and rusting away under its own dead weight. On the contrary, it is essentially a dynamic force and fiery energy that keeps moving from age to age, from time to time and field to field, upholding both the individual and society generally and in special circumstances through all of life. It is the great cementing factor and controlling power that holds together and energizes the various jarring elements in man and society; not to mention the beasts and birds below and the stars and gods above. Nobody can live without it.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUTER DHARMA

For the origin of the outer dharma, we have to go back to the pre-historic past. With the first flicker of awakening in man, there arose in him a desire to evolve principles which would make human existence smooth and worthwhile and finally profitable. It was part of the

natural instinct for self-preservation and survival of the human race.

In course of time, the original nebulous idea evolved into what came to be known as *varn-ashram dharma,* which ordained specific duties and obligations for different classes of people in the social order (which originally was divided according to *varna* or color), and for the different *ashramas* or stages in the life of an individual. Thus it had a two-fold object: the amelioration and uplift of society and of man at the same time.

To preserve the supremacy of their status and to keep the gains of conquest, the early Aryan conquerors of India regarded themselves as superior beings, the favorite of the gods. Why else would the gods give them new lands with rich soil, and fresh pastures of such inestimable value to them? This is why they came to attach great importance to the blue blood in their veins and the fair complexion they possessed, considering themselves, like their contemporaries the Israelites, as the chosen people conducted to a land overflowing with milk and honey. Thus *varna dharma* or a social order based on color came into being, with the fair-colored Aryans exercising superiority over the dark-complected natives. Intermarriage and intercourse between the two was forbidden, so as to keep the purity of their blood intact and continue the grounds on which they based their claim to supremacy.

With the passage of time, the rigidity of the strict Aryan *varna dharma* softened and the color bar gradually began to give way under the pressure of circumstances; with the result that all the fair-colored northerners became dissolved into the mainstream of the new society, adopting one uniform mode of life for both classes.

In order to meet the growing needs of the complex new social order emerging from the fusion of races, it was felt necessary to draw up some sort of division of work in the society, so that each of its natural divisions could effectively and efficiently take up work within their area of competence. The work was divided four ways: (1) the learning of the sacred lore (*Brahm-Vidya*), teaching, and officiating as priests at secular as well as religious ceremonies; (2) the government and defense of the country, with special knowledge in the sciences of *Rajniti* (statecraft) and armament and ordnance (*shaster-vidya*); (3) the economic development of the country, including trade and commerce, agriculture, industry, etc., aimed at production and distribution of wealth (*artha-shastra*). In this way the bulk of the people were divided into (1) *Brahmins,* (2) *Kshatriyas,* and (3) *Vaishyas.* (4) Those people who could not reasonably be fitted into the above scheme were employed as laborers and servants of the upper three classes and formed a separate class of servers or *Sudras.* Each of the classes then had their own code of conduct or class dharma (*svadharm*).

Within this broad-based division of *varna dharma,* there grew up the complex *Jati-vayastha* or caste system on the pattern of trade-guilds: iron-smiths, carpenters, potters, etc. These became hereditary, and the children served as apprentices with their fathers and naturally became proficient. Each of these guilds formulated its own dharma or set of fundamental rules for the conduct of its trade or profession and for regulating family relationships.

Down in the scale of the social order came the individual, the unit in society, who had his own *svadharm* or personal duties at different periods (called *ash-*

rams) of his life. He was supposed to pass through four such stages with the ultimate objective of becoming one undivided whole, an integrated being, complete in himself, a fully developed man. These stages or *ashrams* were: (1) *Brahmcharya,* the stage of a chaste student living in a *Gurukul* (family of students living with a teacher); (2) *Grehasth,* the stage of a householder, bringing up children in holy wedlock, supporting his family, and serving not only his family members but persons in the other stages—students, renunciates, etc. —for they too depended on him for their maintenance. This *Ghehasth ashram* or the householder stage was the pivot round which the entire economic well-being of the society as a whole revolved; (3) *Vanprasth,* a period of retirement from the world, with the householder leaving his family and friends and all worldly ties and possessions, and retiring to some forest retreat or cave. Here he would spend his time in meditation on his Self and God, and put into practice what he had learned as a *Brahmchari.* (4) Last of all came the stage of *Sanyas ashram,* in which the individual, renouncing all, wandered from place to place disseminating the wisdom he had gained in his personal, experimental, quest for Truth. Now, a true *sanyasin,* he shared his truth and knowledge with others. In this way each individual was supposed to end his days on earth, happily and consciously doing his duty to himself and to society. The life of such a one was lived in dharma from birth to death.

The Esoteric or Inner Dharma

"Dharma," says Nanak, "is born of the grace of God and is the proverbial bull (in Hindu mythology) that is harmoniously sustaining the creation." Etymologically, the term *dharma* is derived from the Sanskrit root *dhr,* meaning to hold, bear, support, maintain and preserve. In the metaphysical sense, dharma is the Cosmic Law that sustains, controls, and upholds the universe; and in the physical sense, it works for the general good of each individual soul, leading him on the path of morality toward salvation or freedom from the endless cycle of births and death. These are just two aspects of the same life-force or Spirit and Power of God that works both in individuals and in nature. Samuel Taylor Coleridge has given expression to this grand truth: *O! the one life within us and abroad,/Which meets all motion and becomes its soul,/A light in sound, a sound-like power in light, /Rhythm in all thought, and joyance everywhere.*

Looked at from this angle, dharma is quite distinct from and far above the institutionalized religious and social beliefs and faiths, which are based on feelings, emotions and inferences. The outer dharma does serve a very useful purpose, which cannot be denied. It keeps the various social orders from sliding into corruption, and shows us the elementary but necessary steps on the God-way, providing us with a basis for the life of the spirit.

The Spirit and Power of God is the dharma of God. God in His own dharma created man in His own image and endowed him with His own life-breath. The entire universe is but a manifestation of the Will of God which is ceaselessly working to fulfill His purpose and plan. The different religions are the outcome of human endeavors to find the secret of the life-principle in all that is. The founders of all the religions did, in varying degrees, get an insight into this mysterious Power and recorded their experiences for our guidance. So long

as they lived, they gave individual souls practical contact with the saving lifelines within (the dharma of God or the Holy Word).

The religious dogmas and doctrines contained in the scriptural texts are often elaborate commentaries on the truths revealed by God to sages and seers; who in their turn gave a practical demonstration of *Evam Brahm* (this is Brahm) to their close associates and disciples. God is spirit and can only be worshiped in spirit. The Self in man is also of the Spirit of God: We live, move and have our very being in God and His dharma within and without us.

Dharma born of the grace of God is essentially divine, while the religions or outer dharma are but offshoots spreading from the great wish-yielding tree (*Kalp-briksh*) of real dharma. They are built round one or another aspect of the eternal dharma and are but imperfect attempts to limit the Limitless in the language of the people. The Word of the Wordless cannot be expressed in words. His law is unwritten and His language unspoken. This is transcendental dharma, though at the same time it is all-pervasive and all-permeating. The divine ground provided by dharma is the only firm ground on which our lives can be built and come to fruition, so that we may truly become *dharma-putra* (the son of dharma) and *dharma-atma* (a soul ingrained in dharma). It is only on getting the second birth, the birth of the spirit (*duai-janma*) that one becomes truly begotten of God.

The dharma of God is not only inherent in life, it *is* life. Being and Becoming are but two different states of the one Reality. The Spirit and Power of God can no more be separated from God than the rays of the sun from the sun. The sun may be momentarily darkened by the clouds, but it cannot be hid forever; and the clouds cannot help reflecting the silver lining around their periphery.

This transcendental dharma is the primordial expression of God in the form of Sound and Light (the Audible Life Stream). As it is the oldest of all, since time itself owes its origin to it, it is known as *puratan-dharma.* The *yuga-dharma* or dharma of the age came into being in time and pertains only to the specific time cycle it relates to. Again, as the transcendental dharma is essentially pure and eternally the same with no variableness, it is called *sanatan-dharma,* meaning the eternal and unchangeable in nature. And closely associated with this is *manav-dharma,* of which we have had glimpses above, for the guidance of man as man, as taught by the prophets of the various religions. *Manav-dharma* is built around one or another attribute of Godhead, so that the common man may live in peace and concord and lead a healthy-minded, harmonious life until such a time that a theocentric Saint or perfect Master rooted in Truth (*Sant Satguru*) comes on the scene to impart practical training in the inner Path.

Manav-dharma itself has two phases corresponding to the dual nature of man: the sensuous self and the rational self, each contending for mastery. Man in relation to society is just a unit; but his relation to God is through his divine center. The first part of *manav-dharma* tries to humanize the animal in man and the second part tries to divinize the human in him. The first part of the process consists of the moral precepts as found in all scriptures. These are sometimes given negatively, as Moses did in the Ten Commandments, with the emphasis on "Thou shalt not" this or that;

sometimes positively as done by Christ in his beatitudes. Patanjali, the reputed author of the *Yoga Sutras,* paid equal attention, in his exposition of Ashtang Yoga, to both methods by separately listing *yamas* (prohibitions) on the one hand and *niyamas* (observances) on the other. It is after successfully passing through these strict disciplines that one becomes qualified to undertake the higher Path, the path Godward—the transcendental dharma.

There is no religion higher than Truth, and if it is understood and practiced, one can have the Kingdom of God right here on earth. All that one needs to practice is the presence of the living God within. *The Kingdom of God cometh not by observation . . . for behold, the Kingdom of God is within you.* And once this is realized and experienced in the holy mountain of God—the mount of transfiguration in the body—the entire outlook is changed. The very world which now appears to be bristling with imperfections and contradictions will put on a divine mantle and appear as the veritable abode of God, with Him dwelling therein.

The inner perceptual knowledge needs no other proof. Seeing is believing; and belief brings conviction (awakened consciousness) and conviction brings faith (reliance and trust founded on personal authority) which no sensuous storms can shake. "True knowledge is an action of the soul independent of the senses." The Reality or real life is seen to the full only when one rises above the consciousness of the body and all the bodily adjuncts. The experience of Truth, or true dharma, comes only "when the senses are subdued, the mind is at rest and the intellect wavers not," say the sacred texts. In a poetic vein, Milton asserts: *The divine philosophy is musical as Apollo's lute,/And a perpetual feast of nectared sweet.* This is learning real dharma at its roots. Another poet, Wordsworth, speaks of it: *It is an ever active principle; however removed/From senses and observation.* It is a direct experience of the knowledge of God, "by knowing which all else becomes known and nothing remains to be known," affirm the Upanishads. "Whosoever has found himself, can never again lose anything in the world. He who has grasped the human in himself, understands all mankind"—Stefan Zweig. All this and much more comes easily within reach, when one, by transhumanizing the human in him, truly becomes a living spirit, for in truth it is the Spirit which alone proceeds Godward. "It is by the practice of God that one comes closer to dharma (the Will of God)," says Nanak.

Before closing, it may be worthwhile to consider dharma in relation to *karma,* another extremely subtle term. By the compulsive force of the actions set in motion in the distant past, long since forgotten, we are being influenced in the living present. The law of karma—"as you sow, so shall you reap"—is inexorable in its operation and keeps every creature in its iron grip. The wheel of life remains in perpetual motion because of the karmic momentum; and under its influence some are born high, some low, some rich and some poor, and everyone has to work out his destiny, whatever it may be. But it is neither birth nor caste nor vocation that determines the man and his intrinsic worth. It is given to man to be able to rise above the magnetic field of karma and contact the dharma, the liberating Power of God. As karma binds the *jiva* or embodied soul, dharma liberates. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall

make you free," is the cosmic law of transcendental dharma. "To know the true God truly" is the real and true dharma, the acme of perfection and the goal of life. And, *The highest religion is to rise to universal brotherhood,/Aye, to consider all creatures your equals,* affirms Nanak. Dharma is Truth and Truth is dharma: dharma is inherent in Truth and Truth works through dharma. When one rightly practices dharma while living on the earth plane, one becomes a *jivan-mukta* or self-fulfilled and self-illumined being, eternally free.

My *Tabernacle*

My mind is a temple of the Divine
More surely than any man-made edifice:
Here, I await alone, the coming of the Lord,
Here I await the all-surpassing Bliss.

First, I must empty the mind of mundane clutter
And sweep it clean of passion's sordid stain,
And sternly banish imagination's trash,
Preparing the space which is the Lord's domain.

Then I must still the voices of the world,
And hush my own loquacious inner speech—
That I may hear the Master's quiet voice
And in the silence learn what He may teach.

My tabernacle awaits, serene and tranquil,
The infusion and the plenitude of Grace:
Here must I consecrate myself to Him
Who is the Liberator of our race.

The mental screen is erased and free of faces,
Colors, images and places: undeterred
By ritual—in the formless, voiceless dark—
I await the Light that marks the coming of the Word.

Out of the sombre dark, intense luminosity;
Out of the silence, an esoteric call;
Out of the solitude, a nameless wonder;
Out of the barren nothingness—the All.

Carmen Blumenkron

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Compiled by Robert Reifler

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Announcement

The South African Satsang has published an edition of Dona G. Kelley's "Scientific Nutrition & Cookbook" for distribution to those living outside North America. Anyone from South America, Europe, Africa, etc., desiring a copy of this book may write

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