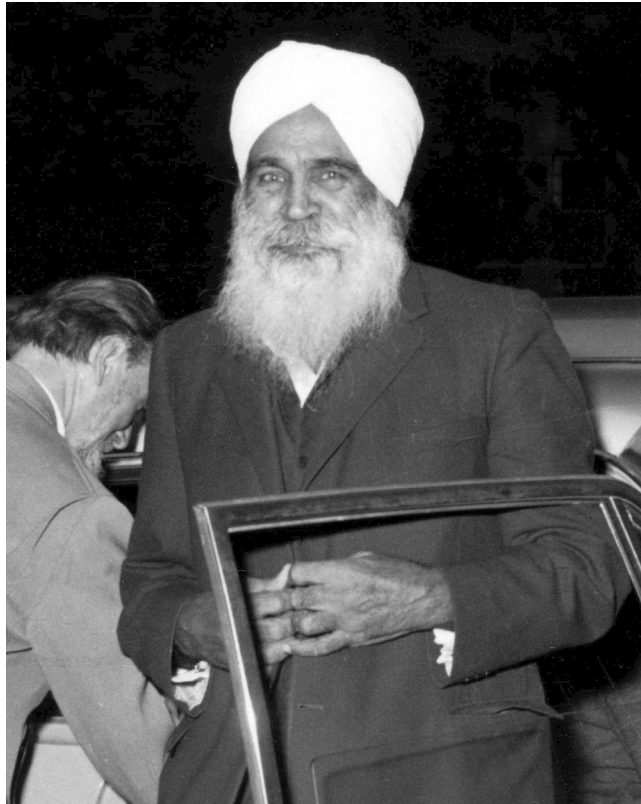


Never Dance to the World's Tune

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When the Masters come to the world and see its condition, great pity swells in their hearts. They wonder, "What is the world doing?" for they can stand aside from the activities of worldliness, and they see that truth is being ignored and untrue things are accepted as the truth. When a lie is repeated ten times or more, people begin to accept it as being true; men drift away into iniquity just through witnessing the bad actions of others.



There is a certain story which is illustrative of how easily a man can be influenced and blindly follow the lead of others. A farmer was returning home from his fields with his head uncovered, perspiring on account of the hot season. According to tradition in those days, going with one's head uncovered showed that something tragic had happened, like a death, etc. So when the farmer's family saw him approaching the house with a bare head, perspiring, and with disheveled hair, they jumped to the conclusion that someone had died, and immediately commenced lamenting and beating their breasts in the usual customary manner. The farmer saw his relatives mourning, and without hesitation joined in the demonstration of woe. But after a short time, his curiosity got the better of him and he asked someone, "Can you tell me who has died?"

The person was astounded and explained that, seeing his bare head, they had thought the farmer had brought news of death.

This story is very descriptive of the world's condition. Man is easily influenced, and does not turn his head in the direction of the Truth. Farid Sahib says, *The whole world is sounding, and you are also dancing with it.* Without thinking for themselves, people agree or go along with anything. Do you know anyone who does not? *He does not become the echo, on whom the hand of Allah rests.* These are God's children, who look to the Truth, and can see what is really happening. They do not drift, nor do they echo along with the worldly people, but they try to discover what the truth is behind everything. So who is wise in this world? He who searches for the why and the wherefore of things, thereby escaping the pitfalls. For those who play along with the world's tune, and follow that tune, only unhappiness can result. The Masters have no selfish motives, so they speak the truth only — and that with love.

In India, *Divali Day* (the Indian festival of lights) is celebrated by lighting candles. The people usually gamble, and if you ask them why, they will tell you that by gambling on that day our births and deaths will cease. There *is* a kind of gambling that finishes up the incarnations, but what kind of gambling it is, very few really know. The true gambling lies in sacrificing all other things — body and its environments — for the purpose of enkindling the Light within.

Being ignorant of the true gambling, they started outer gambling instead; and the people blindly follow them, without going into the truth of it. He who will see the Light within withdraws his attention from the outgoing faculties and outer objects. Even in the field of spiritual matters, everyone is singing the name of God on top notes — no one stops to think exactly what those names stand for. Every religion contains the same basic teachings in the various languages: that is, in Naam, Word, etc., lies salvation, and not in any other teaching. But unfortunately people follow the outer practice of repetition of names of God and lighting candles, considering it to be the beginning and the end.

All religions encourage the reading of holy scriptures — that is to understand the subject, the theory; it is not necessary to make a lot of noise by singing and playing tunes to the words. The words are there to give thought to the subject. *Very few will think on the words of the hymn, or what they denote.* People imagine that merely reading out the words, parrot-like, is enough. Sometimes they shout the words at the tops of their voices, and even clap the hands and read — the more noise, the happier they are. But if the words were read like this for one hundred years without a pause, it would be of little avail. In the *Shrimad Bhagavat* it says that God cannot be realized just by reading the Vedas. Guru Nanak has said, *To read year by year, month by month, with intense yearning while the breath lasts; O Nanak, this avails nothing unless the written word is lived.* Reading alone is valueless; the teaching must be followed.

The greatest aspiration of human life is to realize God: the God which expressed Himself into Creation, the Maker of *Khand* and *Brahmand* (astral and causal planes), the Sustainer of all things. In the language of the Saints, that God expressed is called *Naam*, through which, they say, the soul can gain salvation, irrespective of religion. The Ultimate or Absolute Lord is Nameless, but that which came into expression is called Naam, or Shabd, or Word — the God-into-Expression Power, which is not separate from His creation. *World is the room of Truth, and Truth resides therein.* If the scriptures are read for long enough, it may be possible to gain some power of concentration and thereby perform small "miracles"; but there is no true awareness in this.

Read one hymn only and try to understand it thoroughly. Get the full meaning of the words, for those words have been spoken by one who has realized the Truth. *Listen to the Master's true words; He speaks of what he sees.* And to have the true import of what is written, one should get the interpretation from someone who has taken at least one step toward the Truth. Otherwise, the learned people will present the subject from an intellectual level, each with a different explanation. This is why so many different schools of thought have been established in the world. Reading the scriptures is

like the mother's lap to a child; just the beginning of understanding that which they give out.

I was born in a Sikh family, and as a small boy I would read the holy *Granth Sahib*. I would read one hymn only, and write it down as a day's lesson. All day I would think on the words, and try to discover their meaning. No doubt the reservoir of the heart must be emptied, but reading only with the tongue, while the mind is still wrapped in the world, has no value. However, I would say that reading the holy words is good, though not doing anything; but to read, think, understand, and finally have contact with the God mentioned therein will bring salvation. Neither following customs nor the performance of rituals brings salvation — the Lord can only be realized by coming in contact with that for which these customs and rituals stand.

The Masters give accounts in the books of their experiences: the bliss they enjoyed when they came in contact with God, the things that helped them on the way, and what was detrimental. True understanding of the writings will naturally encourage one to discard those traits which are stopping progress, and to adopt those qualities which serve to increase it. Outer actions of devotion are not rewarding where the subject of Spirituality is concerned. There have always been Masters of Truth in the world, who give some experience, a contact with the Truth, by withdrawing the attention and raising it above senses and outgoing faculties. *While the senses are not controlled, the mind and intellect not stilled, the soul cannot open the inner eye to see the Manifestation of God.*

Now, what about prayer and rites? The purpose behind them is to develop faith and devotion. The rite must be performed with all respect in the heart. If one goes to a temple or church to wait upon the Lord, one should go all alone, and not think of others around: you should be alone with Him. God is one, and alone, and He desires that we should go to Him all alone, with intellect stilled.

Unfortunately, these prayers and rites are usually performed with the mind on other things. Something that is done daily

becomes a habit, and habit turns into nature. Surdas Ji, a great devotee of God, says, *The steps are going forward but the mind is dragging backward*. It is our habit to follow the mind, and if the mind is not on devotion, there will be no benefit derived therefrom. Have you ever seen the white stork, standing motionless, concentrating for fish, just as if in deep meditation? What a wonderful single-pointed attention! — But upon what? To swallow a fish! — Outwardly he shows the world he is a great mahatma, but his mind is on food.

I have nothing against customs and rites, for they prepare the ground for something higher: they beget good karmas, will bear good fruit. But by what means is salvation attained? By that process which all holy books give out to the world. The means to salvation is the very Soul of one's soul; and it is called *Naam*. What indication is there that one has contacted Naam? *By repeating the Naam, the Light of millions of suns will manifest*. In the Naam is the Light, and Light is the form of God, and in that Light there is Sound — *Udgit, Nad*, the Music of the Spheres, and so on. There is no benefit in nodding one's head in pretense of intoxication and saying emptily, "There is Light, there is Sound" if one has never seen or heard them. Some people light a lamp and wave it around their heads. This outer ritual holds the meaning that there is God's Light within, but they never see the Light. Do not lose sight of the true purpose for which they stand.

Divali day is celebrated in sweet remembrance of important past events: Mahavira Swami got Nirvana on this day, and Swami Dayanand got illumination on this day. Lord Rama returned to his kingdom after fourteen years of banishment, and his people lit millions of lamps in celebration. Divali was the day that Guru Har Gobind returned to Amritsar after fourteen years of imprisonment in Gwalior. Swami Ram Tirath was born on Divali day and renounced the world on Divali day. This is all very auspicious, so brother should meet brother, and all differences in the heart should be ironed out. The true meaning behind the Festival of Lights should be practiced, and that is to enkindle the light, the true Light of the Lord, within. On this day the people clean the house, throw out all the worn-out unwanted things, whitewash the walls, and light the lamps and candles; but this is outer Divali. Truly speaking,

Divali will be fruitful if the inner Light is lighted. When the Light is lit inside, that is an indication of the manifestation of God. This is achieved only when all the dirt and filth in the heart is washed away.

The heart is soiled with the dirt of the ages, and to remove the dirt, one should first observe *ahimsa* (non-violence), so as not to add any more to it. *Ahimsa is the greatest virtue*. It is the highest virtue never to think ill of anyone, actually in thought, speech, and action. Secondly, one should avoid the company of those who have low traits. If a person has low traits, you will be influenced by them; keeping his company will prevent the Light from shining within you. So, one should imbibe first, the virtues of Truth. Lies, cheating, deceit, hypocrisy, showing something different on the face than whatever is in the heart — these things increase the corruption inside. Keep these facts in mind, for he who has no ill will against anyone will say what is true. His tongue will be sweet because he has no intention to hurt anyone's feelings, but rather speaks frankly for the sake of right understanding.

Who speaks the truth without fear? — Either an established enemy or a true friend, although the enemy may make a mountain out of a molehill, because his intentions are dishonorable and he exaggerates. A true friend will never broadcast one's shortcomings, but with love will try to explain where you are going wrong, with your interests at heart. Imbibe the virtues of truth, and with love encourage better understanding in others. And, what is more important, do not fail in your own good intentions and principles because of hearsay or rumors. Some tongues are led by selfish motives with little respect for truth. There is purpose behind everything, which may be obvious or hidden. Do not, therefore, be a puppet to the tunes played by others; you will do harm to yourself.

His heart becomes clean who does not indulge in vice, bad habits, deceit, hypocrisy, etc., and leads a chaste life in thought, speech and actions. We aim to realize God, that God which is in all beings, whom all worship as One, though He may be given many different names. He is the great Controlling Power which keeps all souls in the body; which,

when He withdraws, we also must leave. When a person truly understands these facts, how can the question of hatred for others arise? Whom will one hate? Out of right understanding, true thoughts and actions develop and follow naturally. God is in everyone — if you know that someone is unhappy or in need, go and help them. If they are hungry or thirsty, share whatever you have. Because of God, do service to His children. This does not mean bondage, but rather it is a helping factor. Bondage lies in forgetting Him and tying oneself to the world and its environments.

On the day of Divali you will find that the atmosphere in the home changes for the better, due to the increased devotion, the extra cleanliness, the added fragrance of incense and burning of lamps and candles — all done with devoted attitude of mind. There is some radiation in this, but the real remedy for cutting out all evil propensities from the mind is to enkindle the Light within you.

I have kept no sect here (in Sawan Ashram) — nor will any be started at any time. You should stay in your own social bodies and religions, speak your own languages, and keep your own customs, apparel, emblems and identifying labels. All religions demand an ethical and righteous way of life. *Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.* It is also said, *Clean the core of your heart for the Arrival; Sweep all impressions away so that He may sit there.* That heart is truly clean in which no other thought remains save that of the Lord. You may ask, "How can we do this while we are in the world?" It is written in the Gita, *He who sees everyone in Me, and Me in everyone, is My most loved one.* If you have children, or father, mother, wife, husband, see the Light of God in them. He has united you in this relationship, not merely for an outer bond but to see and serve God in them. If you do so, there will be no bondage in your relationships. Bondage occurs only when the I-hood steps in and the Lord is forgotten. So you can do all the world's work, but live like a compass whose needle always points in one direction.

Keep your attention on the Lord, for if the direction changes, then? *The Giver is forgotten, the gifts become loved, and miserable Man forgets the approaching death.* Man is fully

enwrapped in the world — he is all "me and mine," and wherever "me and mine" are, there rules Illusion. "Me and mine" have some bearing on one's life, but the Lord Himself has arranged it, and when everything is seen in the correct perspective there will be no binding effects. If the children make mistakes, appeal to their finer instincts, with love and careful understanding. Losing one's temper, shouting, and taking violent action will only confuse them; they will not know what they have done wrong. Take time to explain, even three or four times, and it will eventually have effect.

This necessity of cleaning the heart has been advised in all religions. You will find it in the *Sermon on the Mount*, in Buddha's *Eight-fold Path*, and in other teachings. But we deceive ourselves by sprinkling a little fragrance on our pile of dirt; how will the smell leave like this? We would like to dye our filthy clothes, but how will the color take? Even with a little color, a clean cloth will dye beautifully. If a room is perfectly clean, a single flower will fill its atmosphere with refreshing fragrance. Even if the disciple has been given the experience and continues the practice but does not make good progress, you will find that this very thing is at the root of the trouble.

Lighting the lamp and ringing the bell as an empty religious custom, though performed up to one million years, will remain an empty religious custom. All religious rites remain in this category, though good actions may be earned which will bear the fruit of reward, if they are performed with sincerity of thought. But there is no salvation in this. Kabir Sahib says, *In the palace of silence, light the lamp*. The body itself is the true temple of the Lord, in which the Light of God is shimmering, and in that Light the Sound is vibrating. Masters speak of this in various terms: Intrinsic Hearing (Buddha), Truth clothed in Light (Pythagoras), the Unstruck Fire (Zoroaster), the Music of the Spheres, etc. So even if one could remember every known scripture by heart and could fill the memory with the words, but yet without lighting the Light inside and hearing the Sound, all this knowledge is bearing no real fruit.

Light and Sound are the direct way back to Absolute God. They are like two electric lifts which will take us to that place from whence they emanate. Learn the basic teaching of your own

religion properly and you will find it all starts from here. It was due purely to climatic variations that different customs and rites were adopted, but basically it is all very simple and clear, so do not remain under any misapprehension. Blessed is each religion, and blessed is each emblem or symbol, so remain wherever God has placed you; He cannot be realized just by changing one's outer form of religion. *The garb was changed many times, resulting in misery to the body; You have to bear the brunt of all that!* It is man that must change, not the religion.

The Muslims do not commence their *namaz* (prayer) without doing *vazu*, which is washing the hands, feet and face with water or sand. There is a very definite meaning behind this, which is to wash oneself away from the world and its affairs; then one may stand in attendance at the court of the Lord. The Muslim prophets say that if you have not washed your hands of the world you have no right to sit in the remembrance of God. In such unwashed attitude there would be no true *namaz*. *Mind was given elsewhere, body was in the Sadhu's company; Kabir says, how can an unbleached cloth be dyed?*

The thoughts may not necessarily be bad, but do not forget your aim, which is to realize God. Relationships and property, etc., were given to man to help him achieve this end. If the inner Light has not been lit and one has not seen that the Lord is the Doer and Operator of all this machinery of body and world, then one's main task has not been accomplished. *While he thinks he is the doer, he will continue in the womb-cycle.* Lord Krishna has said, *Good and bad karmas both bind the soul, as chains of gold and iron.*

Salvation consists solely of the soul being rejoined to the Lord. To achieve this, the mind must be stilled. If the mind is not stilled, the attention constantly wanders outward and becomes the image of the body and the world; day and night this impregnation of *sanskaras* (impressions in the mind) continues. The heart's reservoir overflows with these impressions — even the nightly dreams are full of them. The meeting with the Lord is very far from those who stay in such a condition.

The same Light of God is in all creatures — animals, birds, fish, etc. — so one should love God and love also all creation, for He is in all. This constitutes a true way of celebrating Divali. You may do it today, or tomorrow, or next year, in ten years' time, or later on in life, or you can take millions of births to do it, but this very work will have to be done sooner or later. The learned and illiterate alike must be able to control the attention — if the attention is not feeding the senses, the senses remain out of action. This has been proved in an ordinary way by a person keeping his attention fully concentrated upon a certain thing or task; he will not be aware of anyone speaking to him or calling him.

In truth, everything is within you, and you are the Light. He is the Greater Light, and you the smaller. After you have been cleaned free from all dirt, you will see the Light, and ultimately be absorbed into the Greater Light, for this is the law of Nature: that everything is drawn to its own kind. In this way, you will become one — in Him. If on Divali day you enkindle the Light within you, then I congratulate you; otherwise your "house" is in darkness. As Kabir Sahib says, *In the silent palace of the void, light the lamp.*

When you close your eyes there is darkness, but when the Light is seen, then the inner journey starts; first to rise above the physical into the astral plane where the Light will become stronger. In the causal plane it will be yet stronger, and from then onward the Light is so strong as to be incomparable with millions of suns and moons. A certain *pandit* (Vedic scholar) came here recently and read to me a section from the *Yajur Veda* which mentioned these very things I am now telling you about. Brothers, there *is* Light within you, and there is also Sound within. In the *Gurbani*, we have, *There is Light within, and the Everlasting Music reverberating therefrom.* The *Chandogya Upanishad* gives the same information. It is a real thing, and if you have received this gift — in *any* religion — know that you have received the means to salvation.

The Muslim Fakirs also say that within man the *Kalam-i-Kadim* is vibrating, but we are imprisoned in the body and alas do not hear it. Shamas Tabrez Sahib says, *Every minute One Voice is*

coming to my soul from the Lord's direction. What kind of Voice is this? It is said to be like an ordinary voice, but alas we cannot hear it. There is an inner eye, which if open can see the Light of God. Lord Krishna has said, *You cannot see Me with these eyes of flesh and blood, but only through that Divine Eye with which I have blessed you.* Guru Nanak Sahib similarly says, *O Nanak, that eye is different through which the Lord is seen.* Everyone has got this eye — it is called the Third Eye, the Single Eye, the Shiv Netra. *If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.* And where is this eye? *Fix your attention above the outgoing faculties, where even Mahesh is meditating.* Even Lord Shiva (*Mahesh*) is meditating upon that same invisible place, and that is why we sometimes call it the *Shiv Netra* — Shiva's Eye.

Excuse me, but performing customs and rites and distributing parshad is not a true way of celebrating a Divali festival. Our condition in this respect can be likened to the story of the camel which thrust its nose into its master's tent on a cold night. It gradually edged farther until its head and neck were inside, and then farther until half its body was in the tent. Finally through steadily inching its way, the camel took over the tent and its master had to go outside in the cold. Likewise, these customs and rituals of ours will throw out the Truth completely if we are not careful enough to find the right understanding. Right understanding is a noble factor — it prepares the ground for the Truth itself. Perform all rites, customs and prayers with right understanding and they will all be acceptable at the Lord's feet. Even if you do it as a gymnastic exercise, yet at least there is hope for you in the future.

We cry every day that communism is increasing (atheism), but what is the condition of our own homes? We rise in the morning, drink tea, do this and that, read the newspaper, and then we have to eat something. Someone goes to the office, someone else to the shop, etc. Is there a routine whereby all members of the family sit in the remembrance of the Lord every morning, for even one hour, or half an hour? There is nothing like this. In Punjabi there is a saying that, if the child is spoiled while in his diapers, he will never right himself. Well, people are crying about the communists outside, but

communists are being created in our own homes. Our children have no knowledge of even the most basic teachings of spirituality — many of the parents do not know them. We worry about possessing things and being happy — we are concerned that our children should be educated — these things are all right, but we are ignoring the most useful part of their upbringing.

I told the people in the West also, that every home should have a church — a temple, a gurudwara, or mosque — call it what you will; then morning and evening the whole family, big and small, should sit down in remembrance of God. The children's lives will change, and yours also. Example is always better than precept, and seeing you doing what is right, the children will copy you. We are in fact responsible for the coming generation's character, and if we will not change, how can we expect that character to be decent and upright? Stop for a while wherever you are, and review your own situation. Search for the true meanings hidden behind all things, and make sure you have got the right understanding. Up to now, most of our life has been lived in a very artificial manner, and if we have gained nothing real thereby, then what is the use? Farid Sahib has warned us that, *The whole world is sounding, and you are also dancing with it*. Do not go on blindly following what others do without knowing the reasons. What can be achieved from such actions? I am not trying to belittle anything, but rather am trying to help you understand from the right perspective.

Seeing Him, all our durmath (misconception) is finished; He is our True Friend. This is the true way to banish all wrong thinking and establish right understanding. The company of such a true friend is called *Satsang*. By searching the whole world you will find these true friends, which are very rare. So be wise, take in the Truth and throw out untruth. It is written in the *Upanishads, Lead me from the unreal to the real, from darkness to light*. It is no new teaching, and whatever company you keep, you will take on the same color. There are many formations in the world, but making formations is not the Masters' purpose or mission. They were made after the advent of each Master, without whom, as a matter of course, stagnation set in, from which bad smells arose. The result of

all this was misery upon misery. There is no exaggeration in a Master's words — he will tell you exactly what is what.

From this lowly level, we cannot see the Absolute God, but that same God came into expression in creation and is permeating throughout, in the form of Light, in which the *Akhand Kirtan* (Perpetual Song), or *Nad*, or *Udgit*, is vibrating. All philosophy deals merely with theories, but mysticism deals with direct contact with Reality: the God-into-Expression Power. But that can only be contacted when one rises above the senses, which can be done only in the human form. Where does our attention finally reach? To that place from where the Sound is coming — the Ultimate Source. Some people practice the path of Light only, but on that path the soul finds itself surrounded and cannot discover the way out. Here, the path of the Sound is most necessary. The various holy scriptures have been explained in detail countless times, but no one can explain the Sound; it is beyond description or explanation. Anything which is above the intellect cannot be explained — it can be contacted only. Furthermore, it will be one thing; it has eternally been one, and cannot be made into two or more. That is why those realized souls who are in direct contact with the Sound all speak of it similarly.

So, on this Divali Day, I would like to impress upon you particularly to give up thinking ill of others. *While you do not make the enemy your friend, you will have no peace within.* Your sleep state will be full of restless dreams. If anyone thinks or speaks of you in an aggressive way, do not follow his example, otherwise his very thoughts will react upon you. If a wave of water hits a hard surface, it will bounce back, but if it strikes something resilient, it will be absorbed, like the action of a sponge, and there will be no violent reaction. *One curse is given, but on its return becomes many.* — If it is not returned, then? — *It was one, and remained one.* Again we remember Farid Sahib saying, *The whole world is sounding, and you are also dancing with it.*

It is better, with a cool head, to try and read between the lines to discover why the person is acting so antagonistically, and then take action accordingly. You will save yourself from degradation this way. To think or speak of a person badly, to

tell lies or cheat, to be hypocritical, indulging in backbiting and other ill-becoming traits — these are all degrading to the soul. Keep your hearts pure, and as God is in everyone, try to see only the best in all. Whatever duties have been given to you by God, perform them with love, and if others are shirking their duties, appeal to them with love, and pray for their better understanding. Then, leave them to the Lord. If we always remember that the God we worship is in all men, we would not even allow a single brother to go hungry.

There was once a devotee who worshiped the Lord very faithfully, and one day he prayed, "O God, please give me your darshan." God replied to him, "All right, I will come to you." The devotee started preparing for the Lord's arrival with great enthusiasm, cleaning his house spotlessly, making a specially comfortable seat decorated with flowers for Him to rest on, and preparing many different delicious delicacies for the Lord's refreshment. When all was ready, he sat at the door awaiting God's arrival. From morning until night he did not leave the door; but the Lord did not come. An old man in very ragged clothes passed by, and in passing, called out, "Brother, I am very hungry, could you give me just one piece of bread?" The devotee was so engrossed in expectantly awaiting the Lord's arrival that he totally ignored the old man, who went away hungry. In the depth of night, the devotee spoke to the Lord in meditation, asking Him why He had not come, as promised. God said, "Why, I came to you, and I asked you for food, but you gave me nothing."

So we never know in what form God will visit us. Whatever our attitude in approaching the Lord, so will be our reward. Whatever the desire, that will be fulfilled. If, for instance, you think of this as a place of Truth (*Satsang*) then leave all worldly thoughts when entering. This more elevated attitude of mind will enable you to absorb the radiation therein, from which you will be greatly uplifted. When you fully understand what it is you are receiving and also make it a part of your everyday life, most decidedly you will have salvation. However, *If you see the Satguru as the world sees him, there is no salvation in this — If you do not love the Satguru's Shabd.* There are various attitudes of regard toward the Satguru, and accordingly does each man receive. If he is met with faith and

respect in the heart, receptivity develops, and the radiation is absorbed.

I have led a householder's life. You also should live in the world, but there is no need to add to its degradation, and to your own. Women in the home should maintain it properly with cleanliness and tidy habits, look after the children with interest, and serve their husbands wholeheartedly. This is also a *dharma* (principle of righteous living). To him whose home is heaven, the whole world is heaven. How can anyone hope to realize the Lord if they declare they serve Him and ignore the needs of others? Does it mean that we dislike God in some forms?

Those personalities who are Truth personified never advise the seekers to leave their hearths and homes to take up vigil in the jungles and lonely places. This is not at all necessary. *When you meet a complete Satguru, competent is his method; Laughing, playing, eating, wearing, you will gain salvation by following him.* It is not a matter of leaving the condition wherein God has placed you; there is no need to change your location, but simply change your angle of vision. Bow down to the Satguru's words, not his body only, or you will remain very far away — from him and from your aim.

There is a very explanatory example of obedience during the life of Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru of the Sikhs. There was a Jat farmer by the name of Bela, who came to Guru Gobind Singh and said, "I wish to serve you." The Guru asked him what he could do, and Bela replied that he knew how to look after horses. The use of horses was extensive and common in those days, and so the Guru gave Bela the service. He worked diligently and with love, and even the Guru saw the difference in the horses' condition, and he asked, "Who is taking care of the horses these days?" He was told that Bela was the groom, and the Guru sent for him, congratulated him, and told him how pleased he was with his service. In further token of his pleasure, the Guru said, "Come to me daily, and I will give you one stanza from the *Jap Ji Sahib*, to learn and digest."

So each morning, Bela would go to the Master and receive his lesson, and then spend the whole day repeating the words with full concentration on his Master, while doing his work in the stables. One day Guru Gobind Singh decided to leave early on some urgent work, and was about to gallop away when Bela ran up to the Guru and cried, "But what about my lesson?" The Guru replied, "O brother Bela, do you not see the time or opportunity?" and he galloped off.

Brother Bela accepted what the Guru had said without question in his heart, and in all sincerity started learning the words with full attention — *O brother Bela, do you not see the time or opportunity?* — Guru Gobind Singh's attention had been so fierce when uttering these words that the full force of it went deep into them. The result was that on repeating them, Bela began to go into *samadhi* (began to leave the body).

One of the senior disciples, who had long been chief reader of the *Guru Granth Sahib* and was the Guru's constant companion, even in the fighting during the war, was a very learned man and would not only read but explain the words and their meaning. On hearing that Bela had gone into *samadhi*, he went to the Master and said, "Maharaj, there is injustice in your court, for this Jat Bela who arrived here only a few days ago and who is an illiterate and understands nothing, has gone into deep *samadhi*; whereas we who are with you constantly even in the wars, have sacrificed our lives and lived under terrible conditions, and have studied the books for countless hours, and yet we cannot meditate as successfully as this man."

Do you understand what this all means? It is a question of the person's attitude of mind. If you do not absorb the teachings practically into your very lives, you will gain nothing. It is not achieved by dancing and jumping around (professing devotion outwardly). Some people go as far as to say, "The Master came from *Sat Lok* and gave me fruit as a *parshad*." This type of people is only interested in impressing others — but this is how we can drift away from the Truth. See what is right with your own eyes, and do not be led astray by the prattlings of others. This is what Farid Sahib means when he talks of the world dancing to its own tune. He says further, *He does not*

dance who takes the Lord's protection. When you get something, be content with what you have received, and practice it properly so that it may increase. If you can find anything better than what you have been given, then I will also go with you. Our Hazur used to say, "Whatever I had, I have given you; if you find anything better, you are welcome to take it, and let me know that I may also benefit."

So truly celebrating Divali does not lie in getting parshad or any outer action, but rather in taking the Truth of Divali into yourself and practicing it. You will see that your life will change in a matter of months. If up to now you have not done this, and are not going to do it, you will remain in darkness. If you have done something and have received a little Light, but do not devote your full attention and do not practice it daily in all expressions of life, you will not increase whatever you have. I will now take a short hymn of Guru Ram Das Ji, on the subject of Divali — how to light the lamps of Divali within you. *To realize God, we have sold our body to a Complete Master.*

The words are very clear; but why a Complete Master? — Because today the world is full of people who are not what they profess to be. Who in fact is the Guru? The God Himself is the Guru. When Guru Nanak Sahib was asked about this, he said, *Shabd is the Guru, and the surat (attention) is the disciple.* In other words, that God Power which came into expression is my Guru. Kabir Sahib was asked where his Guru lived, and he replied,

*My Guru resides in the gaggan (seat of the soul), and the disciple in this body;
When the surat and Shabd meet, there will be no separation.*

To come into contact with that, our attention must rise above the senses. Guru Gobind Singh has said, *The Ultimate God is One, know Him to be our Guru.* The Lord residing in each being is the Guru. *My Beloved is in each form, no place is without Him; I rejoice in that form where He is manifest.* We should respect the form in which He has manifested — such a personality never declares himself to be the Guru, but always refers to the God in him. It is a very valuable criterion. Whoever says, "I am a Guru," know him to be yet short of that

very status. *O Bheeka, the Incomprehensible (Agam) is beyond speaking of or hearing about; He who knows speaks not, he who speaks knows not.* Kabir Sahib describes a Master in this way: *Kabir says we are the knowers of the true home of your Father, and have brought the Lord's orders.* It is a beautiful description. He did not say, "I am the Guru."

Who is the Complete Guru? *Through the Complete Guru, Satsang occurs* (comes out). And what is the Complete Guru? He is one with the Shabd. *The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.* Also, *He manifests Himself in the Guru, and distributes the Shabd.* It is that manifested God which joins us to Himself — that is the Guru. No son of man can do it. Christ said, *I am the light of the world, those that come to me shall never walk in darkness.* It is another criterion: whoever has got the Light can give it to others. It cannot be given by teachers of the outer customs, or by intellectuals, or by any scripturist. But he who is one with the Light can give the Light. *He who takes the veil from my eye and gives the glimpse — O Sadhu, that Satguru is to my liking.*

When it says we have sold the body, it means that he has given himself over completely and has no further claim on himself. And he did this just to realize God. *Someone should make me meet my Beloved Lord; To Him will I sell myself; I am in torment for darshan of my Lord.* He does not make you a slave, but rejoins you to the Lord Himself. Another Master says the same thing: *Someone should come and join me back to God.* And how is that done? *A strong Guru drags the attention (soul) out.* He is full controller of his attention, and has become therefore the mouthpiece of God. By his single thought, ten, twenty, one hundred, one thousand, can be taken above the senses and shown the Light within.

There should be no misunderstanding of the term "selling the body." Through the *prarabdhi* or destiny karmas, God has joined one to a wife, husband, children, and friends; so this body belongs to them. But the Lord wishes us to make the best use of it, by being pure and chaste, doing meditation, living righteously, and keeping His commandments; this is the true meaning of giving the body. It does not mean leaving one's home, family, and so on. Why has the body been given

to us? *The Feet of the Lord should reside in this body, and the tongue should repeat His Name; O Nanak, for this reason take care of the body.* Keep it clean and pure, for cleanliness is next to godliness, but there is no need to be constantly decorating it. Furthermore, cleaning outwardly and remaining dirty inside is useless, for no matter how much perfume is poured on a garbage heap, it will never impart a clean refreshing fragrance. To become clean inside, he tells you that no sins should be committed through this body, and no bad thoughts should enter it. This is what it means to sell one's body to Him.

Hazrat Ibrahim once bought a slave; it was the custom of those days. When he and the slave reached the house, Hazrat Ibrahim said, "What would you like to eat?" The slave replied, "Whatever food you give, for I have been sold to you." The next day, Ibrahim asked the slave what kind of clothes he wanted to wear, and the slave replied, "Whatever you give, for I have been sold." He asked for nothing and claimed no choice, for he knew his body had been sold and surrendered himself to the fact, fully resigned.

Complete obedience is the essence of selling the body to the Guru — it means nothing more nor less. Christ told his disciples, *If ye love me, keep my commandments.* Those who do respect the Guru's words will most decidedly receive salvation. Christ also said, *If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.* Whatever words enter your heart, that much have you understood fully. *The words the Guru uttered have I tied into my heart.* But don't just keep them there — they are not meant for repeating to others as a demonstration of knowledge; they should be lived up to.

And how can one reside in *his* heart? *Keep someone in your heart, and you will reside in his.* If you think of a person, there is always a reaction. When the disciple remembers his Guru, then, *Satguru gives protection with remembrance, through his very life.* His attention is his very life's essence. Though he may be hundreds of miles away, yet he constantly cares for his children — through his attention. The more you remember him, the greater will be the reaction. As you think, so you become; and if he is truly a Guru, you will gain spiritual

upliftment and salvation. When one can hear sound and voice through radio, across thousands of miles, and can see images through television, then surely the God Power which is all-omnipotent, that same Power which is the Guru, surely that can manifest, if one's needle is tuned in correctly. Just keep your thoughts toward him and you will benefit from the direct radiation.

*This body, this wealth, this mind, I have given to the Master. It does not mean to give the body literally — that belongs to those with whom you are connected, as a reaction of the past. The Master guides your soul, so your soul should be surrendered to him, not the body. By giving the mind, you should think as he wants you to think, and your wealth used for good cause — not for misuse, or to harm the lives of others. Share with others, and then eat. Think of everything as being the Guru's property given in your safe-keeping, and use it in a like manner. If you do all this, what happens? You receive *Par Brahm* (God beyond Brahmmand). *O brothers, keep connection with the Satsang, and all your wrongs will be righted.* Even your earthly life will be a success.*

So Guru Ram Das Ji is giving out some of his own life's experience. You should know that he was a great devotee of his Guru. Devotion therefore is the keynote to success, for as you think, so you become. If you obey his every wish, your success will be beyond words. If he puts his hand on your head (gives you his protection), then you have got his attention, and what more is wanted?

To realize God, we have sold our body to a Complete Master; Satguru, the Giver, intuned us with the Naam, and our countenance radiated with this transformation of destiny.

The True Form, the Master, gives the experience of God within us, through which our whole destiny is awakened. After more than seventy years of searching, Guru Amar Das Ji said,

*I was very tired, performing all these karmas;
Then, without effort, I met the Satguru.*

And what type of Guru is the Satguru? *When the Satguru is met, the eye can see and realize the Truth within.* It clearly indicates what the Satguru should be. But we must take our attention from outer things — give him our body, our mind, and our wealth.

When King Janak was given an experience by Maharishi Ashtavakra, he was also required to first give his body, mind and wealth. The king had announced that he wanted the experience, and it should be given in as short a time as it takes to mount a horse. A huge gathering of sages and holy men had been called, and a large stage set for the purpose. When the announcement was made, none of the wise men present had the courage to mount the stage and declare himself capable of giving the experience.

Many could give fine talks, but only one who is in oneness with the Light can give experience of it. These are not words of pride — it is his daily work, or you may call it his vocation, and he has been commanded by God to this purpose. The Lord Himself works through him. So from all the great sages present, only Ashtavakra stepped forward and mounted the stage. His body was crippled and deformed in eight places (the name *Ashtavakra* means "eight humps" or deformities). When the rest of the holy men saw him come forward, they laughed and thought he must be mad. They considered his strange figure ridiculous and his claim of knowledge pretentious, and were not impressed but amused. It was a rare thing, even in those days. Where can you find such a person today? Go into the world and search for one. Many will give ethical teachings and repeat what is written in books, but those who actually give an experience of the Beyond are very rare; there have always been only a few, and even now they are rare, but the world is not without them.

But the amusement died into an embarrassed silence when in a calm clear voice, Ashtavakra turned to the king and said, "If you want the knowledge of the Beyond, then why are you sitting with a gathering of cobblers, whose eyes are only on my body?" All the audience was ashamed. Then he asked the king, "Do you really want this experience?" The king replied that he did. "Then, you will have to make an offering to me of

your body, wealth, and mind." The king agreed. In those days, the custom of sealing agreements between men was to pour a little clear water in the person's hand, and the ceremony was finished. These days, special stamped paper is prepared and typed upon, and even then there remains some doubt as to whether the man is being cheated or not.

So the Rishi said, "You have given me your body — go and sit among the shoes at the entrance of this court." (By Indian custom, especially in those days, no one would dream of taking their shoes into a place of worship or respect.) One can imagine the depth of humiliation for the king to have to sit among the shoes, with his followers and subjects in full view, sitting on carpets. But the king told himself that his body now belonged to the Guru, and in meek obedience went and sat among the shoes at the entrance.

The Rishi called to him, "O king, where are you sitting now?" The king replied, "In the lowest place of all, with the shoes." The Rishi's purpose was for the king to admit his place. He then said, "As you have given all your wealth and possessions, then do not even think of them — they do not belong to you." The king saw his court and palace before him, and his mind wandered from one thing to another, so he closed his eyes. Then he closed his ears so that he would hear no sound, but even then his mind wandered about the palace and his kingdom. He again and again reminded himself that he had given everything to the Rishi, but could not still his mind. The Rishi asked, "Where are you now?" The king said, "My condition is like that of a crow sitting on a ship's mast. He flies in all directions but can see no land to alight on, and so returns to his perch on the mast, again and again." The Maharishi told him, "You have given your mind to me, so do not flit around with my mind." Then for a while the king's mind was stilled. Ashtavakra then gave his attention, and the soul withdrew, rose above body-consciousness, and the Rishi connected it to the Light and Sound. The king was asked if he was satisfied, and he replied in the affirmative.

Even now, when Naam is given, the instructions are the same: to withdraw one's attention from outer things and forget the body, etc., and then with a little attention the soul rises. The

Maharishi then said, "All right, I am giving all these things back to you — body, wealth, and mind — as a parshad, so deal with them remembering that they are mine. Think of the body as mine; keep it clean and pure. Think of the wealth as mine; share with those in need, and use it only for good purpose. Do not entertain any bad thoughts; keep all thoughts pure."

Do you all see the significance of this story? The same teaching is given now; it has not changed at all with the passing of time. It is true that the extent of our success depends upon how obedient we are to his words. If we can concentrate our scattered attention, we will become the controller of that attention, and in due course, the mouthpiece of the Greater Attention. What then will we not be able to do?! Though God is in us, we must become man-in-God and God-in-man; this is our aim. Whoever becomes that can then help others, that is, to see the manifestation of the Light of God in him. *He who thinks of the Guru as a human being will come back, birth by birth.* If the Guru seems to be a mere man to you, then what can you expect to receive from him? Each man sees through his own spectacles: whatever color the glass is, so will the vision be. In whatever manner you regard the Guru, your benefit will measure accordingly.

The Guru's knowledge attached us to the All-Pervading Lord.

A Guru's single thought can accomplish vast tasks. Masters are not made in a day; every Saint has his past, and every sinner a future. We can also become Masters — with proper help and guidance. When I was in England, two small boys came to me and I asked them, "What do you want, boys?" They both said, "We want to become Masters." You have all received the gift — increase it — then you may be selected as a Master by God. This is not an election by votes; the Lord Himself gives the commission. Furthermore, *He manifests Himself in the Guru, and distributes the Shabd.* It is not the kind of work that can be done through the puny power of man.

Each man sees only at his own level; he makes mistakes, and then falls. Then he dances to the world's tune, and others follow his example. Who suffers? One's own self. What does the Master lose? Does a mirror care if anyone looks into it or

not? *The Guru's knowledge attaches us* — so become one with God, this is the very essence of all this teaching. Light can only come from Light. Merely pressing or rubbing the eyes to bring sparks through friction within the physical vision, or trying to visualize Light, will not give anyone a connection with the Light. He who has that power in his attention can, in one sitting, reveal some Light in others — by withdrawing their attention from outside. This is the only method of connecting the soul with the Light, and that connection increases daily with practice. *In each living being the Lord is vibrating; Get connected to the Guru's Shabd.*

*I would cut my mind and body as an offering to the Guru;
All my doubts are removed by His word.*

I have explained that giving one's body to the Guru does not mean that one loses it — and cutting the body and mind does not mean they are cut into pieces, but they should work only to obey the Guru's commands. Why and how are the doubts removed by the Guru's words? *The whole world is sleeping in attachment and illusion; When will the doubt be removed?* Maya — illusion or forgetfulness — starts when we become identified with the body, for then we begin to see everything from the body's level. The body is made of matter which is changing every moment. The world is also made of matter, changing at the same speed. When two things, namely body and the world, are made of matter changing at the same speed, they both appear to be still. Those who are one with them are under a grand delusion. For a simple instance, the world appears to be still, but in actual fact it is moving. We have bound ourselves to this illusion and all it means, with all its effects.

How can it be removed? — Only by rising above body-consciousness. *O Lord, some Master-soul should show me the easy way.* Only then can the doubts be removed so that the Truth can be seen. The Master-soul's vision is correct: he does not dance to *anyone's* tune. He can never see anything inaccurately, so naturally he will never do anything wrong, like the depraved man with his smoky spectacles. This is how a man's character changes from bad to good. — But only

through the Lord's blessing. How? — By being attached in love to him in whom the Lord Himself has manifested.

If you have good karmas from the Beyond, you get the connection to the Name of the Lord. The Guru never lives in an untrue way; he does not act and pose. When a person tells one lie, then one hundred more lies must be told subsequently, to cover up that one. This sort of thing results in party factions and other undesirable situations. It is not necessary for the Satguru to tell any lies; he will say what he has seen; and that is the Truth. Kabir Sahib says,

*You cannot describe Him who is above all
But what the Guru gives becomes sweeter day by day.
Kabir says, My doubts have been removed by seeing the
Everlasting Lord.*

It is a very clear statement which gives the situation exactly — if we are still in doubt as to what we should do, then what can be done? *Having a lamp in the hand, still we fall in the well.*

*In the darkness He lights the lamp,
When we love the Guru's knowledge.*

Through getting attached by love to the Guru, the darkness is dispelled; thousands of suns shine forth with the repetition of Naam. Due to the difficulties of *Kal Yuga*, this blessing is being given freely. In the past, many restrictions were imposed before connection to Naam was given. After many years of service, the Master would then give the first part of the theory, and so on. But the darker the age, the more mercy does the Master extend, and today everyone receives an experience from the very beginning. This special concession is due to the bad condition of the world, which is drifting speedily into negativity. A Master would use any means to save the souls from such a terrible fate, but if the soul receives the gift and then wastes it — well, that is a tragic misfortune.

What is the Guru's knowledge? *The Guru's knowledge reveals the True Light, and the darkness of ignorance is split asunder.* Light appears in the darkness — the God manifests in the form of Light, and he in whom the Complete Light is burning, is the

true *Khalsa* (a true and pure disciple). Guru Gobind Singh Ji says, *Know a Khalsa only when the full Light shines in his body*. He also says, *Khalsa is my true form*. Also, *In the Khalsa I reside*, and also, *Khalsa is my Complete Satguru*. Finally he declares, *These are not words of imaginative lies; I take the Par Brahm Guru Nanak as my witness*.

If you have done every other work *but* this, it will all be of little value; but if you do *this* work all other efforts will be fruitful. When the Masters recommend the company of Saints who can give contact with the True Naam, they do so with infinite purpose. It is a gift which gives benefit both here and hereafter. *Tie with the Gift of Life, which is with you here and there*. In the Hindu religion, when a man is approaching death, his people say, "Quickly light a lamp and place it before him, or he may die without first seeing the light." People do not realize that the Light should be lit while living — within one, not outside. What is the use at the time of death, when even every-day consciousness is withdrawing?

At Hardwar in northern India, the pilgrims light a small wick in a boat of leaves and flowers, and set this afloat on the sacred River Ganges. If it gets extinguished by the water or a breeze, they light another and float it. The meaning behind this outer ritual is to show that to cross this ocean of life, one needs the guidance of the Light. But that Light is different; it has no wick, no oil; it cannot be overturned or sunk, and remains burning forever. *If someone lights such a Light, O Nanak, he does not come round in transmigration*. And ahead there is Sound in this Light; it is the basic teaching of all true Masters, irrespective of religions.

*The darkness of ignorance is banished;
Through that Treasure lying in the house, the mind is awakened.*

The mind is steeped in illusion — a kind of sleep state — and can only be awakened by the connection to Naam.

The Lord of Death will take reckoning of those imprisoning themselves in illusion.

Illusion is like a guard with a bow and arrow, keeping the prison closely guarded so that those who have forgotten their freedom in the enjoyments may not escape. The Lord of Death's toll for these prisoners is very heavy. When one enters a beautiful park, one is free to roam around, relax on the grass, enjoy the beauty of the flowers, plants and trees; but the gardener will deal very severely with anyone attempting to pluck the flowers or steal the plants.

A true sadhu is he who lives in the garden of the world, but never thinks of claiming anything as his own. Those who live their lives according to their Guru's commands and remember the Lord continuously will not be under the world's influence with all its corruption. Those who have not the good fortune of knowing their Guru is with them, remain under the mind's influence, and they eat, drink, and live according to the dictates of their minds.

Even after meeting the Guru, there are those who remain under the influence of the mind. *He is a manmukh* (mouthpiece of the mind) *who does not recognize the Shabd, and knows not the fear of the Guru.* Such a man has no awe or respect in his heart, and often thinks of the Guru as being on his own level. At times he considers the Guru to be lower than himself; so what can this type of person receive? *The words of a depraved man are like a scorpion's sting, the pain of which is like the prick of a driving thorn, but it increases to an unbearable extent.* So do not believe such people, as it will give unbearable pain in the long run. The worldly things were given with useful purpose — not for enjoyment's sake. Those who go on enjoying will have to pay the price; he who plucks the flowers will get the fine.

The unfortunates, who have not sold their heads to the Satguru, will come and go in the world.

One will go on coming and going until one surrenders one's whole being to the Guru; and this means living in accordance with his wishes, thinking as he advocates. *The keeper of the intellect is the Guru.* Maulana Rumi Sahib prays to God, saying, *This intellect will turn my face from You; Keep Your control on it, and I am saved — otherwise I am lost.* It does not take

much time to spoil the milk! The intellect is like that. *If your mind obeys the Guru one hundred per cent, you will know then who the God is.* Don't let your intellect interfere in the slightest fraction with what you know is right. He who is willing to obey him without a question will receive the treasure. *Naam's Perpetual Song, precious jewel of the Lord, is in the Sadhu's keeping.* You can also say that God has handed over His treasure to the Master. —Then? — *The Guru places it before him who takes His words as Truth.* To find a Guru who can do this is the height of good fortune. *Without good fortune, the Satguru is not met.*

*Please, my Lord, listen to my appeal:
I wish only to be at Thy Feet.*

To be at His Feet means to obey him — to surrender unto him. He would like to dye you in the same color as his own soul. In deep humility he has said, *I want to be at Your Feet.* He is wearily acknowledging his defeat in the world; it is not a matter of force. It has also been said that by force you cannot get, and by force you cannot give. You can neither gain the inner knowledge by force, nor can you learn to leave the body at will by force. Whoever feels that he can achieve anything through force is welcome to try and see. All is in the Lord's hands; if He wants to give anything, then you will receive. He most definitely will give to one who will surrender to His Feet. Dwell only on the understanding that the Guru has given; imbibe the virtues therein, and as you think, so you will become. In this way you will absorb the radiation.

*O Nanak, the Guru looks after my honor here and hereafter;
So I have sold my head to the Satguru.*

Our protection and honor is all safe in the Master's hands — we have sold our heads and our attention to him. It reminds me of my own life, about 1917. There is potential for searching out the Truth within all men, some more, some less, according to the *sanskaras* (background). I used to enjoy an intoxication within, but after two to three months it would cease, for as long as a week sometimes. Naturally I would feel very unhappy during those periods. I went to many Mahatmas for help, so that the intoxication would continue and not break.

When I asked for the cure from a certain holy sage, he said, "Yes, but you will have to give your head." In my heart I felt that the giving of one's head should happen with one's own free will, whenever one feels it right, and not by order. Once a person has given himself, there is then no question of rights. But there, whoever searches will one day find, and Hazur Baba Sawan Singh Ji started coming to me within, seven years before I ever met him physically. So giving the head must come with one's own will and pleasure. You can be sure that he who asks for it, is hungry for it — and if he is in such a hungry condition, what will he be able to give? When I finally came to Hazur's feet, with his mercy I truly understood what is meant by giving one's head.

Keep the Guru's words always before you — they should become part and parcel of your life. You may ask why Hazur said I should do this spiritual work; it was His wish, that is all. The people are receiving the benefit, what better evidence is wanted? Property and other things can be given through official papers and man-made laws, but not Spirituality. Fire is lighted from fire, and Light comes from Light. Those who are getting the Light are receiving with Hazur's blessing — I have not earned it. What did he see in me? It might be that I was very open — I never hide anything from him. I used to see that He was seeing all my actions — that is really the truth of it. So, to have a clean heart is most necessary, for he who is one thing inside and tries to show he is something different will remain far from this true wealth. If he has a small part of it, it will stop further progress.

So let each of our days be a Divali day; light the inner lamp. If you have any bad thoughts for anyone, stop them; and if anyone has wittingly or unwittingly harmed you, forgive and forget. There is no other cure. If you cannot forgive the misdemeanors of others, your progress will stop, for forgiveness and justice are different. Forget justice, and develop the virtue of forgiveness. Keep your heart clear; do not think badly of anyone, even if they have deliberately harmed you. And do not dance to the world's tune. Protect yourself from lies and hypocrisy. Everyone has God within them, so have love for all men. Do selfless service, and regular

meditation. As is also usual on Divali day, the houses and shops are cleaned and decorated. Man should also clean himself inside, decorate himself within with the inner Light, and sit in the Lord's sweet remembrance. Then only can Divali be truly beautiful.

