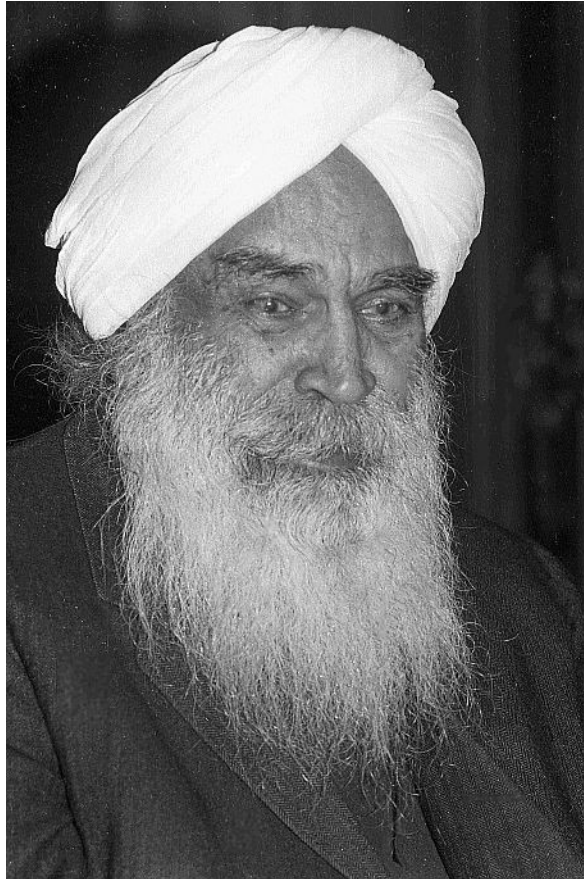


True Master and His Mission

An English version of a Satsang talk given in Hindi by Master Kirpal Singh at Sawan Ashram in Delhi, India. Published in May 1968 issue of Sat Sandesh.

Once Raja Parikshat [the grandson of the Pandava prince Arjuna of Mahabharata] asked his minister as to why in times of a moral crisis or a calamity God Himself comes to the rescue of His children even when He has innumerable attendants at His beck and call and can direct any of them to do the job for Him. The minister replied that a loving Father, as God is, cannot help coming down to help His children. The Raja asked the minister to substantiate his statement, and the latter promised to do so in course of time.



After some days, the minister made a doll that looked just like the Raja's son and dressed it in the fashion of the prince. He placed the doll on the bank of a pool in the garden where the Raja used to go for a walk. The doll could be manipulated to move with strings from a distance.

When the Raja next went to the garden with his minister, he saw the prince sitting on the bank of the pool. While he was wondering as to how his son was there; he saw the prince taking a plunge into the pool. The Raja could not bear this heart-rending sight and instantaneously jumped into the pool to save his son from drowning. To his great surprise, the Raja found that it was a doll and not his son. The Raja called for an explanation from the minister, who humbly replied that the farce was enacted to substantiate the truth of what he had said some time ago about God coming down to save His children in critical moments.

We all are children of God, fashioned by Him in His own image. The soul in man is of the same essence as God. Kabir [1440-1518, a well-known Indian saint

who practiced and preached *Surat Shabd Yoga*] says: "The soul, though embodied, is but a part and parcel of the all-pervading essence enlivening the universe." It is nothing but a drop of the sea of all-consciousness. Environed on the physical plane by the limiting adjuncts of mind and matter, we have completely identified ourselves with the world and all that is worldly so much so that we have forgotten our truly divine origin. The natural result of this forgetfulness is pain and suffering.

Physical life is all misery, declared Buddha, the enlightened one. The ever-loving Father, when He hears the piteous cries of His children for a way out of this magic maze of the world, cannot but descend in the garb of a man to reclaim the lost sheep back to His fold.

God is the Guru of soul, for soul is of the same essence as God. When in agony, it cries for help and God comes down to its rescue. When in deep anguish, one yearns for a way-of-life; the Word, or the Power of God, materializing in the form of a Godman, call him what you may. He comes to give all possible help and to lead the world-weary and heavy-of-heart back to His own Kingdom.

We are here in this world on probation. When the time comes, God makes arrangements through His "elect," or the chosen one, to establish a spiritual contact with Himself. Nanak has drawn a beautiful pen picture of a soul suffering the pangs of separation: "Having forgotten the real source of life, the soul in perpetual delusion is bewailing her lot."

In our descent to the earth-plane, we have so wrapped the "self" in us in mantles of mind and matter of varying degrees of density peculiar to the different levels of our existence — causal, mental, and physical — that we are completely lost to the self and are endlessly wandering in delusion in the mighty maze of the world. In spite of brief momentary awakenings, we are prone to go astray by force of habit that has become our nature.

Our condition may be likened to a woman who, having been deserted by her husband, goes back to her parents and lives there forgetful of her husband. The husband may still be loving her, but she has no knowledge of it, nor does she try to know her own weaknesses which brought about the forced separation between them. Howsoever the parents may provide her with dainty comforts, yet she is in exile. How different would be the picture if she were to reform herself and render herself worthy of her consort. Most of us are in such a plight.

We all are children of the Father-God, the God of us all; and our souls are essentially at one with the divine principle sustaining the universe. The Lord Himself is the consort of all the souls, but how sad it is that, while in exile here on the physical plane, we have altogether forgotten Him, and while dwelling with Him in the same body, have not had an opportunity of coming face to face with Him. We are separated from God, have forgotten our true Home, and by constant association with mind and matter are completely lost in the enjoyment of sense pleasures. We are ever a prey to all kinds of deadly sins. Like a spider

we are inextricably caught in the web of lusts, anger, greed, and attachment, and are obsessed with the ever-assertive ego, all of which conspire to lead us further away from God.

We have two alternative courses before us. There is a class of persons who believe in a life of worldly enjoyment — eat, drink, and be merry. They are even worse than those who are merely ignorant of their true self and of God, and are leading a quiet life of blissful ignorance. The former are in a pitiable condition. They might appear to be enjoying life, but how long will they do it? The pleasures of the world are ephemeral and end in smoke, leaving you a wreck — physically, mentally, morally, and spiritually.

The bliss you get from the love of the Lord, you cannot get from anywhere else, not even from parents and others whom you consider as near and dear ones, and on whom you so fondly rely. Should this awakening arise in you, then friends and relations will look like messengers of death. If we are able to create such a state in us, it is but natural that the Lord who is already within us, befriending and sustaining the soul, will definitely heed our wailings full of pain and anguish.

In the words of Guru Nanak [1469-1539, the founder of the Sikh religion], the soul bursts forth:

*O my Beloved, attend to my woebegone tale of sorrow.
While Thou art happily settled in Thy ever blissful state,
I am confined and entombed in a mold of clay.*

All Masters say the same thing. Swami Ji [1818-1878, Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, the great saint of Agra who revived the teachings of the Masters like Kabir and Guru Nanak] says: "O spirit, thou wert a ray of the eternal Truth."

The soul in us is a scion of the royal blood. It has a glorious origin. But alas, by constant association with the mind and senses, she has degraded herself to this wretched state! Verily mind is an abode of sense-pleasures, and the various sense organs are full of filth; but we are so blinded by lusts of the flesh, that we do not see what is underneath the surface. If the soul were to become aware of its true home — the home of eternal bliss and existence — it would naturally strive to get back there, and a cry of anguish from the depths of the heart is sure to move the Lord of Compassion.

It is nothing but an earnest prayer, a supplication from the torn and tormented spirit, and cannot but move Him to pity. But our attention is all the time running out and downwards through the nine portals of the body — eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth, rectum, and procreative organ; quite unaware of the tenth opening or center in the brain that provides us access to the Kingdom of God within. Howsoever we may try to escape from the body, we cannot do so, as we are subject to the great controlling power of God — the Holy Word or Naam — of which we are yet quite ignorant.

*O Nanak, everything rests in Naam;
but it is in the fullness of time that one gets to it.*

It is the God-in-action Power (the Holy Word) that is controlling and sustaining all that is visible and invisible. One who realizes this great truth cannot but wander restlessly in quest of it. All the great souls have emphatically spoken of this vital life-force. Maulana Rumi [a great Persian saint, author of the famous *Masnavi*] says:

*Shame to thee, that hast heaven as a true abode,
And yet are happy with shadowy forms and colors.
How long wilt thou be playing in dust,
and whittle away life like children.*

Please remember that the heart which is stirred by this awakening for inner life gradually begins to yearn for it; and this yearning in course of time assumes the form of a ruling passion, so much so that day and night he piteously cries for it until God, the great Ocean of Mercy, is stirred to His very depths and provides him with the means of a way out of His magic house of the body, and draws him to Himself. This then is the power of a prayer coming out of the depths of the heart.

What should I say and to whom shall I turn? This is then the cry of a bewildered soul when it comes to its own. It turns around and sees no comfort on any side. As a last resort it calls upon the Lord God, the true comforter and savior of us all. Prayer, as you know, is the last weapon in the armory of man, and also the most effective weapon. It is in these hopeless moments of despair that hope comes to illumine the way. The Power-of-God then appears in the garb of a Godman and says: Follow me. I am the way, the truth, the life. I am the imperishable way, the infallible truth, the eternal life. I am the most noble way, the ultimate truth, the true life, blessed and uncreated.

But when does God take pity and appear in the form of a Guru? The answer is very simple. The Master comes to the aid only when one abstains from all the lusts of the flesh.

Christ assured forgiveness even to the worst of sinners if they desisted from future wrong doing. He cried a halt to his followers, put a dead-line to the past, and commanded: "Sin no more." Tulsi Sahib [1763-1843, the saint of Hathras, original name: Sham Rao Hulkar, crown prince of Gwalior, who spurned the throne to practice meditation] also said: "Adopt truthfulness, humility, and respect for womanhood; surely then shalt thou have God, and I stand guarantee for that."

Such a soul then pleads:

*O thou who have access to the Kingdom of God,
carry the message from one in exile;
Tell Him to take pity on one who is waiting all the while*

*with eyes full of tears.
With tearful eyes saying Thy praises and nothing to recommend, how can I
approach the Beloved Lord?*

Thus, the soul, in the pangs of separation from the Lord, cries to the divine messengers who have a free access to His court and seeks their help in this sad predicament.

The soul now pleads her inability to reach the path Godwards of which she has no knowledge, and hence conveys her helplessness through God's elect. Clouds always precede the showers. God's grace descends when the soul is in utter agony, and cries in bewilderment with eyes full of tears and heart throbbing with love. In mystic language this is called the dark night of the soul on the threshold of beatitude:

*The sacred books are aids to the Master,
and by following him one is ferried into the beyond.
Unless a Master-soul reincarnates on the earth-plane,
none can even get at their true import.*
— Gurbani [the sacred writings of the Sikh Masters]

Although the divine principle of the Light of life is present in all human beings, it lies dormant unless it is re-activated. And who does this? The one who has made it manifest within himself may make it manifest for us. Herein lies the competence of a Satguru — a chosen human being in which the Power-of-God works for the benefit of mankind. Call him man-in-God or God-in-man, for it is one and the same. This is how God works out His plan of redemption. "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me," said Jesus. And again: "No man knoweth who the Father is, but the son, and he to whom the son will reveal Him." The Guru or God-in-man appears only when the disciple is ready is an age-old saying: "The merciful Father hath commanded: Give unto my children whatever is desired."

If we do yearn for God in all sincerity, there is no reason why God shall not provide means to manifest Himself. There is always food for the hungry and water for the thirsty. Where there is fire, oxygen must come to keep it alive. Christ says: "Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Similarly, we have in the holy *Quran*: "Whatever my child shall ask, that shall be granted."

Here we must pause for a while and see what we ask for. We never ask for God from God. We ask from Him success in our worldly endeavors, advancement in life, name and fame, escape from illness and the like. In short, we ask for worldly things and the same are provided, no matter if now or in the future. The wheel of life, thus, is ever on the move. If we ask for Him, He will come into the world Himself; and we shall not have to be reborn again and again in evolutionary search for Him. Like King Parikshat, He will take the plunge Himself, for that is the law. Man is the teacher of man. God, too, has to assume a human form for teaching human beings. His power and glory shine from the

human-pole from where He works for the uplift of mankind. Such are the chosen few, or the elect, that appear from time to time in response to the crying need of the hour and the place. My Master used to say that like attracts like and, as such, God-in-man alone leads man's soul.

*Should you chance to meet a real Master,
surrender thy all unto Him without any scruples. —Gurbani*

When we do meet a competent Master, we have our own part to play. Generally speaking, there are three kinds of mental reservations with us; and those act as a positive hindrance in our progress. We do not shed our bodily pride, pride of possessions and riches, and lastly pride of intellectual attainments pertaining respectively to *tan* (body), *man* (mind), and *dhan* (wealth). This is why emphasis has been laid to surrender them all at the feet of the Master. It may, however, be noted that a real Master does not need any of these things, not the least. It simply means that these are to be considered as gifts from him, and must be kept as a sacred trust from him, and used in the best possible way in the service of the children and the family for repayment of *karmic* debts, the society and the country, the truly needy, the indigent, the sick, the hungry and thirsty.

The acts done in the dedicated spirit of an agent of the Master will hardly have any binding effect on you, and you will easily and readily escape from the otherwise inexorable law of *karma* — as you sow, so shall you reap. This will render you spiritually clean in all your actions — physical, mental, and moral. This will endow you with true humility and a spirit of selfless-service or service-before-self, all of which are so very necessary for a pilgrim on the path of love.

*Filled with the Power-of-God,
The Master doles out the Holy Word. — Gurbani*

When we free ourselves of attachments to all created things, and dissolve our will in the divine will of the Master, then the holy Word, already within us, comes uppermost in our consciousness or, in other words, is revealed and can be practiced by actual communion.

Raja Janak [father of Sita—the consort of Lord Rama (of *Ramayana*)] once called a convention of all the *pandits* and religious leaders of the realm, and asked if anyone in that exalted assemblage could impart to him the divine contact, but none could do so except Yajnavalkya who could just explain the theory of spirituality but was unable to give a practical demonstration.

Sometime later, another similar conference was convened for the same purpose, and the king desired that anyone competent to give a direct and immediate inner experience to him in a short time taken in riding a horse should come forward. It was, of course, granted to the king by the sage Ashtavakar, an oddly deformed person with eight humps on his body as his name indicates.

Herein lies the greatness of a competent living Master. It is easier said than done. There may be many who can give learned discourses, expound the scriptures, recite Vedic hymns, narrate epics; but a rare soul can lead you within and give a direct contact with the Light of Life in you — the Light that "shineth in the darkness and the darkness knoweth it not." A real Godman is God-incarnate in flesh — Word made flesh, as Christ puts it. Tulsi Sahib has said: "I adore a Satguru who can lift me above body-consciousness in a short time of three hours."

This then is the touchstone for judging a genuine Master, for otherwise there is no dearth of the so-called Masters. Of the competent Master, it is affirmed:

It is the magnetic pull of the Guru that can affect a withdrawal of the sensory currents from the body. — Swami Ji

God resides in every heart. His Light shines in and enlivens the body, and we possess the lift-of-life in the music of the soul; but have we ever experienced these saving lifelines: the Light-of-God and the Voice-of-God, upholding all that exists? A real Master grants an actual experience of a direct inner contact with these saving lifelines.

Who then can effect such a miracle, the miracle of linking us with the music of the soul? He alone can do this who himself is Word-incarnate for he is filled with the Word from top to toe.

Now let us consider the price that one has to pay:

*Surrender thy body, thy riches, and thy mind to the Guru,
Follow his instructions implicitly and then shalt thou get.*
— Gurbani

When Raja Janak asked for God-experience, the sage Ashtavakar in turn demanded of the royal disciple his ceremonial and customary dues as a preceptor, and laid claim to the king's body, mind, and all his possessions. The king, being anxious for the highest mystic experience, readily agreed to do so. Thereupon, the sage ordered him to get down from his throne and sit at the far end of the court, right at the place where the shoes of the courtiers were lying. It was too much for the king to do, but as he had stipulated to surrender his body and mind and all to the Guru, he could not help complying with his behests. Not content with this, the sage inquired of the Raja as to where he was sitting, and the latter had to affirm before his court that he was occupying the meanest place.

The object of the Guru was to dispel from the mind of his disciple the pride of place and status. Having done this, he commanded Janak not to interfere in the worldly possessions, riches and wealth, which were now his (Guru's) — not even by entertaining thought of the same for they were no longer his (Janak's) — as he had given away the same to his Guru.

Janak felt perplexed as he looked at his erstwhile pomp and glory, and heard the voices of his courtiers. To escape from all these, he shut his eyes and closed his ears. But the force of habit is terrible indeed. In spite of shutting his eyes and ears, and his best efforts to keep his thoughts under control, his mind was yet in all those things — palaces, courtiers, and royal pomp and splendor, his queens and children. On being questioned about his mental state, he replied to the Guru that his mind was at that moment just like a bird perched on the mast-staff of a boat on high seas, attempting to fly again and again; but finding no place of rest on the waters, it returned to the mast. The Guru then commanded him to stop all mental vibrations as the mind which projected those thought-waves was no longer his (Janak's); and he had, therefore, no business to use it.

The words went home and momentarily Janak felt in him a mental vacuum for the Rishi by his own thought-force pulled the disciple's consciousness from out of his bodily mold into the great beyond above the plane of senses. This is what a real competent Master does. He gives a practical mystic experience by means of concentration, after gradually weaning the mind of the disciple from the world and all that is worldly, collecting the sensory currents of the body at the eye-focus, and retaining them there for some time.

God is where there is nothing. We have to disenfranchise the self in us, by stripping it of the person or the marks of the bodily adjuncts of mind and matter, before we can get a spiritual experience. The Guru does not need your body, mind, and possessions. They all remain with you as ever before, but enriches you a thousand-fold by providing you with subtle spiritual riches of inestimable value.

We have to "forsake the flesh for the spirit, for flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." "He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it," declared Christ. We have, in fact, to choose between the two: life of the flesh and the life of the spirit. It does not mean that we have to shirk our duties and responsibilities, and take to the wilderness. True renunciation means inner detachment and making a proper use of everything that God has given us in trust, as any trusted agent will do for his principal.

This is the price for attaining divinity, and it has to be paid without any mental reservation. While in the midst of plenty, consider your all, including your mind and body, as belonging to the Guru and never employ them for gratification of the senses. The more you will empty yourself of the love of the created things, the more will you be filled with the love of God and verily come into greater communion with the holy Word.

So when we earnestly implore for divine beatification, God in the garb of a living Master instantly comes to our aid, for that is the law. Christ, when questioned as to where He was going, replied: "I have yet many sheep to look after."

One day in the month of June, I happened to be with my Master at Beas. As the weather was sultry and the heat oppressive, I suggested to Hazur to spend some time at Dalhousie (a hill resort in Punjab).

He replied smilingly: "Look, Kirpal Singh, people perhaps think that I go to the hill station for my personal comforts. But this is not so. I do so in the hope that some lost souls may yet be ready enough to listen to the message of God, and be prepared to retrace their steps Godwards. To me personally, heat or cold makes no difference in the least."

Such Master-Souls scour the world in search of us and not we for them. They come here with a divine mission to pick up those destined for the holy path, or such as may be world-weary and piteously crying for a way out.

This earth plane is a vast prison-house. It is not the true abode of the virgin soul. It is here temporarily till it gets reconciled to the divine consort and is called back from the forced exile here. Whenever a soul in an alien land feels the pangs of separation, God plans a way out through a God-realized saint; a saint who is filled with the unseen Power-of-God, a living embodiment of the divine Word:

*Satguru is the Immaculate One Himself,
though in human form.*

Again it is said:

The servant of God is God-like in spite of his physical raiment
. — Gurbani

We all are in the making. We are gradually striving towards perfection. This world is a training center towards that end. Suffering is the best teacher. It awakens in us a yearning for crossing the limitation of the flesh so that we may attain a state where there is perfect serenity. Whenever we feel helpless in our struggle, and we do feel helpless in diverse ways, we call for the unseen hand of God to our aid. When we do so, the Power-of-God is stirred. Some man-of-God, endowed with His power, comes our way, consoles us in our misery, offers his helping hand to us, and lifts us up from the mire of despondency, puts us upon our feet, and offers to lead us Godwards.

A Godman, then, is not a man of this world as we are; nor is his spirit bound down in the prison-house of the physical body as ours is. At one with the supreme Power-of-God, his spirit knows how to vacate the body at will and soar into the spiritual realms beyond mind and matter. Wonderful indeed is the house we live in. It is given to man to transcend the limitations of the flesh, and to work wheresoever we may like in the material world, the materio-spiritual, the spirituo-material, or the purely spiritual, unlike all other creatures who are tied to the body only. The microcosm is fashioned on the pattern of the macrocosm.

But we have altogether forgotten our capabilities in the mighty swirl of the world, and have come to identify our great self with the physical raiment, not knowing how to rise above body-consciousness into the cosmic and super-cosmic consciousness. A divinely gifted person not only reminds us of our vast potentialities, but also gives us an experience thereof, no matter at what level, and encourages us to develop the same to whatsoever extent one may like to do. He, in brief, tells us: Learn to die so that you may begin to live.

We are certainly a drop from the ocean of consciousness. In the limitations of the senses, busily engaged in the enjoyment of sense-objects and environed by the mind, we are lost to our real self, just like a proverbial lion-cub of a shepherd, who brought him up in the company of his sheep and goats, as Hazur used to illustrate so lucidly. A lion passing that way was greatly distressed to see the cub grazing on grass and herbs. Taking pity on the cub, the lion took him aside to a pond of water, showed him his image in the water which resembled his own, and advised him to roar along with him. The moment the two roared together, the shepherd and the flock all ran helter-skelter, leaving their erstwhile companion in the company of the lion. A Master-saint likewise reminds us of our intrinsic greatness, helps us to get out of our make-believe complacency, and puts us on the road to self-knowledge and God-knowledge.

God is the Soul of the universe. He willed to manifest Himself into so many forms of different patterns and colors. From one current of His power, multitudes of creations came into being. The soul in us, too, has innumerable capabilities but is engaged in outer pursuits. Master-saints tell us to gather in and collect the outgoing spiritual currents at one center, the eye-focus. They give us an experience of the withdrawal of the life currents. By daily practice we get into a habit which in course of time becomes a second nature. Surdas says: "As one proceeds along, the mind follows suit."

We wish to do this but have not the will to do it. We need some competent Master to help us on the path — one who has trans-humanized the human in him, and has become the mouthpiece of God. Nanak says: "Nanak opens his mouth only when he is bidden to do so." Similarly, Christ says the same thing: "I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things."

A Master-saint, by his own life impulse, gives a green signal to the human spirit lying smothered under the dead-weight of mind and matter, and gives to it a glimpse of the way up. We, too, have been gifted with that power, but are helpless as our life-currents are every moment flowing downwards and outward into the world of matter and towards all that is material. A competent Master, like a powerful magnet, pulls the spirit-currents up and magnetizes them into a living and conscious soul. In this temple of the body, we dwell along with the spirit of God.

The human soul is like an over-loaded donkey, burdened with *karmas* of the past out of memory; and incurring more and more *karmas* from day to day, it is

deeply stuck in the quagmire of sensuous life. In this sorry and woebegone state it is well-nigh impossible to take a single step forward unless some kindly Godman takes pity, lightens the smothering *karmic* load, and pulls us out of the quicksand of life. We are filled to overflowing with the thoughts of the world and all that is worldly and are so enchained hands and feet that we cannot possibly find a way out.

In this sad plight of utter hopelessness and helplessness, we do stand in need of some powerful friend who may be able to lend a helping hand, and infuse in us courage and persistence, through His Grace. He, at a single sitting, by his concentrated attention, helps a gathering of ten, twenty, or hundreds of persons, and gives a practical inner experience to all as the sage Ashtavakar gave to Raja Janak. It is the work of some God-centered saint who can make us transcend the self-conscious self-hood, to witness the clear Light of the void (Beyond).

With this initial experience, we can develop our inner life, which at every step opens out new vistas into the innumerable realms beyond. Being anchored in the Power-of-God, he does not lose anything by imparting his life impulse. An ocean would suffer no loss if millions of creatures were to drink from it to their fill. The *yogis* and *munis* and the *rishis* with all their laborious practices for years and years never had a glimmer of the inward Light. But a truly great sage may, by his kindly glance, open the inner vision. In the Gospel of St. Matthew we have: "For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them, and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."

I remember how my son, when at the age of four or five, once accompanied me to Hazur and made a request for initiation. Hazur gave him some sweets and he was satisfied. Next time when he went again, he prayed for that gift which had been granted to his father. Hazur took him inside, made him sit in front of him, and asked him to concentrate and see within. In an instant the lad witnessed a star-spangled sky and Hazur asked him to open his eyes, saying that it was enough at that stage. He came running outside saying that he had got Naam as far as the stars, and inquired up to what stage had I been taken. Herein lies the greatness of a saint.

While soaring into ethereal regions, he remains true to the kindred points of heaven and earth which are verily linked by the Power-of-God working in him in a manifested form. He is the human pole from where the invisible hand of providence works visibly. Whosoever comes in contact with him and implicitly follows his instructions, he, too, is alchemized or transmuted from dross into sterling gold. The Master is sent into the world to salvage souls for the Kingdom of God. From the Wordless state, the Word is made flesh to dwell amongst us for regeneration of mankind:

*This much that man was made like God before,
But that God should be made like man much more,*

*God clothed Himself in vile man's flesh, that so
He might be weak enough to suffer woe. — John Donne*

Being one with the divinity, a true saint gives us first-hand knowledge of his experience with the Divine. All the scriptures of the various religions are nothing but fine records of the spiritual experiences of their authors with God. In fact, a living saint is much more than all the scriptures put together; for he, being in direct contact with the God-power, is able to impart God-knowledge directly, and grant actual experience of the saving life-line. He gives us a correct import of the ancient scriptures. While reconciling the seeming inconsistencies, he presents an integrated picture of the science of the soul, which has eternally been the same and shall be the same, in spite of linguistic differences born of geographic variations and historic backgrounds:

*Attend ye to the true testimony of the saints,
For they tell us of their own actual experiences.*
—Gurbani

It may be taken as gospel truth that none can know in fullness the greatness of a saint. With all our learning and worldly wisdom, we cannot rise to his level, much less know of him. Godman is vastly different from a mere human being. "Nanak has met the Guru who manifested the glory of the God beyond."

Guru Arjan [the fifth Sikh Guru who compiled the *Adi Granth*] declared that he searched the entire universe (*Brahmand*), but could find none who could come up to the level of his Master (Guru Ramdas). Guru Arjan saw in his Master, God Himself clothed in human form. We, living on the plane of the senses, cannot understand the significance of a Master-soul. But those whose inner vision is opened, know and see what in reality a Guru-power is. Maulana Rumi says:

*The hand of the Pir (Guru) is no less than the hand of God;
His hand is not apart from the Power of God.
His gracious hand is outstretched beyond seven heavens.*

As the sway of the Master extends to the highest heaven, so do follow the sincere seekers after Truth when in company of the Master. The great Maulana beautifully describes this by means of a parable. A small mouse was running on the ground when a pigeon flying in the air happened to see him. The pigeon inquired of the mouse as to where he was running so fast. The mouse replied that he was on his way to Mecca for a pilgrimage. The pigeon pitied the little creature, and swooping down instantly carried the mouse in his claws, and flew with him to Mecca, and put him down in the sacred precincts.

Entangled in the clutches of mind and matter, our spirit cannot, by itself, escape from the prison-house, and reach the purely spiritual region (beyond *Pind*, *And*, and *Brahmanda* — physical, astral, and causal) which is our true home. As I have just said that a donkey overloaded with burden cannot be extricated from a marshy swamp, unless he is first relieved of the load and then pulled out.

Similarly, when a seeker comes to the Master, the latter by His words of encouragement and attention, momentarily lightens the load off his mind, and makes him see things clearly in their true perspective. The Master then directs him to enter into the laboratory of his body for an actual experiment. By doing so, the disciple gets some inner experience, which he is asked to develop by daily practice.

His basic instruction to the disciple is to rise above body-consciousness. He tells him how to do it, and helps him. This is how he gives him a way-up, and pulls him out of the mire of sensuous life, in which he has been stuck for endless ages ever since he wandered away from his native home, the Garden of Eden, and went into self-exile on the plane of mind and matter. He comes to heal the spiritually sick and suffering humanity. Mohammad Iqbal, a great Urdu poet of Punjab, says:

*O Power invisible, manifest Thyself but for once,
That I may offer myriads of salutations to Thee.*

When such a piteous cry spontaneously escapes from the heart, the Power-of-God, which is all-pervasive, reveals Itself in some human form.

When is the Word, or the Power-of-God, put on the covering of flesh? It does so when children of God restlessly yearn for Him. If a child begins to cry, the mother gives him a toy; and, if in spite of it he persists in crying, she brings still another and yet another; but when nothing satisfies him, the mother leaves off everything, lifts the child into her lap, and hugs him tenderly.

If we have a genuine yearning for Him in our hearts, He shall reveal Himself, for like a loving father He is keenly waiting and watching for the moment when we turn our eyes towards Him. This is how he appears in the form of a great living soul to meet His children and to shepherd them back to His eternal mansion, *Sachkhand* — the perennial Abode of Truth.

It is well-nigh impossible to comprehend a Godman and his greatness, much less to describe his powers, limitless and ineffable as they are. He is just a conduit for the Power-of-God to work in the world in a manifest form and serves as a prefatory note to the Book-of-God. To come in close and living touch with Him is to come near God. Without him we cannot possibly know of God, and much less come in direct contact with the Power-of-God working within each individual and sustaining the entire creation.

Hence the paramount need to search for and contact a living embodiment of the Godly Power. To know something of him is to know something of God. If he is God personified, or Word made flesh, he will surely attract our soul, as it is of the same essence as of God. The more we think of him, the more we will begin to love him and become like him. "As you think so shall you become" is a well-known adage.

When Master-saints come to the earth-plane, people are attracted by the divine glow of their eyes and the soothing radiance they emit from the pores of their body. At first sight, they appear to be dignified gentlemen. As one comes nearer to them, one finds something unearthly about them. Gradually this changes into the light of other-worldliness, which in time forms a divine halo around them, until they look nothing short of God, for one begins to see the Power-of-God working in them. They are then God-in-action, manifestations in flesh of the Absolute God whom no one has seen nor can see. In a state of divine ecstasy, Bhai Nand Lal, a great mystic poet, says: "Here and hereafter, I sacrifice at the feet of my fair-faced beloved." He goes on to explain as to why he does so: "None of them can compare with the beauty of a single hair of him."

Hafiz, a Persian mystic, speaks in much the same strain when he says: "Should that ravishing beauty of Shiraz (Murshid) accept my suit, I would just for a mole on his cheek give away the Kingdoms of Smarkand (meaning both worlds, here and hereafter) in dower unto Him."

*If ever any beauty I did see,
which I desired, and got,
it was a dream of Thee. — John Donne*

This then is the vein in which the devotees speak of the really great saints, for they get from a single glance of theirs an ecstatic intoxication which even thousands of barrels of the purest wine would not give. They come to serve divine vintage to the thirsty by imparting their own life-impulse.

The sacred books, however great, are mighty bloodless substitutes for life. They constitute a valuable treasure-house of the recorded experiences of their authors; experiences which they had in their search of their own inner self and of God. They, of course, inspire us and encourage us to emulate the sages and seers of the past, but by themselves, cannot impart the life-experience which comes only through the grace of a living competent Master. Spirituality cannot be taught, but it is caught as an infection from a God-infected soul.

*I saw Kaaba (house of God) whirling round and round an entrance to an
avenue where lived a man-of-God;
O God, what type of man is he? Is he really a man
or an enchanter practicing black magic?
— Maulana Rumi*

One is really astonished at such strange utterances. But they contain a marvelous truth in them. A Godman is a mouthpiece of God Himself:

*God Himself speaks through a Sadh (an enlightened one).
— Gurbani*

When such a Master accepts you, he will never leave you. He is always with you wherever you may be. He becomes a constant friend and companion, a

sure and unerring guide in the most unpredictable and bewildering situations, even after the much-dreaded physical death which ends all worldly connections. Even before the judgement-seat of God, he appears as an intercessor and leads the soul on its upward journey, bypassing all perilous pitfalls and warding off dangers. He never leaves the soul, even for an instant, until the soul reaches the mansion of the Lord and is safely enthroned there. He is commissioned from God to gather the lost sheep and to bring them to His fold. After having discharged his commission in one part, Christ went to another remarking: "I have yet to tend many more sheep."

Every saint, like a good shepherd, has to tend to many a sheep, here, there, and everywhere. From place to place, he moves the world over, administering to the spiritual needs of the hungry souls, regardless of personal hardships and privations, public taunts and rivalries, and open persecutions and indignities. All these trials and tribulations he undergoes and to what end? Just to help the helpless, to soothe the lacerated hearts, and to put people on their own feet on the path of self-knowledge and God-knowledge. We can only have a fleeting glimpse of their inner greatness and grandeur, occasionally and in passing as they may drop a hint here and there, just as Kabir did: "Kabir knows fully well the divine mysteries, and he has come with a message from God."

Other saints, too, have spoken likewise. Hazur also gave such like hints: "When we come into the world, we bring our staff with us. When our work is finished at one place, we are commissioned to go elsewhere." "It is His pleasure that He should now reveal Himself to the Americans."

Human birth is a precious privilege. We must make the most of it. First things should come first. Our foremost duty is to realize God. How can we do this? We must make friends with one who is God-realized so that he may help us to be likewise. God's Power or the Word-of-God shines in fullness in one who has realized Him. What is electricity after all? Can we separate it from the bulb through which it illuminates? If one bulb gets fused, we replace it by another. Electricity itself never dies.

Christ-power is eternal and shines forth from time to time to meet the needs of the people. Whosoever comes in contact with the Christ-power, through the agency of God's elect, wherever he may be, the agent never rests until he delivers the goods to his principal (God). Who would not like to find the elixir of life and be a living soul forever?

The people of the world befriend us so long as we are capable of serving their interests. They leave us one by one when we become helpless on account of poverty and indigence, prolonged sickness and disability or otherwise when we cannot be of any use to them. Even the so-called nearest and dearest friends and relations, whom we proudly claim as our very own, may not stand by us till the last moment. They, too, can be of no avail to us when we are in the throes of death and gasping for breath. All that they can do is to pray for our easy and speedy exit from the world.

We, therefore, stand in need of such a one who may be our constant companion here and hereafter, and be with us everywhere we may happen to be: in the deepest depths of the sea, on the snow-capped mountain tops, in the burning desert sands, suspended in midair, in wild forests, or even before the judgment-seat of God.

Take hold of the garment of a brave soul, one who moves freely between earth and heaven. — Maulana Rumi

We do need a friend capable of working on all the levels of existence, so that we may have the benefit of his instructions and guidance here in this life, as well as in the life hereafter, on realms astral, causal, and spiritual, and who will take us to the home of our Father. Who then can do all this? None else than God Himself and He is the true guide and Master:

*One who stands supreme from beginning to end,
Take Him to be our guide and friend.*

Swami Ji also says:

The Lord of the soul graces the earth plane in the garb of a man so as to guide the humanity Godwards.

Once Sahib Ji Maharaj of Agra came to Beas, and for his discourse he took up the hymn beginning with this couplet. He asked Hazur if there were in the Sikh scriptures any verses corresponding to these. Hazur presented several verses with similar connotations, and I give you just one of them:

*He who sent thee here, now calls thee back;
Return ye to his eternal Home and live in peace.*

Such kindly souls come from afar, from the very bosom of God Himself. They hold a divine mandate. Why do they come? It is His will, is the only answer they give. From One proceeds all things, according to the divine will. When they come to the earth-plane, they abide by the laws of the land where they live for the time being.

We, too, do likewise here on earth, and live accordingly. But here we are the bondage of the karmic law of action and reaction throughout the ages ever since we separated from Him. When we suffer, and at times we suffer terribly under the heavy load of accumulated karmic burden, we feel helpless to get out of the magic maze of the Lord of this universe, and piteously cry for help.

When the Father-God within hears our tale of agony and torture, He is stirred to His very depths, takes pity at our woebegone state, and manifests Himself in the form of a saint to lead us back to Himself. Thus, He who sent us (from time out of mind) comes to call thee back. What does He do? He by suitable instructions reminds us of our ancient lineage, gives us a glimpse of the saving lifelines provided by God in each individual. He connects our spirit with them,

and gradually helps us to untie the *Gordian knot* between the body and the soul, until we become free from the body and capable to travel into higher planes along with him in his radiant form (*Divya Sarup*).

Mind that all this is done by a voluntary process of practical self-analysis under his guidance while living and without total disruption of the silver-cord which finally takes place at the time of death (or dissolution of the material body). A true saint is the greatest gift of God as much as God is the greatest gift of the saint. It is said: "God is all-wisdom; and when He manifests Himself on a human pole, He is known as a saint."

Can we see God? This is the next question, and here is an affirmative answer:

In the company of a saint one sees the Lord in Himself.

In the holy Gospels, we have:

All things are delivered to me of the Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

— Matthew 11:27, Luke 10:22

Nanak emphatically declares: "God of Nanak is all-apparent." And Christ in no ambiguous terms says: "Behold the Lord." Guru Arjan tells us: "On land and in the water, He is in His fullness."

He pervades the very fiber of all beings. This is how Guru Arjan sees the all-pervading Power of God vibrating everywhere. Can we see likewise? Yes, we, too, can by becoming a *Gurumukh* (i.e., by implicitly following the instructions of a Guru — a God-realized being). Is it then possible to see God with the two eyes that we have?

O Nanak, the eyes that see God are quite different from what we have.

The eyes of the flesh can only see things of the flesh, for mortal eyes perceive only what is mortal. It is the inner eye that can witness the glory of the Lord. It is *Divya Chakshu* of the Hindu saints, *Single Eye* as termed by Christ and the *Nukta-i-Sweda* of the Muslim divines. A Master-saint like an ophthalmic surgeon helps in opening this inner eye which is now shuttered. Shams-e-Tabrez, a great saint, tells us that he provided eyes to thousands of congenitally blind. So far as the experience of God goes, we are all blind. We have all our life been reading of God in sacred books, and hearing of God from others, but never had a personal experience of God. This is how we are blind, leading a blind life in the brain. Nanak so beautifully defines a blind man:

*They are not blind who have no eyes on their faces;
but such as are alienated from God are blind indeed.*

All the founders of the various religions in the world are one on this point. We

have been gifted with inner perception and audition, independent of the sense-organs; for perfect knowledge is an action of the soul. The soul is, however, smothered under the deadweight of mind and matter for myriads of ages, and has never had an opportunity of attending to the divine Light and the celestial strains of the inner music. A Master-saint helps in lifting the karmic burden and thereby releases the soul, freeing it gradually from the various enveloping *koshas* or enshrouding veils and different limiting adjuncts until it comes to its own, disengaged of the love of all created things, and becomes a disembodied soul, shining in its own luminosity and capable of thinking and acting independently, and on its own. St. John of the Cross puts it succinctly:

Hence the soul cannot be possessed of the divine union until it has divested itself of the love of created beings.

The means for effecting this union are the Light of God and the Voice of God. God is self-luminous Light (*Swayam Jyoti Swarup*), Father of all lights as the Christians speak of, and *Nurun-ala-Nur* (the light of Lights) of the Muslims. He is also spoken of as the Song of the soul, the Voice of the silence, the Music of the Spheres, the *Shabd*, the *Vak*, the *Word*, the *Nad*— all signifying the same thing. Both these saving life-lines are within each individual. We live and move and have our very being in and through them, but like the proverbial fish-in-water, do not know what water is:

*God is in the soul and the soul is in God
as the sea is in the fish and the fish is in the sea.*

These then are the two means whereby the Master takes the soul Godward: the Way of Light (*Jyoti Marg*) and the way of Sound (*Sruti Marg*). All the great teachers, the world over, led their followers along these paths, which, of course, are not exclusive but complementary to each other, one leading to the other. They come from time to time, to lead us back to the mansion of our Father, while we, like the prodigal children, are busy elsewhere, knocking about restlessly from pillar to post, ever a prey to chance winds and waters in the storming sea of life, while our rich heritage in heaven is lying neglected. Swami Ji says: "Your crown and scepter are lying unattended in the Kingdom of God."

Guru Nanak also says:

*O join ye in the glorious music of bliss,
And live eternally absorbed in the divine.*

This inner music is the expression of the Power-of-God working in each one of us. We can, by communion with the Word, reach the place from where these celestial strains are coming. This is the true home of the soul, now wandering in exile on the earth-plane, while the Father-God is looking forward to our homecoming: "Come ye home, O friend! Return ye to thy native abode."

This music is coming down to give us a call back so that we may live in peace and plenty hereafter.

Now that the call has come, answer the call and start on the way-back: "With the God-head revealed within, what else remains? Thy labors ended, be ye still like a polestar."

When by the grace of the merciful Master, the Power-of-God is made manifest within, you come into your own, and see the Reality face to face. You have nothing more to do. That Power now does everything for you, and you find yourself but a mere onlooker in a pantomime show of the world. You have to commune with the holy Word. It will gradually lead you back to your eternal home. There will then be one more descent to the earth-plane, not, at least, like a prisoner to serve a sentence of life-imprisonment under the compulsive force of karmas, but under a divine command to fulfill the purpose of God:

With the joyous peals of the inner music the Lord Himself shall come to receive thee. — Gurbani

Just as in the outer world, we play trumpets and drums to express our delight, so also in the inner-world, all are greeted by sublime soul-enlivening strains of Celestial Music, when we proceed heavenward in the company of the *Gurudev* (the radiant form of the Guru). Where does all this lead to? We are now being led to the source of all lights, the Father of Lights, where there is nothing but eternal Light and eternal Music, uncreated and fathomless and yet the material and efficient cause of all created things, and as such a veritable connecting link between the Creator and His creation, between heaven and earth. *Naam* then is the name for the Power-of-God, the primal manifestation of the Nameless One, embodying as it does the holy Light and holy choir.

This is the only way leading Godward. We may talk as much of it as we may like, but mere philosophy will not help us in getting nearer the truth. The more we may theorize the further we get away from the Reality. It is the mystic experience within the laboratory of the mind that counts, for it links us directly with the divinity and this experience we can get with the help and grace of some man-of-God.

A competent Master-soul may, if he so likes, put even a child on the Sound-current, which serves alike the young and the old, the learned and the ignorant. Everyone can derive benefit by communion with holy Word, irrespective of caste, color or creed, age, sex or vocation. That is not possible in other forms of yogic discipline. *Jnana Yoga*, for instance, requires a highly developed intellect and skill capable to ratiocinate and deduce conclusions. If *Jnana Yoga* requires the intellect of Shankara, the *Bhakti Yoga* calls for the heart of Buddha; and the *Karam Yoga*, the hand of a warrior like prince Arjuna [one of the five Pandava princes to whom Lord Krishna gave out the divine discourse known as the *Bhagvad Gita* — the Song Celestial].

With all these accomplishments and arduous disciplines, one still remains in the realm of duality; and until one is able to rise above it, one cannot reach a state of Oneness. In the present age, Yoga has come to be associated merely with

health and vigor and longevity. The *Surat Shabd Yoga* (the Yoga of the Sound Current) on the other hand, aims at the highest union, the union of the *Surat* or soul-current with *Shabd* or the Sound Current, which is made manifest by a Godman, thus coupling the two in eternal relationship. This then is the direct way to God.

A real Godman is capable of giving this marvelous practical experience to any number of people at a single sitting, irrespective of their different religious faiths and beliefs, their social modes of life and their worldly status, and all other types of affiliations. All this he does by just imparting his own life impulse. Once this seed is sown in the heart of an individual, it cannot but fructify in course of time, for no power on earth can render it ineffective:

Who is greater than God to annul His Power (once made manifest in man)? Oh, none.

When a Master-soul appears on the earth-plane, there descends along with him an irresistible avalanche of spirituality. The purpose of his descent, as I have been explaining, is to unite all the children of God at one level, the level of the soul in man, and then awaken them to the life of the spirit by revealing in them the Light and Life of God. Such great souls have always been very rare, and it is our proud privilege that we were associated with Hazur. Such souls are never bound down by physical and mental limitations, though they may appear as such. Their inner power transcends all that is of the world, for it can work at will, at any level it may choose to do, whether in the *Brahmand* or even in the beyond into purely spiritual realms. Such power is limitless and eternal. It never dies with the death of the body, but eternally remains working forever and ever, no matter in whose form and from what pole.

He is, therefore, not to be taken as a mere human being. The human in him has been trans-humanized in spite of the human form that he keeps up for the people of the world, for man is to be the teacher of man. Without his teachings and practical guidance here and in inner planes, we cannot know of God, much less practice Him, realize Him, and be one with Him. Hence, there is the greatest need to contact a living Master, wherever he may be:

*The Beloved by my side is a guardian angel.
He guards me in all odd moments, here and hereafter.*
—Gurbani

He is a never-failing friend, and comes to our rescue wherever we may be, even when we stand before the judgment seat of the Great Judge to render an account of our deeds: "*Dharam Rai* is obliged to tear the karmic balance sheet, O Nanak! when the Master squares up the karmic account."

Like a master liquidator, he once and forever liquidates all our karmic debts and liabilities incurred in innumerable ages in the past, and in this life-span, and lying stocked and stored, heaps upon heaps, for future dispensations. It is not

an easy task, and none but a karmic-free soul can discharge such a Herculean task of making one *Nehkarma* or karma-free.

To meet a competent Master is a great blessing indeed. Guru Amardas, third in succession to Guru Nanak, was able to contact a Satguru (Guru Angad) after a long search of no less than seventy years. Of his memorable meeting he tells us: "When I grew tired of performing countless deeds, all of a sudden I came across my Master."

When and how does a great Master-soul find his way to us, for it is he who comes our way to help us; and it is not for the blind, as we are, to find our way to the enlightened one:

*Satguru picks us up in the fullness of time,
And he attunes our spirit with the holy Word.*

The communion with the Word is the highest and the most natural way back to God. Everyone, young or old, male or female, can benefit from this. But how? The answer is: Be steady and waver not; and depend upon the words of the Guru.

Those who love the Master and follow his commandments are ever blessed in this world and in the worlds beyond: "Whatever the Guru says, I keep tightly tied in my heart."

This is why Christ emphatically asked his disciples:
Be ye the doers of the Word and not the hearers alone.

And again:

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

I am the vine; ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

*If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love;
. . . — St. John 15: 4, 5, 7 & 10*

We must learn to practice and live up to what the Master says so as to derive the greatest benefit from his teachings. My Master very often used to say: "What is the good of taking a medicine if we do not use it?" By keeping it in the cupboard we cannot cure ourselves of the disease. It may be that the seed of *Naam* once sown does not perish, and a human birth in more congenial conditions is assured in future; yet is it worth our while to come again in the

prison house of the world for another round? Why not settle it here for all times to come, rather than to pass through the same process over again:

*He who takes refuge in the Satguru,
God Himself comes again to his rescue. — Gurbani*

Man is generally described as an inverted tree, for his roots are in the eye focus, the seat of the soul above, while his limbs and branches are spreading downwards in the world. As it is by the roots that a tree draws its sustenance from the soil, so our roots, the soul-currents, draw their food for us from the Sound-current made manifest within. It is thus the Master-soul that provides us with *manna* or the Bread of Life and elixir or the Living Water.

It is by linking the soul-current with the Sound-current that a perfect Master provides the means wherewith the spirit gets its substance and helps to keep the mind and the body under proper control. The more one partakes of this heavenly food, the more one grows from strength to strength, until one becomes a living soul, fully conscious of the divine-power playing in and around him.

On reaching the court of God, one gets a right royal welcome from the spirits already there. This is how the law of divine dispensation works and God fulfills His purpose. When He sees us crying helplessly in the iron-grip of toils, troubles, and tribulations with no way out of the giant mill-stones of the world, His compassion is stirred to the core, and He hastens the process of deliverance and reveals to us the avenues of escape through His elect. Nanak says: "One who gets a Satguru by his side, all his accounts are settled right here and now."

What is stated above is perfectly correct. We, however, delight to take things by halves, as may suit our own convenience, and cleverly try to distort the truth by looking at it obliquely. If we, on our part, do our duty towards the Master by abstaining from the wrongful acts, then alone the Master absolves us from the accumulated sins of past ages. We must, therefore, learn to stand and hold our ground firmly, somewhere, before we can make a beginning for the inner journey that lies ahead.

In the time of Hazur, whenever a person got up in the congregation to confess a deviation from the path of rectitude, Hazur used to lift his hand and graciously say: "Thus far and no further." He exhorted sincere repentance for the past, admonished against future lapses, and strongly advised meditation (communion with the holy Word) as the sole panacea for all ills of life. It may be possible to cure a person of the poison already taken and in the stomach, provided, of course, no further doses of it are swallowed. What do we do? We cry and cry with convulsions and contortions and yet go on taking more and more of the deleterious matter. This is how Hazur, in such simple words, used to advise all defaulters.

A Master-soul looks after his *jivas* more tenderly than any mother would take care of her child. We, like a newborn babe, as we are for the Master, can hardly

know and much less realize the loving care he bestows on us and the way he saves us at every step from coming to any harm, and guides us on the inner spiritual path leading to the Kingdom of God. "Strange are His doings:" Nanak glorifies Him. Isn't it really strange that God Himself sends us into the world and again He Himself (in the garb of a Godman) comes to take us back. His greatness defies all understanding:

*O Nanak! Satguru opens the inner eye.
And one begins to see Truth within oneself.*

This then is the secret of God-realization. It needs no special qualifications. It is not necessary to leave one's hearth and home. Live in the world, amidst your kith and kin, make an honest livelihood for yourself, help your friends and relations. Alongside this routine of family life, practice the holy Word as may have been advised by a Master-soul. You will, in course of time, become a changed man — totally changed from what you were and see for yourself how God's Power works for you and does everything for you. You will become altogether free and fearless.

Whenever a Master-saint comes into the world, he showers his blessings on all alike. We sitting here can hardly do justice to the glory that was Hazur's. A Godman like God Himself is indefinable and unfathomable. Blessed indeed are they who had an opportunity to see him and meet him, came in direct contact with him, and had the good fortune to be associated with him.

A *faqir* (mendicant) once came to Prophet Mohammad. As the Prophet was not at home, the *faqir* went away disappointed. On his return, the Prophet, when informed by his servant about the *faqir*, asked him if he (the servant) had met the *faqir*. The servant said he had only had a glimpse of him as the *faqir* had by then turned his back and was going away. The Prophet blessed the servant at his good luck of having seen such a sage, even from behind. Such indeed is the glory of a person who meets a man-of-God, what to speak of those who met Hazur face to face, sat at his lotus feet, and drew inspiration from him.

We must strive to be the worthy children of the worthy Father so that the world may glorify Him. It can be done not by mere acknowledgement, but by actually following and living up to his teachings. Every father wishes that his son should excel him in prowess and prestige. But who can excel the Godman? Should we become Guru-man, this would be quite enough. What I mean to stress is that we may practice the Word and commune with the Word, the living manifestation of the living God, revealed unto us by the God-in-man (Hazur).

Hazur was never tired of telling us that the path of Light and Sound was the basis of all the religions. Socrates spoke of an "Ethereal Sound" which led him to a wondrous world quite unknown to him before. Goethe referred to it as "Music of the Spheres." Pythagoras described it as "Light and Music of all harmonies." In the *Vedas* it is addressed as *Vakya* and *Jyoti*. Zoroaster lighted the eternal and unending fires and practiced *Sraosha*. When Siddhartha, the Prince of Peace, witnessed the Light within him, he truly became the

Enlightened One, and the Buddhists to this day worship and adore the unknown and unknowable Power with the words *Aum Mani Padme Hum*, which means that the *Aum* shines resplendently like a crest-jewel, emitting the sound like that of a distant thunder.

This then is the most ancient thing that has come down to us through the ages extending back to the hoary past. This is the great truth that Hazur placed before us; and with a twinkle in his eyes and a smile on his lips always adding, "Should you, in your search, find something nobler than this, please accept it by all means and let me also know of it."

But we have with all our endeavors not yet been able to find anything more sublime than this; and all our research in the realm of religion has revealed that Truth, the manifest Truth is based on the twin-principle of Light and Sound. Should we come across a Master-of-Truth and the latter condescends to enliven our "self" with his own life-impulse, what will be the result? This human life will have its fulfillment. How fortunate we are. We did meet a Master-of-Truth; we sat at his feet; he accepted us and blessed us by revealing in us the holy Word and by contacting us with this audible-life-stream.

The first and foremost task that a really great Master-soul sets before himself is to unite on a common plane all the children of God, no matter to what religious order they owe allegiance.

It was at the behest of Hazur that this forum of *Ruhani Satsang* came to be established. It is a common meeting place for the people of all religious beliefs and diverse faiths. It is not embellished with sectarian signs and symbols of any one religion or the other. It is just a training ground, or call it a school of spirituality where spirituality is preached alike by Mahatmas of all religious orders, and practical steps are taken to inculcate the moral and spiritual values in the vast congregations of people comprising all shades of religious opinion. Spirituality is the rich heritage of mankind — greatly cherished in all times and in all climes — but appearing and disappearing like a stream as it meanders in and out of the thick foliage of doubt, suspicion, and mistrust that the people generally have in their work-a-day world, which is full of untold anxiety and fears.

As and when we lose sight of this priceless human heritage, and find ourselves going down in the scales of human values, God in His infinite mercy provides us with the means to reorientate us by manifesting His own divinity through the agency of some human being of His own choosing and at a place He thinks best. In comparatively recent times Swami Ji Maharaj revived this age-old and half-forgotten science, and it has come down to us and we are benefiting from it. It behooves us then to make ourselves worthy of this great treasure-house which is ours. We must strive to be clean in our thoughts, sweet and courteous in our words, kind and gentle in our deeds, and above all we must regularly devote some substantial time every day to the practice of the holy Word and thereby equip ourselves for the Kingdom of God within us.

It is all Hazur's Grace that he accepted us as his very own, contacted us with the Light and Voice of God by revealing the same to us; and we ought to be thankful to him every moment of our life. Even a hawker when he returns to his hut in the evening, takes a count of his earnings for the day. A shopkeeper similarly draws up a balance-sheet of his profit and loss account every six months or so, if not oftener. We have to see where we were and where we are now. If we are better than before, it is all right; and, if not, what are the reasons for lagging behind? Are we at least maintaining the capital, the stock-in-trade with which we were provided, the experience of inner perception and inner audition that he gave us; or have we altogether lost everything by our negligence, carelessness, and maladroitness?

All these questions need our serious consideration. We must see how we can develop and extend of that experience with which we started on the first day. We must, if necessary, have a refresher course from some advanced brother-in-faith so that whatever difficulties beset us are overcome, and we are enabled to go ahead. The revelation of the holy Word is a priceless gift of the great Master and, mind it, it has been given to us freely and fully and on trust, and, therefore, should on no account be allowed to slip through the fingers, simply because it has not cost us anything in terms of worldly money.

I remember, some Americans once wrote to Hazur that they were quite prepared and willing to exchange their temporal wealth that they had in abundance for some of the spiritual wealth with him. Do you know what reply he gave? He told them that he was not in need of their worldly riches for he had in surfeit the Godly wealth of Naam, and that like all other free gifts of God — light, air, and water — he was here to share his spiritual treasures with all the children of God wherever they happened to be.

Such high souls come into the world with a divine mission to remind the people of their long forgotten heritage, of which we can hardly dream because of the smoke-colored glasses on our eyes: They come into the world for no other purpose but to look after the lost sheep, the morally and spiritually sick, so as to lead them back to the fold.

Let us, therefore, render our grateful thanks to him — [the Great Master](#) — who has already put us on the path — and is still putting others likewise. It is all his grace that he is looking after us from the spiritual planes within, and is ever ready to reveal his radiant form within if we just turn inside towards him. He is keenly awaiting us at the eye-focus to shower his multitudinous blessings upon us. Let us strive our very best to do our part and reach unto him to enable him to pull us up and lead us on to his Eternal Home.