

**Selections from *Sat Sandesh*
and Other Writings from
Master Kirpal Singh**

**Jap Ji: The Message of Guru Nanak
Stanza 33 with explanatory note by
Master Kirpal Singh**

Guru Nanak and His Teachings
Sat Sandesh, January 1970 p. 25
(Excerpt)

**The Mystery of Death
Chapter 4 — Death in Bondage**

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Jap Ji: The Message of Guru Nanak Stanza 33 with explanatory note by Master Kirpal Singh

STANZA XXXIII

You have no power to speak or to be silent,
No power to ask or to give.
You have no power over life or death,
No power over wealth or state for which you are ever
restless.
You have no power over spiritual awakening,
No power to know the Truth, or to achieve your own
salvation.
Let him who thinks he has the power, try.
O Nanak! none is high or low, but by His Will.

* * *

From here begins the final part of Jap Ji. In it, Nanak gives a rapid survey of the various spiritual realms that the soul has to traverse in its Homeward journey. They are five in number:

- (1) Dharm Khand or the Realm of Action.*
- (2) Gian Khand or the Realm of Knowledge.*
- (3) Sarm Khand or the Realm of Ecstasy.*
- (4) Karm Khand or the Realm of Grace.*
- (5) Sach Khand or the Realm of Truth.*

The first is the Realm of Dharm, which the soul must fully realize before it can rise to the next higher spiritual plane above it.

This is the stage where the embodied souls must work fully cognizant that it is He who made the world phenomena with all the immutable laws which bind one

and all. The law of cause and effect nobody can escape. What a man sows, he must reap. There is none outside His domain.

Men's actions go with them after their death and are weighed in the scales of God's justice. Those found wanting are sent for judgment according to their actions. The only thing acceptable at His Court is "communion with and practice of the Divine Word." Those who adhere to it, are honored.

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Democracies have failed, but a democracy can live, survive and triumph when two conditions are fulfilled:

- (1) When sectarianism and fanaticism perish; and
- (2) when States bow in reverence to a superior law, the law of fellowship and human sympathy, and above all to the Infinite whose Voice rings from end to end “Children of the Earth, ye all are one!”

Nanak came to proclaim this twofold truth. The real and lasting freedom cannot be achieved without faith in solidarity and freedom of humanity. How?

By:

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

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

The Mystery of Death

Chapter 4 — Death in Bondage

In nature, death follows life and life proceeds from death. Death as a cessation of life in one form is but a prelude to re-living in another, and generally at a higher level of existence than before, and in better and more congenial environs.

Evolution is the law of life and it consists in active flowering of the latent possibilities in the spirit-matter, and comprises in its compass, not only evolution of the spirit-matter which grows more plastic and translucent in its onward march, but also evolution of forms from minerals to human entities and lastly expansion of self-consciousness. The so-called dead matter is not really dead though the energy in it may, for some time, be in a congealed state.

A worn-out garment, that has outgrown its utility, is to be cast off and replaced by a new one, moulded in a fashion one desires the most. Such is the law of Dame Nature, the handiwork of God. The kindly Father, it is said, hath ordained that His children may have what they ardently wish for.

In providing the essentials of life on the earth-plane, Love, Light and Life and the necessary adjuncts thereto, like earth, water, sun, air and space together with all the means of sustenance, the Supreme Lord of the universe is munificent beyond measure, and provides the same freely to all, though each one gets according to his need and measure of descent. His bounties are innumerable and inexhaustible, and for ages man has fed upon them in diverse ways. Not satisfied with the limitless gifts, man ever craves for more — more of silver and gold, more of amenities and conveniences of life and more of everything else, and he struggles and strives endlessly for them.

Instead of being grateful to the Lord for all that He has, by His grace, provided for us, we curse ourselves, curse those around us in better and more affluent circumstances than us, and curse the innocent stars above and do not hesitate to cavil at, and criticize in stinging terms, our own fate or destiny which we have by our own actions, forged for ourselves. ‘With all his possessions, one loses his head for just a pittance.’

Human life is a great privilege and a rare asset and blessing. It comes after passing through a long evolutionary process extending over time unending. It is an opportunity for amassing the riches of spirituality that lie hidden within us and of which we are hardly aware. But the majority of us are after ephemeral non-essentials — the sense pleasures of the earth-life, and not real happiness.

For these short-lived and fleeting pleasures, which we may or may not get, we, by all means, fair or foul, try to move heaven and earth, and more often than not pay dearly, even with our own life, and quit the stage of life with many a deep regret for one thing or the other, and for the unworthy means employed, and for the sorrows suffered in the attempt.

Nature is not extravagant in her design and purpose. As one thinks, so he becomes. Our feelings and emotions, thoughts and passions, desires and aspirations do not die with the death of the body. They constitute an inner vest, an undergarment (the astral body) below the physical cloak; and the spirit clothed therein, goes out to be covered by yet another mantle, drawing upon the karmic seeds lying in store in the seed-body, the precious treasure-chest. It is this causal or instrumental body with its vast resources that helps its inmate, the spirit, in fashioning a new mould, a fresh tabernacle of flesh, which may serve as a fitting vehicle for the fulfilment of what lies uppermost in the unconscious self.

The curtain finally rises, unfolding the entire panorama of life down to the minutest detail ere one passes out of sight from the stage of life. On death-bed one may get a glimpse of reality, but then it is too late to comprehend it. This process works on and on, giving at the end of each span on earth, fresh momentum to the wheel of life and death with its natural concomitants of joys and sorrows, weal and woe — sometime up and sometime low, moving in interminable gyres, as one is never satiated with all that one gets in one's sojourn on earth, and goes on adding new hopes and new desires, mixed with many a regret for what he wanted and did not get.

He is thus unwittingly engaged perpetually in sowing the dragon's teeth, and life after life, he spends in fighting his self-started battles with the self-raised armed bands which, like shadows, follow on his heels as untamed furies or the avenging spirits.

Nature, like the potter's wheel, provides the means in the form of many clayey pots, one after the other, for slaking the insatiable thirst and expectation of each individual. Weighed down by countless desires from top to toe, one makes a slave of himself. Without them one could revel in his Godhood. What is man after all? — God plus desires. And conversely what is God? — Man minus desires.

The great philosopher-poet, William Wordsworth (1770-1850), draws a beautiful pen-picture of a growing child in his memorable "Ode on Immortality":

*The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, Who is our home:*

*Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing boy. . .
Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
And, even with something of a mother's mind,
And no unworthy aim,
The homely nurse doth all she can
To make her foster-child, her inmate man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.*

This then is the sordid picture of life on earth as we witness from day to day. Ever having our fill, as preordained, we are yet hungry—ravenously hungry for more and more of pelf and power, more of ephemeral pleasures and sense-enjoyments. Far from being thankful for what we have of the bounties of nature, ‘we look before and after, and pine for what is not.’

Nature cannot remain a silent spectator of our unappeased gluttony and with her magic wand turns us, Circe-like, into swine so that we may have our fill of the piffle and be done away with. It is only some wise Ulysses, armed with a magic-flower from Mercury (the messenger of gods), who can fight the enchantress on her own ground and rescue his followers, getting them reconverted from swine into men, and along with them all others held in captivity by the sorceress in many different forms, each according to his or her innate nature. It is the type of the ruling passions that determine our course of life, not only here right now in the living present, but also in the hereafter.

Now let us have a look at the inevitable process of change called death. This transference from one state of life to another is a necessary adjunct of life; and takes place in its own good time but with a swift and stunning suddenness, the more so when it is least expected. Death knows no calendar, and no one can predict it, nor can

anyone escape from it with all his cunning and wit. Each living thing has its own allotted span of lifetime. We all live, move and have our being in time, and when the sands of time run out, this change comes and continues to do so, time and again, until one gets beyond the farthest bounds of time and arises into timelessness.

Death, then, is something terribly real and unavoidable. It perhaps seems to be the only real thing in the midst of the unrealities of the world. Everyone, rich or poor, king or beggar, young or old, healthy or diseased, has to pass through death's trap-door, whether one likes it or not. One may live long or short, a hundred years or just a while; but one cannot live on eternally in one and the same life form, which in course of time, is sure to decay and become wearily burdensome, a millstone around the neck as it were, and one in sheer desperation may cry out in anguish for a quick riddance from the heavy load hanging around the self in him:

*Neither kings nor beggars remain,
All go, each one in his own time.* —Ramkali M.1

A Muslim darvesh therefore advises:

*All thy life thou hast bemoaned the death of others,
Why not thou sit for a while and ponder over thy own
fate?*

Is death a painful process? is the next question. Generally speaking, it is so with most. The scriptures tell us of the excruciating pain that a dying person suffers at the time of death. In the *Bhagwad Purana*, it is said that one experiences the horrors of death-pangs as if one is bitten by a million scorpions at once. The holy *Quran* likens the throes of death to the condition of a person when a thorny hedge were to be pulled through the alimentary canal from one end to the other. The Sikh scriptures also speak in much the same strain: The life-currents are wrenched out.

All such statements are merely illustrative of the immensity of the torture that one experiences when the demons of death appear to forcibly take the spirit out of the body. What actually happens at that time, it is only the dying man who knows. No one, after the actual experience of death, has ever returned from across the borders of the death-land to tell us of the exact nature of his sufferings. Each one suffers unto himself and becomes silent forever. To be on the death-bed is a veritable nailing on the cross, and the death-chamber is a charnel-house.

One can hardly stand unmoved, when some people toss restlessly for days on end with a death-rattle in their throat, writhing in extreme agony on the death-bed. Who can assuage the tortures of death? All stand helplessly by; the best of physicians administering drugs to the last, the attendant nurses standing on toe-tips, the nearest of kith and kin with tearful eyes and woebegone looks and sombre faces, awaiting the inevitable end. Who hears the piteous cries of the poor victim and his life companions, his wife and children?

*As the wife with hairs dishevelled moans,
The solitary spirit wings its way alone. —Kabir*

Of Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.), king of Macedonia and conqueror of the world as known at the time, it is said that it had been prophesied that he would die only when the earth would be of steel and the sky of gold. As neither of these two phenomena could be possible, the king was lulled into a false sense of perennial security. He imagined and believed that like the Olympian gods, he was immortal.

After long and wearisome campaigns in the Far East, as he was passing through the desert near Babylon, on his way back to Greece, he was stricken with fever. Being unable to hold on to the saddle, he was helped to

dismount, and one of the generals spread his steel coat-of-mail on the ground, lined as it was with velvet on the inside, and made the king lie thereon, and held up outstretched his gold-embroidered umbrella over his face to protect him from the scorching rays of the fierce desert sun. It was then that the great hero of many a battle, the invincible conqueror, realized that his end was near, for he was now lying on the steely ground with a golden awning over him.

He was overtaken by consternation. Addressing the best of the physicians who were attending upon him, he, with tearful eyes, begged that something should be done to save him for the time being, so that he could reach home and meet his mother, whom he greatly loved. But one and all expressed their helplessness. He offered to them, at first, half his kingdom and then the whole if they could, by their medical skill, procure for him that much of respite. But who could help to stay the divine decree?

On the tenth day of illness, as his generals one by one, passed through the tented chamber of the dying king, he bade them good-bye and directed that at his funeral, both his hands be kept out of the shroud so that all could see that a great emperor was leaving empty-handed, just the way he came into the world.

Similarly, we hear of the sad story of a great and talented queen who ruled over vast dominions. She was adored by her people for her dazzling beauty, and admired for her sagacity. She had ruled wisely and well for quite a long time. Brought up in the lap of luxury, with hundreds of attendants, she could not for a moment believe that there was such a thing as 'death'. When her end came, she was stricken with great sorrow and overtaken by poignant grief. The royal physicians by her bed-side could do nothing to assuage her fears and torments. As death stared her in the face, they tried to console her and advised her to prepare for the last journey. 'What,' in her

horror, she exclaimed. And where was she going? she wondered.

‘Alas! to the land from where there is no return,’ was the simple reply. She could not believe her ears. ‘Am I dreaming?’ she enquired.

‘No, you will have to go, your majesty.’ ‘Is there a land of no return? and if so, where is it?’ ‘It is far off from this world,’ said the courtiers.

‘Could not you locate it for me in time? And what preparations have you made to make my stay over there comfortable?’ asked the queen.

‘None, your majesty.’

‘How many of you will accompany me to that land?’ inquired the terrified queen.

‘You will have to go alone and by yourself, madam,’ said the courtiers. ‘How many attendants will I be permitted to take with me?’

‘None, not one.’

Such, indeed, is our ignorance of the realities of life. We are clever, very clever, in the workaday affairs of the world. But strange as it may seem, we know next to nothing of the stern retribution that awaits all of us; and we have, like all others, to go all alone and empty-handed.

‘Naked I came into the world, and naked shall I go,’ says the hymnologist. That, indeed, is the inevitable fate of all. Weeping we come into the world, and weeping we depart from the world.

To come weeping is understandable. A new-born babe does weep as he emerges from the chamber of the womb,

for he is severed from the Light of lights, the Light of life, that has been sustaining him right through the period of gestation in that chamber, suspended upside down. This is why we generally keep some sort of light on for a few nights after the birth of the child, and whenever he cries, we turn his face towards that light, or at times, we play the rattle to amuse the baby and quieten him.

But why should we weep at the time of departure, when on the way back to the parental care of the loving Father? It was open to us to re-link the strands of life in us by consciously working for that end. This we, willy-nilly, do not care to do, and the human existence from cradle to the grave runs waste. Once this opportunity is lost, we go down in the scale of existence.

To fall from the top rung of the ladder, more often than not, proves fatal. Snapping ties with acquired relationships of the world, spread over a number of years, is painful and the departure terrifically poignant, the more so as we are quite unprepared for the quit-notice that is sprung on us. We do not know how to quit the rented house and where we are to go. The prospect of being thrown out into the unknown as we take the life after death to be, bewilders us. All this works up a state of horror, unimaginable horror of the worst type. This is why it is said:

*Remember thou the day you came weeping into the world
to the jubilation of those around thee;
Live thou a life that you may depart laughing amidst the
weeping and wailing of all.*

Francis Quarles (1592-1644), a mystic poet, speaking of death tells us:

*If thou expect death as a friend, prepare to entertain it; if
thou expect death as an enemy, prepare to overcome it;
death has no advantage, but when it comes a stranger.*

Herein lies the difference between the Eastern and the Western thought on death. St. Paul, describing death as ‘the last enemy of man’ said that he died daily ‘swallowing death in victory’, and mockingly asked: ‘O grave, where is thy sting?’

The Eastern savants hail it as an occasion for union with the Beloved. The conclusion, however, is the same in both cases; viz., that death claims an advantage over us only when it comes suddenly and swiftly as an unexpected stranger, neither as an expected friend nor as a dreaded foe, and we are entirely unprepared to receive it or to meet its challenge.

Those who are prepared for it and are ever ready, they receive it, welcome it, taking it as a home-going and a means of union with the Beloved. A true lover of God, even when condemned to death for heresy, cheerfully lays his head on the block and beseechingly calls the executioner, praying to make a short shrift of his body with his sword, as he sees reflected in it the Light of his Beloved (God).

After all, what is death? “Death,” says Euripides, “is a debt we must all pay.” This being the case, why not pay off the debt and be forever free from the obligation? The body is the ransom or the dower which the soul has to deliver to obtain ultimate release from the *Law of Retribution*.

To have some idea of what happens after death, let us have recourse to the scriptural texts. The Masters divide mankind into four categories.

In the first place, there are those who have not had the good fortune to take refuge in any Sant Satguru, and these form a considerable bulk. They have to go, all alone, each a solitary soul by itself, without any friend and companion. All such souls have to appear before, and abide by the decrees of the just-god (*Dharam Rai*), who

dispenses stern and strict justice on the principle of ‘as you sow, so shall you reap’, without compassion or commiseration. This is what is called the inexorable law of karma that works relentlessly. This law does not take any count of extraneous circumstances and admits of no exceptions:

*Castes and colours avail naught there;
One gets his meed according to his deeds. —Asa M. 3*

*Every way of a man is right in his own eyes;
but the Lord pondereth the hearts. — Prov. 21:2*

At the appointed time of which no one is aware, good angels (*Ramgans*) or bad angels (*Yamgans*), as the case may be, come to forcibly take the spirit out of the body, and one has to go along with them. They escort the spirit to the judgment-seat, so that each has to render account of his thoughts, words and deeds.

*Fool! Thinkest thou that because no Boswell is there to note thy jargon, it therefore dies and is buried. Nothing dies, nothing can die. The idlest word thou speakest is a seed cast into time, which brings fruit to all eternity.
—Carlyle*

Jesus in no uncertain terms has declared:
And I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof on the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified: by thy words thou shalt be condemned. —Matt. 12: 36-37

All thoughts, feelings and emotions, all words uttered intentionally or unintentionally, and all deeds done premeditatedly or casually, leave indelible impressions (*samskaras* or *naqsh-i-amal*) on the tablet of the mind, and the account has to be rendered after death.

It is all a summary procedure, but just, with no provision for logic-chopping or argument or appeal to any higher power, nor can there be any chance of release therefrom.

The one who has indulged all his life in sinful doings is sent to hell (*Narak* or *Dozakh*) to undergo the penal servitude for a particular length of time as his deeds may merit, and thereby rid himself of the evil impressions, and understand the law that works for his ultimate good. When the allotted time runs out, he once again takes birth so that he may have another chance to lead a reformed life freed from the evil now washed off, and make a fresh start avoiding the pitfalls of the past.

If one leads a life of righteousness, he is assigned a place in heaven or paradise (*Swarg*, *Baikunth* or *Bahisht*), where he, for some time enjoys the fruits of his good deeds, after which he too once again, comes down to the earth-plane.

Thus, all persons ensconced in the karmic wheel of life move up and down by the ceaseless momentum of their own deeds. There is no escape from this ever-revolving giant wheel until one, by a stroke of good fortune, meets some Sant Satguru and the latter accepts him and helps him to a way-out and to the God-way.

The spirits on coming out of the nether world of *Pluto*, gradually work their way up from the mineral to the vegetable kingdom, and then to the world of insects and reptiles, and on to that of the feathery fraternity, and next to the quadrupeds, and finally to human beings:

*After passing through the wheel of the eighty-four thou
hast gained the top,
O Nanak! now take hold of the Power of God, and be
thou eternally free.*

—Shri Rag M. 5

Even the Devas or deities, the various gods and goddesses who are said to reign in regions of bliss, are there on account of their highly meritorious deeds on the lower planes. As soon as they exhaust the merit gained, they have also to return to the physical world.

The blessed Lord Krishna, the adorable one, once explaining to Udhav, a devoted disciple of his, about the working of the *Law of Karma*, pointing to an insect crawling in the filth said:

O Udhav, this insect that you see before you, has oft times been Indra, the god of thunder and rain, and has oft times been grovelling in dirt as at present. Such indeed is the fate of all.

Even the *Avtaras* or incarnations, the embodiments of the Powers of God, are not immune from the inflexible working of the karmic wheel and are called to judgment. Like a soldier in the army, an *Avtara* is not immune from liability under the civil law, in addition to his obligations under the military law governing his profession.

Even if he may be doing his duty under the command of his superiors, which is law unto him under military regulations, he may incur a civil liability under the civil law. His is a two-fold responsibility: one under the army law — to wit, to obey implicitly what the officers order him to do on pain of being court-martialed, and the other under the civil administration if, in the discharge of his duties, he is found to have exceeded the limits.

Gods and goddesses, and the incarnations of various God-powers, are therefore included in this category, so far as the law of karma goes. With all their privileged position, they, and the entire hosts of angels, are under the law and not above the law. This is why they too seek human birth, in which lies the possibility of escape from the toils and struggles on to the abode of peace- eternal and life ever-lasting.

Even the great *Rishis* with all their austerities and penances, when their end draws nigh, wish and aspire for a human body in preference to celestial abodes in heaven as the shining ones (*Devas*). They do so because it is in this way alone that they stand the chance of contacting a Satguru, getting instructions from Him, and rising above the inexorable law of causation or action and reaction.

Heroes like Arjun and the Pandva brothers except Yudhishtira, the dharam-putra (the embodiment of dharam), as he was commonly known and believed to be, were cast into the nether regions for engaging in a war, though of righteousness, and enjoined by no less a personage than the blessed Lord Krishna, because in doing so they could not, with all His exhortations, divest themselves of the idea of doership.

Again, of Lord Krishna himself, it is said that he met his death by the chance arrow of a *bhil*, thus requiting his past karma committed ages before as Rama, who killed the invincible Bali, a forest prince, by the artifice of shooting an arrow from behind the cover of a tree. Rama and Krishna, it may be mentioned, were both incarnations of Lord Vishnu in different ages.

Similarly, of King Dasrath, the father of Rama, it is said that one night while hunting in the forest, he heard a gurgling sound that appeared to him to be of some wild animal lapping water close by among the rushes and the reeds. Guided by the sound, he directed his arrow in that direction, hitting a young man, Sarvan, who had gone to the riverside to fill a pitcher with water for his blind and thirsty parents, whom he was carrying in a pannier across his shoulder, and had just left them at some distance.

Hearing the piteous anguished cry of his victim, the king rushed towards the dying man, who told him of his plight and begged him to take the water to his parents.

Full of grief, the king went to the aged couple and told them of the mishap. They could hardly bear the shock and died bemoaning their lot, wishing the same fate as theirs for the unknown perpetrator of the crime.

In course of time, the king also met the same fate, when he died in bitter agony caused by the pangs of separation from his son Rama, who had been exiled for fourteen long years.

This is how *Nemesis* overtakes each one in his turn, meting out what is due unto him. Thus, each one comes in his own way into the world, and goes out of it into the valley of death under the compulsive force of karma.

In the second category fall all persons who come in contact with a living Perfect Master, are accepted by Him, and initiated into the esoteric science of the soul, but for one reason or another, are not able to develop Communion with the Holy Word to any appreciable extent, be it on account of indulgence in sense-pleasures, or because of sloth or lethargy, or something else.

They stand on a different footing from those in the first category. At the time of their death, when the soul-currents begin to withdraw from the body, or a little earlier, the Satguru in his Radiant Form appears within, to take charge of the departing spirit. His Radiant Form gladdens the heart of the devotee, and he gets so absorbed in Him that all attachments of the world fall off like autumn leaves, and he fearlessly and joyously follows Him into the valley of the shadows of death.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me,
— says the Psalmist (23:4).

And this indeed is His troth — ‘Everyman, I will go with thee, and be thy guide; In thy most need to go by thy

side.’ Again, ‘So . . . I shall not leave thee nor forsake thee till the end of the world.’

The Master constantly keeps a watch over the affairs of the disciple. He is ever with him in weal or woe. “He stands by him even before the judgment-seat of God,” says Nanak. With the darveshes, there is no reckoning of deeds of their disciples. The Master is all in all, the sole judge and arbiter of the disciples’ deeds, whether these be righteous or unrighteous, and deals with them as he thinks best:

The Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him an authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. —John 5:26-27

It is because of such a deep solicitude for the disciple that Nanak so emphatically declares:

*Love thou the true Master and earn the riches true,
He who believes in Him unto the last, the Master rescues
him true.
Like wandering sprites, the mind-ridden roam up and
down,
Animals in human form — devoid of light through and
through.
— Malar War. I*

Distance does not count with the Master. The Master-power does come at the last moment, or even earlier, no matter where the disciple may be — far or near. He apprises him of the impending inevitable hour of his exit from the world and accordingly comes to escort him. The Subtle Form of the Master is resplendent, and leads the spirit into higher regions and assigns each one an appropriate place to which he may be entitled according to his sadhna or the practice of the Holy Word during his lifetime; and imparts to him the necessary instructions for further and fuller development on the spiritual path.

In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. —John 14:2-3

In case one is to be chastised for his laxities, He Himself administers the necessary chastisement, but never lets him into the torture of hell-fire. The divine balance-holder (the king of shadows) who judges each according to his deeds, has no authority over the apt disciples of the Master, for they live in 'the name of Lord (which) is a strong tower' —Proverbs. 18:10

It is not given to him to pass and execute judgment on them. In all such cases the Master Himself decides and does things as He thinks best.

The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy —Ps. 147:11

Again,
For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth (accepteth) — Heb. 12:6

In brief:
*Those who love the Master, are never alone,
Nor are they answerable to any, nor do they suffer pain.
—Gujri War M. 3*

But such initiates who have no love for the world, they are not reincarnated on the earth- plane, unless for some particular reason the Master deems it necessary to do so, and in that case, such a one does not slide down the scale but is reborn in some family of pious and religious parents so that the new-born easily gets into touch with a Master-Saint and resumes on his path Homeward, from an early age, without any let or hindrance. For the seed of the Word sown by the Sower (the Master) ever remains

within the depths of his soul and cannot but, in time,
sprout, blossom and fructify by the Water of Life that he
is sure to get from the Master of his age:

*None can take away the gift of the Guru; He who has
bestowed it, knows how to ferry across. —Maru M.1*

*Once the seed is sown by a Sant;
None has the power to singe it.
— Soami Ji*

Hafiz, the mystic poet of Persia, says:
*On the day of reckoning, thou shalt know for certain,
In the land of darveshes, there is no count of deeds.*

Shamas Tabrez, another great mystic of Persia, says:
*Death breaks down the cage, liberating the spirit,
Death has no sway over phoenix that dies to soar again.
Why should I not fly back to my own home?
Why should I tarry in the clayey mould?*

Again:
*The lovers know where and how to die,
They accept and relish death as a gift from the Beloved:
With inner eye opened, they see the glory of God,
When others are forced blind-fold into the blind alley.
While the lovers wend their way happily to the Lord,
The ignorant ones die a horrifying death.
Those who pass sleepless nights in fear of God,
They have no regrets in life nor any hopes and fears;
While here they seek His glance of grace,
Merrily do they go in His holy presence.*

The third category comprises such persons as make the
most of the instructions imparted to them by the Master,
but have not yet attained Perfection though they are well
on the way to it.

Such souls know of the time and day of their departure in
advance of the event. Since they are fully conversant

with the death process and every day undergo its experience; they are not afraid of death and know its shadowy character. On the contrary, they wish fully and wistfully await the appointed time and voluntarily throw off the worn-out mortal mantle, just in the same way as they had put it on, on their advent into the world.

They know some of the higher planes of the spirit-world which they traverse day in and day out along with the Master-power, and know the particular plane to which they are ultimately to go for sojourn after death. There they live for some time and work for their way up to still higher regions. They live all the time consciously in the love of the Master, and the Master-power ever abides in them. He is their mainstay and support, and they owe no allegiance to anyone else.

Led by the spirit they are no more under the law
— St. Paul

Last, but not the least, come the Perfected Souls.

They, while living, are liberated beings (*jivanmukats*) and lead a freed life of the spirit. They know full well, far ahead of the time, as to when they have to go back to the Mansion of the Lord, and gladly await the hour, and welcome the manner in which they are required to quit the bodily frame — be it on the cross or the gibbet, on the red-hot iron plates, or on the executioner's block.

With no will of their own, they live in the Will of God, and joyously embrace death as a means of reunion with the Beloved, unmindful of the swift or lingering process of death, as may sometime be ordained by the religious zealots and tyrannical pontiffs and potentates, for that is the moment of highest jubilation for them.

Thenceforth, they live out their span of life from moment to moment. They care not if they are flayed alive, hacked to pieces, or burnt at the stake, or made to drink the cup

of hemlock, or nailed to the cross along with felons. They give a hearty handshake to death as it comes in their way, no matter what form it may assume. This then is the way that Gurmukhs, the Saints and the Prophets follow.

Of Guru Amar Das, it is said that when the time of his departure drew nigh, he called for the *Sangat* (congregation) and addressed: "I am going back to the Hari (Lord). No one should weep for me. He who will do so, will incur my displeasure. After I am gone, be ye all engaged in the silent Music of the soul."

Similarly, Shamas Tabrez said: "On the day of my death, as my bier slowly moves along, never for a moment feel that I am going with any regrets in life. When you see my coffin, utter not a word of separation, for then alone I am in union with the Lord. When I will turn my face away from the world, I will then be facing the eternal Reality."

Hazur Baba Jaimal Singh Ji Maharaj had foretold of his approaching end long before it actually came about. When he was nearing the end of his earthly pilgrimage, he said:

I am going back to my native place and none should press me to stay on. My mission in this life is over and I have amassed immense spiritual riches. Happily, I go to the Mansions of the Lord.

It is a sacrilege to lament and bewail the passing away of Saints, for verily do they go back to their own home. One may, if he likes, shed copious tears at the death of a worldling who is forcibly ejected from, and dragged out of the body by the Prince of the nether world, and passes through devious processes up and down:

O Kabir, why weep for a Saint who goes back home: Weep, if you must, for a worldly-wise who tosses from hand to hand.

Saints, when called back, on completion of their mission, are given an honoured place in His Court. To die such a death is a rare privilege and a real blessing, which may be envied by mighty kings and emperors.