

## **Selections from *Sat Sandesh* Second Quarter 2021**

### **Service Before Self**

Circular 29 — Issued February 21, 1964, three weeks after the completion of the Master Kirpal Singh's second world tour. This was printed in the October 1970 edition of *Sat Sandesh*.

Dear Ones:

With the unbounded Grace of my Master, it has been possible to complete successfully this phase of the Master's Mission, which took about eight months of continuous touring in so many countries of the West. The loving assistance and the warm welcome that came spontaneously from all quarters was a source of great delight and inspiration, and rendered the task much easier. I am really thankful to all who took great pains in organizing the tours, planning programs, arranging daily talks and meetings, and helping me in diverse ways to carry the spiritual message to seekers after Truth.

The work of Ruhani Satsang has considerably increased with the establishment of new centers in many places abroad. It would be to the fitness of things to manage the affairs in a more constructive manner. I would therefore like to give you valuable advice in the larger interests of your spiritual progress and ethical growth.

Love, Life (strength) and Light (intelligence) are the holy attributes of Supreme Power — the Holy Naam — the God-into-Expression Power. This is the Holy Trinity, and It is manifested to the fortunate few who develop spiritually under Divine Guidance. These virtues reflect the inner development of the spiritual aspirant and are granted as a gracious gift by the Master. The holy meditations on the Light and Sound Principle bring a radical change in our outlook upon the earth life, and

hazy doubts and skepticism are put to naught when we awaken to the Divine Call. One enters into a new world, full of astral projection, where the gracious Master Power is shedding gracefully all bliss, peace and harmony. Inner receptivity, which grows gradually by implicit obedience and loving devotion, reveals the untold treasures of Divinity already existing therein.

An affectionate schoolteacher would welcome more discipline for the few bright students who show keen aptitude for intellectual growth. How much more cautious and vigilant would the Living Master be for the all-round spiritual growth of his children whom he has accepted under His Divine Will. The disciplined initiates are privileged to enjoy divine guidance in their everyday life, and in turn become a source of help and inspiration for their less gifted brethren. The initiates are blessed with the charming Radiant Form of the Master within and can benefit from His unerring guidance. He is most eager and keen for your progress. Better avenues of prosperity open for the truly sincere and yearning souls, and many dear ones have borne testimony to this sacred truth.

The representatives and group leaders have a significant responsibility for managing the affairs of Satsang. They are the chosen few from amongst the selected many put on the Holy Path and accordingly deserve special attention. They, being the torch bearers, are required to be shining examples of Truth, Love and Simplicity.

True living does not warrant any show or artificiality, but is a simple life full of selfless service and piety. The basic necessity in this behalf is to stand on one's own feet, which means earning one's own living, by the sweat of the brow, for the maintenance of oneself and family. It has a deep significance, and all Masters stressed the importance of such honest living, which builds a healthy and contemplative body and mind suitable for spiritual growth. The finer tissues of the physical body are manufactured through a smooth and harmonious blood

circulation. Peace and serenity fall to the share of the honest and earnest.

The initiates are advised to render selfless service physically, financially and intellectually, for their inner spiritual progress. Physical service simply means the observance of strict control over body and mind, service to the sick and needy, and leading a clean, chaste life, which purifies the entire system through and through.

Financial service falls into the category of donations and offerings, which grant expansion of the heart and broad mindedness. One enjoys the exclusive right of Sonship of God while knowing fully well that all others are the children of the same Father, and inculcating the loving bonds of fraternity. The distinctions of high or low, rich or poor, vanish.

Intellectual service grants further impetus and personal conviction for the path of righteousness and selflessness. Evidently, all this commences with the physical health of the body, which is built from the intake of food and allied necessities of living.

Mystics have practiced penances and austerities for attaining spiritual discipline, but the Masters of the Highest Order have laid a far healthier law for attainment of the same target. They have forbidden the use of anything for ourselves which does not belong to us or to which we have no legitimate right. Such high living grants both continence and contentment, the two strong pillars on which the lofty edifice of spirituality is erected.

It is a well-known aphorism that a tree is known by the fruit it bears. The seeds of spirituality have been sown far and wide, and a plentiful harvest is an assured reality. All that is now needed from the workers — the representatives, the group leaders, the well-wishers and the sympathizers in the holy cause — is to work selflessly in a spirit of loving cooperation, good will and

sincere earnestness, and attending to the needs of all and sundry in the Cause of the Master, regardless of whatever may come in the way.

*Service before self* counts for much on the Path of the Masters. The little self or ego within has to be eliminated by dissolving it into service of humanity. For all are children of one God, no matter how and where situated, or in what inhibitions and limitations of one kind or another they might be living.

You may have to face heavy odds, for it is an uphill task, but all adverse winds blow over. If one is able to efface oneself for a higher cause, this in itself provides a shield and a buckler to the true crusader, and helps in overcoming the seemingly insurmountable obstacles. The tougher the struggle, the brighter shines the metal within. This helps to liberate the finer instincts, until one has risen to a great spiritual stature, towering like a beacon light, shedding rays of hope and encouragement to the lone and weary traveler, shipwrecked on the stormy and strife-riven sea of life.

Success in spirituality is not the difficult task which most of us take it to be or make it to be; but it does require patient self-purification, a watchful introspection, a careful weeding out of all undesirable elements present and a pruning of outspreading ramifications; and above all timely tending and nurturing of the tender spiritual sapling as it sprouts from the soil of the human mind.

This work hangs on the shoulders of every one of you and I am sure you are fully alive to your responsibilities and obligations in this behalf, which in your case are two-fold: one to your own self and the other to your brethren, the new initiates on the Path, and the skeptical and wavering all of whom look to you for day to day help and guidance in all their difficulties, temporal as well as spiritual.

It is of paramount importance to those who have to give the lead, to be aboveboard in every respect, so that no one has an opportunity to raise even his little finger in censure or be misled by any action. Do nothing that may be unbecoming to the Great Cause which you have voluntarily and gleefully espoused. Work as a living embodiment of the God Power, making It a sheet anchor for keeping a steady keel in all your endeavors. It will protect you from all temptations of name, fame, worldly gain or the like, for all of these are apparently very alluring and beckon siren-like to you, but at the bottom they are truly baneful and in no time will hurl you to abysmal depths, if you succumb to them.

Truth is above all, yet true living is higher still. A clean life, with a frugal living from your own earnings will release a tremendous spiritual force within you, and will enable you to shoulder the task that God has put on your way.

You can accept as custodians all the voluntary donations which may be given for furthering the Master's Mission. These must be carefully and reasonably spent for the Mission work alone, keeping proper account of the same.

May Hazur bless you in your work.

My best wishes are always with you all.

With loving thoughts for healthy harmony of body, mind and soul,

Yours affectionately,  
KIRPAL SINGH

## Surrender to the Master

This is chapter 29 of the book *Godman*, written by Master Kirpal Singh.

Surrender to the feet of the Master means to merge one's individual will in the will of the Master, and to completely place oneself at his mercy. It is the surest and easiest way to escape from all cares and anxieties. It comes only when a disciple has complete faith and confidence in the competency of the Master.

This type of self-surrender is like that of a completely helpless patient who, trusting in the skill of a competent surgeon, places his life in his hands and quietly submits himself to his knife and lancet.

Or it may be compared to the trust given by the hopelessly lost traveler in the wilderness to the forest ranger who finds him and leads him out.

In exactly the same way, the work of the Master does not consist in merely teaching the theory of *Para Vidya* (Science of the Beyond), but it includes the practical demonstration of results of spiritual experiments, and help and guidance through all the disciples' difficulties. A true friend does not only give theoretical lessons in how to escape from mind and matter; he helps in effecting the escape itself.

Suppose, for instance, that a person has to go abroad. He will begin by making inquiries as to the various means of transportation available, land, sea or air, as he may choose. After he makes his choice, he enters the plane, ship or train, and relying on the skill of the operator, takes his seat comfortably without the least anxiety. Should the ship flounder, or the plane be caught in a storm, it is the duty of the captain or pilot to take every possible care to save the conveyance along with the passengers for whom he is responsible.

In exactly the same way, an aspirant for spirituality has, after careful investigation, to decide first about the spiritual worthiness of a Master, and then to submit himself wholly and solely to his authority and direction without any mental reservations whatever; for he alone knows the turns and twists of the spiritual path and is in a position to act as an unerring guide.

The term *surrender* therefore means that a disciple should have full confidence in the skill and competence of the Master, and scrupulously follow and act on his instructions whatever they may be, whether in conformity with his own reason or not — for his reason being limited, may be faulty or fall far short of the depth or prove uncertain.

It is not for him to question the propriety of the Master's commandments. He must learn, like a soldier, to obey his command without knowing the why and wherefore of things; for the Master knows what is best and most suitable in each case.

One must therefore obey the Master literally, and straightaway engage himself in the *sadhan* or spiritual practice and discipline as it may be laid down for him.

This is the only way to spiritual success; there is no other.

In this context, we have the testimony of Hafiz, a great Sufi poet of Persia, who declared:

*Dye thy prayer carpet in wine should the Master so desire;  
For he is not ignorant of the turns of the highway ahead.*

When a disciple entrusts his all to the Master, he becomes carefree, and the Master has, of necessity, to take over the entire responsibility; just as a mother does for her child who does not know what is good for him.

As the disciple develops in his *sadhan*, he fits himself to receive more grace from the Master. Under his kind and benign influence, the disciple begins to thrive from day to day, and all his wishes are fulfilled without the least trouble on his part.

*Sages and seers cry from the housetops:  
Ye seekers after peace, hie to a Master Saint.*

In Discourse 17, Verse 66, of the *Bhagavad Gita*, the Blessed Lord Krishna, as a world teacher, announces:

*Abandon all duties and come to me, the only refuge;  
I will deliver thee from all sins: grieve not.*

In the Holy Koran, we have likewise:

*Whosoever surrenders his purpose to Allah while doing good, his reward is with his Lord, and no fear shall come upon him, neither shall he grieve. 2.112; 10.6*

And in the Bible:

*And I will turn my hand upon thee and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy sins. ISAIAH 1:25*

*Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. MATTHEW 11:28*

Also:

*Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee.*

Self-surrender is not an easy task. To accomplish it, one has to recede back to the position of an innocent child. It means an entire involution, a complete metamorphosis, supplanting one's own individuality.

It is the path of self-abnegation, which not everyone can take.

On the other hand, the path of spiritual discipline is comparatively easy. Self-effort can be tried by anyone in order to achieve spiritual advancement.

It is, no doubt, a long and tortuous path, as compared with the way of self-surrender, but one can, with confidence in the Master, tread it firmly step by step. If, however, a person is fortunate enough to take to self-surrender, he can have all the blessings of the Master quickly; for he goes directly into his lap and has nothing to do by himself for himself.

He is then the Master's Elect, his beloved son, the son of God Himself. But very rarely even a really blessed soul may be able to acquire this attitude.

*Should the Lord so ordain, then, O Nanak! A person may take the path of self-surrender.*

*Blessed indeed is one who surrenders at the feet of the Satguru; Standing near Truth he revels in Truth, and easily merges in Truth. O Nanak! It is by the Lord's grace that one may meet such a Gurumukh.*

In the scriptures one finds a large number of advantages from adopting this path:

*All ills and sorrows vanish by surrender at the Master's feet. In the world of joys and sorrows, he alone escapes who gains the feet of the Satguru;*



*A Gurumukh stands apart from the three gunas and is acceptable to the Lord.*

*In self-surrender the mind becomes purified; but chanting of God's name alone does not help.*

*For the world's good do those come who thirst for a sight of Him; He who surrenders makes a clean escape, with desires all fulfilled. All joys lie with Satguru; bow then at his feet; blissful is the very sight of him.*

*With no regrets chant paeans unto him.*

*I see the world being consumed in the fire of egoism. Escape thou by surrender to the Master, and then attend to True Shabd.*

*I surrender to One who alone is the cause, both material and efficient. His grace has shown the native land in the light of the moon.*

*With a Life Impulse from a perfect Master, Ram Naam rests in me; O Nanak! With a surrender to the Master's feet the Lord Himself becomes merciful.*

*In Kali Yuga, Naam lies hidden everywhere, and the Lord in fullness pervades;*

*But the precious Naam becomes manifest in that surrender to the Master.*

With the blessings of the Guru one becomes fearless of death and is successfully ferried across the sea of life.

*He happily conquers death and never goes to hell. O Nanak! He is saved by surrender, for Hari just takes him into His care.*

Having been accepted by the Acceptor, all his acts become pure.

*O Nanak! Never will he go to hell; such is the gift of surrender.*

*None but the Elect engage in the devotion of Naam. O Nanak! With surrender at the Master's feet one never comes and goes.*

*The dispeller of ills and Lord of all is attained through surrender to a Sadh; and the tumultuous sea of life is ferried across quickly.*

When a jiva surrenders to the Satguru, the Lord takes him under His own protection and grants unto him the blessings of *Sehaj* (eternal happiness). All doubts and fears now disappear and he comes to his own real Self.

## Search for Truth

English version of a Satsang given by Master Kirpal Singh in Hindi at Sawan Ashram in Delhi, India. This was originally published in the March 1969 edition of *Sat Sandesh*.

We are neither much concerned with races and religions nor with any social order. The problem before us is that of God or of Godmen who found God. We are all worshippers of the Reality that is One and pervading everywhere:

*Lovers may be myriads, but the Beloved is one.  
The creeds and faiths may be different, but the objective is one.*

We are all seekers after God — God of the entire universe, and God of the learned and the unlettered. He has nothing to do with Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam, or Christianity. He is One and only One, and we are His worshippers. Devotion to the Master is a *sine qua non* on the path Godward. Christ said: "I am the vine and thou art the branches. So long as the branches are embedded in the vine, they are bound to bring forth fruit." It means that the seekers after God must strike their roots in the Godman. Without devotion to the Master, one cannot achieve anything.

Guru precedes God. We have not seen God nor can we see Him. He is at a level much higher than that on which we are. He is the subtlest of the subtle and beyond comprehension. So long as we do not rise to His level and become as subtle as He is, we cannot see Him. Each one has his own range of vision. Even the atmosphere around us is full of tiny living creatures called microbes, but we cannot see them without the help of a microscope.

It is the microscope that changes the level of our vision, and we begin to see them magnified.

The first thing for man is to rise to God's level. In the Godman, God is fully manifested. If we become Guruman, we rise to the level of God and begin to see the Power and Spirit of God in Him. We can neither visualize God nor contemplate Him, as He is formless. In the Guru, He assumes a form. Devotion to Guru then is devotion to God in Him. Guru, in fact, is not the body but the God-power working in and through that body. He is the human-pole on which the Divine Power works and carries on the work of regeneration. This Power neither takes birth nor dies. It eternally remains the same:

*God cannot speak unless He assumes a human form. Without a human form how can the formless express Himself?*

Guru is thus the human-pole of God, and works like a live switch with all the power of the power-house behind it. Man is to be the teacher of man. Even to know God one has to seek the help of a God-teacher. In God-teacher or the Guru, the Power of God surges in fullness. His eyes are the overflowing cups of Divinity. In his presence, one loses all thoughts of himself, of the world here or of the world hereafter. From this stage begins *Gurbhakti* (worshipful devotion to the Master). From now on, the disciple lives in and for the Master. Saint Paul, when he rose into higher consciousness of Christ-power, said: "It is I. No, not now I, but Christ lives in me." Khawaja Hafiz, in his own way, speaks of the same thing:

*My whole being is so permeated with the love of the Lord that I have now no thought of the self and my old self has completely disappeared.  
O Lord, I am now Thine and Thou art mine;  
I am the body and Thou art my very soul.*

*Henceforth no one can say that we are apart from each other.*

Elsewhere, this Sufi mystic has said:  
*Since I am united with my Beloved,  
I have lost all sense of fear;  
One who has sunk deep into the water of life can have no  
fear of death.*

The Apostle, when one with Christ, said:  
*I can now fearlessly walk through the shadow of the  
valley of death for Thou art with me.*

It is a question of grafting — grafting a branch of one tree into another tree. What happens? The fruit of the second tree, while retaining the shape and color of its own, acquires the taste and flavor of the other. This is exactly what happens when the Guru-power or life-impulse of the Guru works upon the disciple. While remaining as before, the disciple is now no longer his previous self, for he has been bought with a ransom.

To be one with God — *Fana-fil-allah* — one has first to be one with the Godman — *Fana-fil-sheik*. This is the easiest way to reach God. It is the *Atman* in us that has to realize *Param-Atman*. A part is always in search of the whole. We are so constituted that we cannot rest until we rest in Him. The flame of a lighted candle even if turned upside down would still rise upwards. A clod of earth if thrown upward is sure to come down; this is the law of gravitation. Everything tends to move towards its source.

A conscious entity cannot but seek the ocean of all-consciousness. So, the search for God is something natural in man. Why? — Because we are in search of peace and happiness. But unfortunately, our search is in a wrong direction. We try to seek happiness in the world without us. And strangely enough, whatever little pleasure we get because of mental concentration, we call it happiness. It is, however, a misnomer to call sense-

pleasures as happiness. When the Reality dawns in us, then we realize our mistake. The real happiness lies in us. It is born of love — love of the self in us and love of the Overself which too, is in us. God is the Soul of our soul. Soul is of the same essence as God. There is thus an innate similarity between the two. But for want of real knowledge and lack of competent teachers, we do not understand the exact position. Like a butterfly, we flit from flower to flower in search of honey, or like a musk-deer, go in search of musk from place to place. Little do we know that the honey and musk lie at the very center of our being within us.

A child takes delight on a playground, while an intellectual person revels in his intellect. On the other hand, a young man seeks pleasure in his family. This is how happiness travels from one place to another, but it defies all our attempts to arrive at it.

When one gets tired, one tries to search for it elsewhere. This is the beginning of wisdom. From without he turns inwards. God, who is the knower of all hearts, makes some provision for the aspirant. He leads the seeker after Truth to someone who has realized Truth in himself and is competent to help us Truthward. We have before us a psalm from Guru Ram Das. Let us see what he has to say:

*I am smitten by the arrow of God's love.*

It is a beautiful way of describing one's love for the Lord. Once this love enters into the heart, it gets deeper and deeper with time. It is something quite different from the love for worldly things. Guru Ram Das, in this psalm is giving us a pen-picture of his own mind. He had an intense love for God, and it worked like an obsession in him. He now goes on to explain what it meant to him:

*I am feeling restless for the sight of God,  
As restless as a thirsty man in need of water.*

In this couplet, an attempt has been made to describe the nature of longing in him. The great teacher wants to see God face to face. He likens his condition to a person dying for want of water. You can well imagine what a painful state this is. Lovers always pine and wither away in their love for their beloved. God is Love. Our soul, which is of the essence of God, is also dyed in the color of love. It is but natural with man to be in love with one thing or another.

As at present, we are in love with our body and bodily connections — family and children, friends and relations, wealth and possessions. But all these things, you will realize are of an impermanent nature. Again, they are changing from moment to moment. And, ultimately, they do not abide with us forever. Either we are obliged to leave them, or they leave us in course of time. This being the case, we cannot derive permanent pleasure from them. It is just a transitory affair. Guru Arjan tells us in this context:

*We are in love with all that is visible;  
O Lord, how can we love Thee, the eternal One.*

Let me say that this is not enough. It is a kind of attachment. We are momentarily carried away by the glitter and glamour of worldly things. We see things superficially. We do not realize that they would not remain with us for any length of time. The pleasures of the world come and go like pictures on the screen. How can we have happiness with passing shadows? Real happiness is a state of the mind. The saints, therefore, emphasize:

*If ye are in search of real happiness,  
take refuge at the feet of the Lord.*

The Power of the Lord is all-pervading and all-permeating. The saints are worshippers of the Supreme

Being alone. There is no god but God. They tell us to be worshippers of the one God. They come into the world to connect us with God. Their mission is not to establish personal connections with themselves. They are the messiahs or the messengers of God. They bring His message to us. They live in the Will of God and have no will of their own. Kabir always prayed:

*My wish is of no consequence;  
Whatever is, is from Thee.*

We may take the writings of any saint. In each one, we find the praises of the Lord. They have nothing to say of themselves. Christ speaking of himself said:

*I do nothing on my own.  
I do as my Father willeth me to do.*

They have no sense of I-ness in them. The great teacher has a great anguish in his heart. The wearer knows where the shoe pinches. The seekers after God are ever in a state of crucifixion. Why? One has to rise above the cross of the body — the point of intersection between the physical and the astral worlds in man (the eye-focus):

*The Beloved lives far above;  
How can we reach Him ?*

It is a question of inner struggle between the mind and the soul. The soul is keen to reach the Oversoul (God). The soul is languishing in the love of the Lord. One wants either to go up to God or God to come down to him. There is no third alternative. He wants to see the Reality face to face and be absorbed in Him. This is the way of love.

Amir Khusro, a mystic poet, said: "O God! come unto me and dwell in the pupil of my eyes. Let Thou see me and I see Thee. Let our love-play be between us alone." Kabir likewise says:

*Come Thou into the chamber of my eyes and rest a while there;  
I would hide Thee with my eyelashes and try to win Thee over.*

This is how the lovers talk. They are bubbling over with love (of the Lord). This is the way to be one with God. Spirituality cannot be taught but may be caught as an infection from one who has it in himself. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. It is just like splitting the milk with a pinch of curd. In the company of such a one, we begin to put on some of his color. A certain change is surely to be felt. The atmospheric effect cannot but affect us to a certain extent.

The way to God lies through love. Love is the connecting link between the soul and the Oversoul. Whatever practices and performances that we do are the means for igniting the flame of love in us. But unfortunately, we engage in them just as a matter of routine on the physical level like gymnastics, and these do not bring about an inner change. As such, they are not of much value to us. It is, therefore, said:

*One may, for hundreds of years, perform practices and penances and yet be far removed from God.  
One cannot win God without lighting the flame of love in him.*

We have to fan the fire of love in us. Without love we cannot reach God, for He is Love. In the fire of love, nothing survives but the Beloved. In the *Quran* it is said:

*Love is a forest-fire that consumes everything but the object of love.*

Again, love is likened to an eagle, seeing which, all the tiny birds fly away to save themselves. Who can stand this terrible ordeal? None but one who has ignited the



fire. Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru in succession to Nanak, has rightly said:

*Listen ye all with attention — verily I tell ye that it is through love that one reaches unto God.*

Guru Ram Das, having developed the fire of love in him for the Lord, is now feeling restless like a thirsty person for water. He then goes on to explain:

*God alone knows the condition of my mind and the great anguish in me.*

You would please realize that it is only the beloved who can understand the excruciating pain in the heart of the lover. God is the knower of all hearts, and He can know best who is pining for Him. It is only one who has passed through this stage who can visualize what it is. I may tell you of the condition of my mind in the year 1911 or 1912. In those days I had a great inner urge for God. It may be due partly to my past *karmas* and partly to the present development.

While sitting in the office, tears would involuntarily flow from my eyes and spoil the papers before me. I wondered what it could be. In those days, I was under orders of transfer, and my colleagues and home-folk thought that I had taken to heart my transfer orders. What could they know the real state of my mind?

The mystery of life is the greatest mystery in life. Once this question crops up, one cannot ignore it, however best one may try to do so. It keeps on revolving again and again, and presents itself in so many different ways.

I had an opportunity to sit beside a dying person. That had a tremendous effect on me. With the purity of life, I had also developed the faculty to read the future. All these came to me in a natural way. But with all these I could not solve the enigma of life. The sight of the dying

one before my very eyes quickened the intensity of my heart. I could feel that there was something that was slipping out of the person, but I could not make out what it was. I had yet no inkling of the life-impulse. While it was still surging in me, it was ebbing out in the other. The lady on the death-bed called her friends and relations to meet them, before leaving them for good. And in an instant thereafter she closed her eyes, never to open again.

This is how she passed away in my very presence, and I felt bewildered. I was flabbergasted to see the dead body before me. The life in her had gone out, but I still felt that it was working in me. I followed the bier to the cremation ground along with others. While on the way, my eyes inquiringly looked at the bier but could not make out anything. Even the learned and the wise do not know how to solve this mystery. Upon reaching the cremation ground, I saw the dead body of an old man being laid on the funeral pyre. Alongside that pyre, we set up another pyre for the body of the young lady that we had carried on our shoulders. The contrast between the two scenes — the young and the old — deepened the anguish in my heart. Neither the one nor the other could escape the clutches of death. Both were lying lifeless before me.

I wanted to know what life was. I tried to find the answer to my problem in the books. The whole night I would go on reading, but the books did not provide me with any solution. All that I could gather from them were veiled references here and there. At some places I could get tall and loud professions from the sayings of *Mahatmas*, as recorded in those books, advising one to do this or that. The books even would tell that it was a question of death-in-life. But how it could be done was the problem. For this, there was no answer in the books.

Bookish knowledge cannot give that which one can get from practical experience. It is a question of self-analysis. A real Master can give you some experience of

the way-out. I came to understand the great mystery in its practical aspect only when I came to the lotus feet of my Master, Hazur Baba Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj. So all things work their way and shape themselves when there is an intense longing for something. I alone knew as to why I was shedding tears in those days. How could others know of it?

In the world we see people weeping and wailing for one thing or another. All these tears are for the things of the world. Very few weep for the other world (life hereafter). A real seeker after God is always in a state of acute restlessness; and this, invariably, is a happy augury. The thick and lowering clouds are the harbinger of rain. The fruit trees bring forth buds and flowers before bearing the actual fruit. So this was the condition of the mind of Guru Ram Das. In a condition like this, one invariably says: "O Lord! a moment's separation from Thee prolongs into a life's agony." A night of separation is a terrible hell. The worldly-wise weep for the world, but a devotee weeps for the Lord:

*It is through tears that one reaches God;  
If one could get Him easily, then who would wear the  
widow's weeds?*

It is necessary to give vent to the feelings deeply set in one's heart. It is by copious tears that we can wash down impressions of ages lying in the folds of the mind. Maulana Rumi tells us that a pilgrimage to *Kaaba* is possible only through the sea-route and not by land. So God can only be reached through the pearly tears flowing down one's cheeks. This then is the state of Guru Ram Das. The world does not know what it is. But God knows it all right.

*He who talks to me of my Beloved Lord is next of kin to  
me.*

In these memorable words, the Guru has given a beautiful picture of his inner feelings. Are we not always anxious to hear about one who is near and dear to us? God is the dearest of the dear and the nearest of the near. We are all in search of God, and are keen to hear about Him. Where is He? How can He be found? How can He be reconciled to us? Lastly, how can He be won over?

God is the sole object of our desire, and for His sake we should be ready to sacrifice all including our own self. In love one expands and feels that he is the richest person on earth, capable of giving away everything for His sake — both himself and his world. We are so keen to hear of Him and His tales that whosoever speaks of Him endears himself to us. The person may be a total stranger to us, and yet we begin to love him because of the God's tidings that he brings to us. Guru Arjan likewise says:

*Whosoever would take me to my beloved God,  
I would happily sell myself as a slave to such a one.*

Why should one be a slave to another for life? "For I am so keen to see my Beloved face to face." This then is the condition of the mind of one who is languishing in his love for the Lord. In such a state of mind, one welcomes any and everybody who can narrate to us the love yarns. The storyteller may be anybody in the world. We are not concerned with his caste or creed or the social order to which he belongs. We are all tipplers in the divine tavern. We all love divine intoxication.

When a number of bibblers can sit together and enjoy, why cannot the devotees of God? It means that we have not yet developed love of God. When God-power resides in all of us, why is there love lost amongst us? The first step in spirituality is to realize this fundamental principle. One who understands this basic principle puts on a different color:

*Ever since I have come into the fold of a Godman,*

*I have lost all sense of duality and none is a stranger  
unto me;  
I am now a friend to all and everyone loves me.*

This then is the signal change that one feels in him when he begins to associate with a saint. One begins to love the world because he sees the Power of God in everyone, without any distinction on grounds of religion, caste, or creed. This is the first lesson that one gets from Satguru.

*Satguru is known for his all-embracing love;  
In his company all sit together forming one holy family.*

This is why Guru Ram Das considers everybody as his real friend and a close relation. On the other hand, we are all anthropocentric and have not yet known that we are brothers and sisters in God. All relationships of the world remain in the world when the soul departs. On the other hand, the Guru knits us into a kind of brotherhood that is everlasting. How? He places a common target before us — the ideal of God-realization. When the goal is the same, we have to tread the common path leading unto the goal. Ultimately, we shall all meet in God. Once I questioned my Master as to how all the disciples would meet in the end when each one has his own time and measure of advance on the spiritual path. Hazur replied: "We have all to go across the river of life. Some may ferry over by the first boat and some by the next. Ultimately the port of disembarkation is the same for all. We shall all meet at that port." It is, therefore, said:

*The Guru seeks his own and unites them in true  
relationship which is eternally the same.*

This is the kind of relationship in which we are united by the Master. The people of the world come and go in their own turn and are soon forgotten. But the godly people remain forever with us, both here and in the hereafter. They speak to us of things that are dear to us. They, in fact, are our real companions. The birds of the same

feather fly together. A devotee of the Lord delights in hearing of the Lord. We have respect for all religious leaders, no matter to what social order they belong or wherever they may happen to be. The distinctions are only on bodily level. The soul is the reality, and has no caste, color, or creed.

From the level of the soul, we are all equal. Herein lies unity in diversity. We have forgotten it. An awakened person brings home this fact to us. He makes us conscious of it. As we transcend the body, our consciousness expands and gets nearer to All-consciousness. In this way, we become conscious of the purpose and plan of God. Then we realize that we are the children of one God, and all of us have to live together as brothers and sisters in God:

*Let all of us unite together as friendly maidens and sing praises of the Lord,  
After having taken to heart the lessons in God-love from a Godman.*

In oriental terminology, God alone is considered as the bridegroom, while all the souls emanating from Him are regarded as brides or damsels. Those who commune with the Lord enter into an eternal wedlock and are forever happy. The earthly unions are short lived — maybe 10, 50, or even 1,000 years, if possible.

Guru Ram Das, therefore, advises us that we should learn to sit together as friends in God, and take delight in nothing but talking of God. We can sing praises of the Lord only after a Satguru has given us an inner contact with God-power. Without this actual experience, we do so only after reading of God in the scriptures or hearing of Him from others. This singing is of a secondary type. But when we sing after having seen the Reality and tasted of divine intoxication, our singing would be of a transcendental nature. What a world of difference

between the two. The songs may be the same but the singers are different.

The devotees of the Lord remain in touch with the Lord. They see Him face to face. They live in a state of perpetual intoxication. When they sing of God, they do so in a way peculiar to them. Theirs is a typical rhythm and strain. Their songs automatically flow from the depths of their heart, and deeply affect those who hear them. We cannot get this taste and flavor from the songs of those who have no practical experience of God. With an experience of God-power in the Godman, we cannot but spontaneously sing of Him. Satguru is the fountain of the Power and Spirit of God. He gives us a taste of that elixir. In his company, our intellect grows still, and we begin to rise above it. Without this integrated experience, our songs, however sweet and melodious, are of a second rate — why? — Because our intellect, all the time, goes on thinking of one thing or the other.

This perpetual vibration in the mental zone proves a great hurdle in our way. We may start with the best of intentions and cleanest of motives, but we cannot stop the intellect from working. In the depth of the mind, under-currents are perpetually in motion. In course of time, even the good custom corrupts itself. All thoughts whether good or bad take us into expansion. This being the case, our mind never gets stilled. Without stilling the mind, we cannot move ahead. It is only the mind in equipoise that can shoot ahead and find its way out. The question is one of single-mindedness. By sitting together in a genial company, we think and talk of the love of God and love of the Godman. This helps us to gather our scattered thoughts. It is, therefore, said:

*Sit ye together as member of a single family;  
Sink down all differences and direct your attention  
Godward.*

There is a great blessing in sitting together. The Lord hath said: "Where two or three persons sit in my Name, I am with them." Again, in sitting together, we try to understand the point of view of each other. When we learn the correct position, we become tolerant of others' views. And still more, we escape from the evil of double-mindedness. When like-minded persons meet, they would naturally talk of nothing but what is of common interest — God and the love of God. This would lead to singleness of purpose. Thus, we are saved from idle talk of unduly praising or disparaging others. It is, therefore, said:

*When the entire creation is the manifestation of the holy Light,  
The manifested beings are nothing but holy at the core of their being, no matter what their acts.*

The duality between man and man is only at the surface. Nothing is good or bad but thinking makes it so. One may be rich and another poor. One may appear to be good or bad, but we cannot pass judgment on them. Each one has the Power of God in him. We are all one on the body level, as all human beings take the same pattern within and without. We are born alike with equal privileges from God.

God made man — a conscious entity — after His own image. Man is a part of All-consciousness. It is by experience that we come to this conclusion maybe after getting through the storms and stresses of life in the living present or in previous incarnations. Man is always in the making. He may learn today or tomorrow or at some distant date. We are all on the Way. The real happiness lies somewhere else. It comes only by union with the Whole. This is why Guru Ram Das advises us to sit together in love of the Lord, for it would give us clarity of vision, and we will stand on terra firma. Besides this, there is no other remedy on the sense-plane.



*O God, grant unto Nanak his heart's desire;  
Bring him face to face with the Reality so that he may  
have peace eternal.*

With this prayer, we come to the finale of the beautiful psalm. This is the highest type of prayer that an awakened person could make.

Now we take a hymn from Guru Arjan, the fifth in succession to Nanak. Let us see what he has to say in this context. This talk, too, is similar to the previous one from his immediate predecessor, Guru Ram Das.

*In the bottom of my heart, there was a keen desire to  
meet my Beloved;  
Somehow or other, the perfect Master has graciously  
fulfilled my long cherished desire.*

The question, once again, is of earnestness. Do we really need God? Sometimes we do ask for God. Even our intellect also, at times, feels the need for God. But does our mind want God? This is the crux of the problem. We ask for things with mental reservations — only if they are of any use to us on the physical plane. On the other hand, the mind is entirely dyed in the color of the world. It has no time to think of anything else. Mind has a great potential in it. What the mind wants, it fervently prays for. At times, it even cries for it. God comes in only as the means for the satisfaction of his worldly desires. And day and night one thinks of nothing else. This is the actual condition of our mind.

You can search it for yourself. Do you sincerely wish for God? No. We want Him only as a means to an end — the end being physical pleasure and comforts. Otherwise, God has no meaning for us. It is a question of demand and supply. If we actually wish God, the law of nature comes to our aid.

Where there is fire, oxygen comes to its aid. All that we need is to put our tongue, intellect, and mind on one level. Such an attitude increases the mind force. Where the mind force is strong, nothing can stand in our way. We must be true to our "self," and then whatever may be our wish shall be fulfilled:

*If our prayers are truthful and arise from the contented mind,  
Then hearing them, God calls us to Himself, nay draws us on to Him.*

What is a truthful prayer? It is one that springs equally from the mind, the intellect and from the tongue. Otherwise, we are not true to our self and are deceiving our self and our God. Why are our prayers not granted? Because we ask amiss. To ask rightly what is necessary is the first condition. The second condition is that we should be contented with what we have, and be grateful for them; ingratitude is the greatest evil. What has God given us? — All that we need and much more. Have we ever offered a thanks-giving prayer for what He has done and the bounteous gifts supplied by Him? If we fulfill these conditions of truthfulness and contentment with a sense of gratefulness, He would not deny us anything for which we may happen to wish.

If we ask for God from God with a sincere mind, He would never deny us. On the contrary, He would draw us unto Himself. He is the knower of our hearts and readeth us correctly. We cannot hide anything from Him with all our cleverness and cunningness. He sees us right through what is passing in our mind, and acts accordingly. We cry for bread; we cry for our losses, but we never cry for God.

Of Namdev, the calico printer saint, it is said that once the balcony of his home crashed down. His home-folk asked him to call a carpenter to carry out the necessary

repairs. The devotees, as you know, hardly remember such things.

He went out as usual and sat in the sweet remembrance of the Lord. He forgot himself. He forgot the world around him. He forgot the balcony and the carpenter. In the evening, he got up from his meditation and went home. His people asked him if he had arranged with a carpenter to do the job. "I am sorry; I forgot all about it. I shall certainly call the carpenter tomorrow," he said.

Some days passed away like this. Everyone at home felt annoyed and threatened him with dire consequences if he did not bring the carpenter the next day. "I shall certainly bring the carpenter tomorrow," he replied. Strange as it may seem, Namdev again forgot to get a carpenter. A man of God is always absorbed in God. How can he think of the world and the worldly things? They are of no consequence to him. Again in the evening when he woke up from his trance, he felt ashamed. But there was no way to get out of the impasse. He sorrowfully waded his way back to his home.

God, foreseeing his sad predicament had, during the day, gone to his house, in the garb of a carpenter, and set right the broken balcony. When Namdev reached home, he was dumbfounded to see the work. It was a piece of rare workmanship, and had been done in an unusually short time. He could make out who the carpenter was; none but God's hand could do this miracle.

*A nightingale can alone understand a nightingale.*

The devotee knew that his God had done the job. He took courage and pressed on to his lane. The neighbors flocked round him and inquired the wages that he settled with his carpenter for such a wonderful piece of work. He replied: "Love is the only wage that my carpenter demands."

The next question was as to how the carpenter could be called. "My carpenter comes when one cuts himself completely from his family," he added. You can now well understand the position. If you become His, He becomes yours. He then comes to you of his own accord without being called. Namdev was lost to himself in his devotion. He had never asked God to repair his balcony. God keeps the honor of his devotee for His Name's sake.

I would tell you of my own personal experience. It happened during the lifetime of my Master, Hazur Baba Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj. My son was seriously ill. He was hovering between life and death. The physicians apprised me of the critical condition of my son. They even asked me to be prepared for the worst. They advised me to take a few days leave so as to be near my son's sick-bed.

The next day happened to be a Sunday. I was due to give discourse at Amritsar. It was a duty assigned to me by my Master. I got up at quite an early hour in the morning. The premonitory words of the physician were still ringing in my ears. I felt that life and death were in hands other than mine. What could I, after all, do? To carry out the behests of my Master was, of course, in my hands. I decided to attend to my duty, and let Hazur see to his. I accordingly left for Amritsar to play the role that had been allotted to me. The discourse was delivered as usual. The weather was hot and sultry. I finished my job at about 10 A.M. I left the auditorium an hour later.

As I was half way down from Beas, I felt a strong urge to push on so as to have Hazur's *darshan*. I might have reached Beas at 1:30 P.M. Hazur was taking his rest. Learning that I had come, he called for me upstairs. He sat up and inquired: "What about your son?" I replied: "He was ill and somewhat in a precarious condition, but I had to discharge the duty assigned to me. I could not do anything more; nor was it in my power to save him by remaining there."

My words appeared to make Hazur quite anxious. For a while he sat in silence. I quietly said: "Hazur, whosoever thinks of you is relieved of all his worries. How is it that you are feeling so much for me? He replied: "Kirpal Singh, you took the burden off your head, and I have to take it upon my shoulders. When you are so inclined to your duty, what else can I do?"

The scriptures tell us: The gracious Father hath so ordained whatever the son asked for, that hath to be granted. But what one should ask for? — God or world? Nanak tells us:

*The humble Nanak simply asks for one thing;  
O Lord, plant Thy lotus feet in my heart.*

This is what all the scriptures say. In the Holy Quran, we have: "I shall grant unto man what he desires." So, the only thing to be desired is an intense longing for the Lord. If we are sincere in our search, we shall certainly get Him.

Once a little toddler was sitting all alone in a room. His mother was in the kitchen. The milk-can was on the fire before her. The child wanted to stand up but slipped and fell. Then he tried to pull himself up by supporting himself against the wall. His little hands did not find any catch-hold and he fell again. Then he saw the door-curtain and stretched out his hands to help himself with it. As luck would have it, the curtain itself slipped down the rod, and both came down upon him. In his helplessness, he began to cry piteously, calling his mother. No sooner than the mother heard his cry, she ran to the room without caring for the boiling milk, and hugged him to her bosom. She took the baby and came back to the kitchen to attend to the milk. But it was too late to save the milk from spilling over.

The child, perhaps, felt that he had known the trick of attracting his mother's attention. After some days, while sitting in the room, he again began to cry mother, mother. The mother could guess that he was idly indulging in a sing-song and did not run up. The child slowly came to the kitchen and inquired as to what the mother was doing. She replied that she was busy making *dal* (gruel). The child said he had thought that she was perhaps preparing some dainty dish, much better than the milk, because she had not answered his call for a pretty long time. The mother replied: "My child, there was no anguish in your voice today."

So, you see the question is one of inner craving. We crave for mundane things of the world and do not wish God — God only replies to the cry from the heart. He does not answer to our oral prayers. While we sit in worship, our mind is running after family affairs. Excuse me, we are not sitting in the temple of our heart, but are practicing idolatry. God would never come where there are so many idols to attract you and to keep you busy.

You may better compare the state of your mind with that of the awakened souls. Guru Arjan's heart is aflame with the love of God and is keenly in search of ways and means to find his Beloved. The only way to find God is first to find means to the end. God cannot be found without the help of a Godman. When you desire God with all your heart and soul, He Himself provides the means.

It is said that the simple squeak from a contrite heart reaches God quicker than the loud and long prayers offered in public by boastful people. When God resides in all hearts, He knows even the tiniest vibrations therein. He is the soul of our soul and is not sitting in high heavens. We can deceive ourselves. We can deceive the people of the world, but we cannot deceive the great Power in us. If you are sincere in your love for God, God

would surely come to your aid. His grace is beyond measure, and He would put some Godman in your way.

It is a great blessing to meet a really awakened soul. You cannot come across such a one unless God desires it so. We cannot even know a Godman as we cannot know God. A blind man cannot find a person with vision. The latter may take pity on the blind man and take him by the hand. When our inner eye has not yet been opened, and we are sitting on the plane of senses, we cannot possibly see the human-pole on which the higher Power is at work. Apparently, the God-pole looks like any of us; and we have no means to understand his inner greatness.

Nanak, you know, was called a man with a perverted intellect — why? Because people had not the eye to fathom God in him. A competent Master is a rarity. The scriptures speak highly of a "perfect Master." It means that there are in the world Masters who are imperfect and not fully competent to impart spiritual experience. The world is full of so-called teachers and self-styled Masters.

Christ warns us to beware of false prophets and half-prophets. A perfect Master is one who has experienced the "self" in him, and also has the power to manifest the same in others. He who has seen God can make others see Him. No one has seen God but the Son and those whom the Son may reveal.

How to know such a fully awakened soul? He is not to be judged by the palatial buildings in which he dwells or the huge congregations before him. The real test is that he should be able to give some practical demonstration of God-power by momentarily lifting the soul from the level of the senses.

You cannot test him on the level of the intellect, however hard you may try, even by close contact with him, maybe for a long time. The Reality is in him and he keeps it as a sacred trust from God. He would not go about making a

show of it. He can be moved by your genuine and keen desire for God-realization. And if you have God's Name writ in your forehead, he will certainly reveal the Spirit and Power of God in you. "Ask and it shall be given; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you."

So it is a question of asking, seeking, and knocking at the door of a Godman. And secondly, the experience depends upon the life-impulse that the Godman imparts, for life comes from life. Mere knowledge of the formulas from books or from so-called teachers will not help. It is the radiation that passes from eyes to eyes and works the miracle:

*One glance of grace from Him is enough to serve the purpose.*

It is He who raises up and upholds our attention so as to give us the inner experience.

In the times of Hazur, many learned persons, conversant with scriptural texts, would come and enter into idle discussion with the Master. Hazur would simply inquire of them if they had any inner access and, if so, could they take others also into the realms within. This would naturally quiet them for they had no such experience even for themselves.

Once, Kartar Singh, a sightless philosopher, came to hear Hazur. After hearing the talk, the gentleman got up and said: "I am a great philosopher. I used to deliver rhetoric talks that would silence all opposition. After having heard your talk, I feel that I am just like a child collecting pebbles from the seashore, while the great ocean is lying unexplored before me." You would realize that there is a world of difference between a talk from a practical teacher and one from a learned person. The Master's talk spontaneously flows from the depth of his heart and sinks deeply into the hearts of the hearers. The thoughts that



descend from above without thinking are said to be flawless and perfect:

*Attend ye to the true testimony of the saints,  
For they speak out what they actually see within.*

"I speak nothing on my own, but as my Father bids me I do." (St. John).

Nanak, speaking of God's presence, says: "I see my God as in full view."

Saints speak with authority. This is the way of sages gifted with divine wisdom. They have love for all and enmity with none. They even love their enemies. Once the disciples asked Jesus as to how they should behave with the people, particularly with their enemies. Jesus explained: "Ye have heard that it hath been said by Moses. Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, love your enemies and pray for them, that ye may be sons of your Father in heaven." You would realize that divine laws are given out according to the times and needs of the people. The Mosaic Law was delivered to the people because they were hard of heart. With the change of times, Jesus modified the position as above.

The really great persons wish well to everybody. Their love is all-embracing. Their hearts are large like a sea. They do not raise even their little finger against them who cavil and carp and speak ill of them.

It is a pity that the world is full of people who forget themselves for the sake of belly. It is very rare that you will find a person who is really in search of God. Our temples and Gurudwaras are crowded to suffocation. Thousands of people go there to attend the routine service. They listen quite attentively to the recitations and the talks over there. But just search their heart. Everyone has his personal motive for this kind of religiosity. Excuse me, we make a cat's paw of God. We do not want

God for the sake of God. We must, therefore, learn to be true to ourselves. This is the first step and the most important step. God is great and gracious. He gives what we desire. If we want world, He would give us world but not Himself. The process of world is long and unending.

Have you realized as to what is the greatest hurdle in our way to God? We stand at the gate blocking the way and pray God to enter. How can He? We must step aside and make a way for Him. We must empty ourselves of all thoughts of the world so as to make room for Him. We have to wait and watch for Him. "He comes like a thief in the night, and there is no hour fixed for His coming." God is not deaf. He knows what is passing in our hearts and acts accordingly.

The Law of God is good, just, and for our ultimate benefit. If we ask amiss, He would not grant us. We must learn to live in His Will and accept His Will whatever it be. Therein lies our safety and security. We even do not know what to ask of Him and how to ask. The fault lies with us. Sometimes, it so happens that our desires are fulfilled and yet in the end things go wrong. It is then that we realize that we had asked something undesirable. Why not then pray God to give us that which He thinks the best, rather than to blame the stars if anything goes wrong? That is why an awakened person has a ruling passion for God alone. All things work to the good of those who win the love of God.

How can we do this? We even do not know where God is and how can we reach up to Him. For this:

*We shall have to rise as high as He is;  
It is then that we can know Him.*

God is very subtle and beyond the reach of our senses, our mind, and our intellect. We cannot see Him with the eyes of flesh. If we learn how to etherealize ourselves,

we can come in contact with God-into-expression and thereby win His love.

Now the question is one of finding a Guru of the right type. On the one hand, we have Gurus who simply profess themselves as such. By acting and posing as Gurus they make their living. We have nothing to do with Gurus of this category.

Then there are social teachers and preachers doing their work according to the set rules of the organizations to which they belong. Man is a social animal and cannot but live in society. The fundamentals of all social orders are almost similar enough. They tell us to have a clean living and chaste life of truthfulness and continence. This is something commendable. Social reformers can certainly help to raise society and social life of the people to a certain extent. But unfortunately, our reformers too, in course of time, grow narrow-minded and lose their elastic touch with the society, with the result that splinter groups grow within the society. This leads to splitting, friction, and unrest. So whatever they do, they do something of a limited nature for a limited time. The good they do is not enduring. This is the second category of teachers, and we may class them teachers of society and worldly wisdom. They cannot be of any great help to us in self-realization and God-realization.

For these objectives, we will have to search for another type of Guru — the Satguru type or one established in *Sat* or Truth. They are realized souls with a knowledge of and access into the realms beyond — realms beyond the range of the senses, the mind, the intellect, and the *pranas* (vital airs). They are teachers indeed, and hold in their hands the keys of Heaven and Hell and of the Beyond.

The gnarled sage, Ashtawakar, who gave a practical experience of the inscape to Raja Janak, belonged to this category. He was the only Rishi who not only professed,

but claimed to have realized his own "self" and was capable to make others realize likewise.

India, as you know, was at that time at the zenith of its glory, full of sages and seers of different types and orders; but none could demonstrate God to the royal seeker after God (Raja Janak). The great sage Yajna Valkya could only give the king the theory of *Pravidya* or the science of soul. So all we need is a perfect Master for our instruction and guidance on the God-way.

The next question is as to where a perfect Master is to be found. You should know that He is not tied down to any particular society or to any particular country. A Man of Spirit comes and goes like a free wind. And then God may choose any human-pole as his befitting receptacle to work through. He may come as a cobbler like Ravi Das, or as a cloth printer like Namdev, or as a weaver like Kabir. He may take his birth among *Kshatriyas* or among *Jat* cultivators as Dhanna Bhagat. He may appear in one country or the other, in East or in West, or anywhere in the world. Wheresoever God's Light may appear, people like moths are sure to gather. He may come in a high class family or be born low. It matters little. But this much is certain, that if he himself is a man of realization, then alone you may expect some inner experience from him.

We must then pray day and night for meeting a competent Master. I would like to tell you one of my personal experiences. Even as a child, I had some background of my own.

Everyday I would take down a couplet from the Sikh scriptures. I would write it down and throughout the day would cogitate upon it. On one occasion, I took for my couplet something where stress was laid for contacting a real Guru, may be a Sadhu, a Sant, or Mahatama. This set me athinking. I began to pray to God to help me to a real Guru, so that I may derive full benefit in this very life

and thus fulfill my long cherished desire. Gradually this became an obsession with me. I even wished that God may Him-self shower His mercy directly upon me as He did to Dhruva or Prahlad in bygone days. But now the times had changed. God's Power could now be experienced only through the grace of some Godman. I was afraid that if I erred in my choice, my life would be wasted.

For a long time I continued thinking like this. From time to time I had divine visitations. I always took the form of the holy man who used to visit me in my meditations as Nanak. In those very days, I composed a poem in which I beautifully described the lovely features of the divine guide who kept guiding me all these years from day to day on different planes. This state continued for about seven years. It was only in 1924 that I happened to go to Beas and met that visionary figure in the form of Hazur Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj. All I mean to say is that God listens to our prayers provided they are genuine, deep, and sincere. When I inquired from Hazur as to why he had taken so long a time to draw me to his Lotus Feet, he simply replied that it was the most opportune time to do so.

I cannot help repeating that a Godman is not a man in the ordinary sense of the term. He is always a human-pole on and through which the God-power works. The Power of God is pervading everywhere; and on the chosen human-pole, it works on so many different levels. As a Guru, He works on the physical level, as any other worldly teacher would do. He joins in our joys and sorrows. He may even shed tears with us in our distress. All this he does to develop our human nature and our faith in him. Inwardly he remains as he is, unaffected and unconcerned with all our weals and woes. Thus on the human level, he acts as a perfect human being.

But, besides this, he is something more as well. When you leave the physical plane and transcend into the astral

world, the "Guru" now assumes the form of "Gurudev" and appears in his radiant form. When the disciple is able to manifest in him this radiant form of the Master and starts communing with him, he becomes a "Guru-sikh." This radiant form of the Master now becomes our guide on the inner planes, and leads us to the feet of the *Sat-Purush*. The Power that merges in the *Sat-Purush* is called "Satguru." It is this Power that works in the world on the human plane as a "Guru." This is why it is said: "Satguru remains in his fullness."

It means he is fully manifested wherever he is, even on the human pole but is not attached to the pole. Excuse me, we have not yet understood the real nature of Guru and his greatness. Like a little child, we presume to know him. What can a child know of his father and more so of the heavenly Father? We know him only to the extent that he wishes us to know, or reveals himself to us. The Guru is as incomprehensible and ineffable as God Himself. We simply cannot know him on the human level of the intellect.

You may take the life history of any great soul, and you will find that the heights he gained were because of the intense fire in him. God cannot be had so easily as we may imagine. Rabia Basri, a Muslim divine, suffered from severe pangs of separation from the Lord. She had an intense longing for Him. She would go into meditation at early dawn and remain so till night. And then would sit again till daybreak. Her neighbors were surprised at her continuous devotion. Once they inquired of her: "O Rabia, would you kindly tell us if God visits you before you go into meditation or after you have finished the meditation?" She said: "He comes before I sit for meditation." They asked: "How do you know this?" She replied: "It is he who pushes me into meditation. Whenever I feel restless and am overwhelmed by strong feelings and emotions, I know that He has come."

This is something normal in the lives of spiritually great. From a very early age, Nanak had no love for the world. As a child, he remained in a sort of self-absorption. He was the only son of his parents. His father and family members could not bear to see him in a state of distress and distraction. Nanak was sent on to a pilgrimage. It did not help him. A physician was called in. He began to feel the pulse of the young man. Nanak himself described this incident so beautifully:

*The poor physician came in and began to feel my pulse;  
How could the simpleton know the anguish in my heart?  
And then, he significantly added:  
O physician, go thy way back for I am smitten by the love  
of the Lord.*

The first thing that we need is an inner craving for the Lord. It is in the furnace of love that the Lord shineth in full effulgence. The past *Samskaras* (impressions) get a good impetus from a man of realization. The latter fans the flame of love. In every heart, there is love. But what is desired is love for the Lord and not love for the world. The Guru finds a ready soil in a loving heart for sowing the Word of God. Guru Arjan goes on to explain:

*Whatever one sets his mind upon, he cannot do without that.*

It is a matter of common experience that we always follow the mind. If a child is hungry, nothing would satisfy him except food. A mother may place hundreds of toys before him and try to play with him in diverse ways, and the child would still go on crying for milk. Milk is everything for him. This is exactly the case for one who has in him hunger for the Lord. The world and the things of the world have no value for him. The riches and the possessions, however immense he may have, fail to give him any satisfaction. The inner urge for God is gnawing him down. All that he wants is to find a way to God. He

is prepared to sacrifice his all for one who can put him on the God-way.

Once a man went to a Mahatma. The latter was preparing to go to the riverside for a bath. He asked the young man to accompany him. Taking off their clothes, they went to have a dip in the river. The Mahatma pushed the man where the water was deep and held his head down under the water. The man felt suffocated and struggled to raise his head out of the water for breathing. The Mahatma pulled him out and inquired of the man if he had a choking sensation for the Lord as he had for air while under the water. This is what is required for a seeker after God; without it one cannot do anything.

Once Hazrat Junid of Persia was riding along a river bank, when all of a sudden his mare came to a standstill. However hard he would kick the mare, the animal would not move. When all coaxing and kicking failed, he gave rein to the animal to do what it liked. All at once, the animal went into a gallop and took the Hazrat to a mountain cave where an old man was sitting by himself. The Hazrat alighted and remained with the old man for sometime giving him instructions in the way of Allah (Lord). Before parting, the Hazrat gave his address to the seeker after God. The man, all unconcerned, naively said: "There would be no occasion for me to follow thee to thy place. He who has sent thee now, shall send thee again if at any time I feel the need for thee." It is, of course, too much to expect for a *Mureed* (disciple) from his *Murshid* (Master). The fact is that God is not far away from us. He is in us though we may not be in him. It is He who directs the Godman to seek and find the lost sheep.

I may tell you something from my own personal experience. One day I was sitting with Hazur in the house of one Duli Chand in Amritsar when a Sikh gentleman walked in. Hazur, with a twinkle in his eye, looked towards the newcomer and asked in a familiar tone: "O, you have come." "Yes, Maharaj, I have," he replied.



Surprisingly, I inquired from him as to how he had come. The gentleman replied: "Last night, Hazur came to me in a vision. He asked me to come to this place the next day. I had never met Hazur before. It is my good luck that I have come to him." What I mean to say is that an awakened soul is just like a person on the top of a hill, who from a point of vantage can look around and see smoke arising from the hearts yearning for God. When he does witness this, he makes a provision either to reach unto them or direct them in one way or the other to come to him. Such a person is called Guru or a Mahatma (Great Soul).

*O mother, with all thy dainty dishes before me, I feel as unsatiated as before.*

The love for God is unending and increases from moment to moment. No amount of worldly pleasures can divert the attention of a person suffering from the pangs of separation. The parental love is undoubtedly immense, but the love of the Master for his disciple is still greater and exceeds all bounds. It is as all-embracing as God Himself.

Once I called on Hazur at Beas. It was at nighttime. I offered my obeisance unto him and sat down by the couch on which Hazur was reclining. In the course of the talk I remarked: "Hazur, such of the disciples who do some *Bhajan* and *Simran* are undoubtedly doing something. But what of those who are still slumbering on the plane of the senses?"

Hazur sat up on the couch and said: "Kirpal Singh, do you mean that I should stop giving Naam? A loving father always wishes well of his children. Am I not anxious that each one of my children should try to stand on his own legs?"

The grace of the Guru is always with us. His Spirit and Power are working for our good at all times. If he has left

the earthly plane, it does not mean that he has gone away from us. I have told you so often that the Guru-power never dies. It is only the human-pole that the Power changes. He who implants the seed of Naam, attends to the seed and helps it to sprout and blossom forth into a tree with flowers and fruits. His Power continues to work for our benefit both here and in the hereafter.

We always err in thinking that God-power in the Guru dies with the physical death of the Guru. But it is not so. When God is eternal, His Power too is eternal. Is not this Power upholding the heaven and the earth and all that is in them? Though we are unable to see Him physically, He is not far removed from us. His astral form in divine radiance is still behind our eye-focus. All that we need is to transform ourself into spirit to contact the Spirit of God now in the luminous form of the Master (Gurudev). In his radiant form, he is anxiously awaiting for us, to shower his benediction the moment we reach unto his feet. He is like a *Parda-Nashin* (veiled) lady who would not like to appear in public.

If we keep playing in the world and do not turn towards Him, the fault is ours. We must, therefore, strive to reach the door where He is standing. The moment we get near Him, He would stretch out his hands to hold us and pull us up to Him. Be assured He would do so for His Name's sake. This is His Truth, and He would always stand by It.

Explanatory Notes:

1. *Khawaja Hafiz*: Hafiz Shirazi, a mystic poet of Persia.
2. *Guru Ram Das* (1534-1581) The fourth Guru of the Sikhs.
3. *Guru Arjan* (1563-1606) The fifth Guru of the Sikhs. He simplified the *Adi Granth*.
4. *Kabir* (1440-1518) A well-known Indian saint who practiced and preached Surat Sahbd Yoga.
5. *Amir Khusro* (1255-1327) A great mystic poet of India.
6. *Guru Gobind Singh* (1660-1708) The tenth and last Sikh Guru.
7. *Nanak* (1464-1539) The founder of the Sikh religion.
8. *Baba Sawan Singh Ji* (1858-1948) The Master of Sant Kirpal Singh.
9. *Maulana Rumi* — A great Persian saint, author of *Masnavi*.

10. *Namdev* (1269-1344) His 60 hymns are included in the *Adi Granth*.
11. *Raja Janak*, father-in-law of Lord Rama of the *Ramayana*.
12. *Ravi Das* — His 41 hymns are included in the *Adi Granth*; he was disciple of Ramananda.
13. *Dhanna Bhagat*, a 15<sup>th</sup> century north Indian saint.
14. *Rabia Basri* (717-808 AD) An early Sufi saint born in Egypt.