

Gurbhakti — A Lesson in Love

English version and substance of one of Master Kirpal Singh's Satsang talks in Hindi at Sawan Ashram in Delhi, India as published in the July 1968 edition of *Sat Sandesh*.

This day we have gathered together in the loving memory of the Godman ([Hazur Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj](#)) who revived the age-old perennial science which we had forgotten. The object of celebrating the birth anniversary of a Master-soul is to make a fresh appraisal of his teachings; and by following his footsteps, we keep his memory alive. Ordinarily, we are expected to live daily, nay hourly, in the loving presence of the Master and be ever thankful to him for the indelible footprints left by him on the sands of time. That, of course, is an individual affair. But we must, once a year at least, hold a memorial service on the occasion of his advent into the world for the spiritual uplifting of man. Whatever time we spend together in this congregational service to the memory of the Godman will be amply rewarded and should, therefore, be considered a great blessing.

What then are the lessons we can take from such a dedicated life of selfless service as of Hazur? — for it is by knowing them that we can strive to follow them as best as we can and advance on the path of self-realization and God-realization. It is to his great credit that he revived the most ancient science of *Paravidya* (the knowledge of the Beyond, the great unknown cause of all causes that lies beyond the senses and the intellect).

In the modern age, the teachings originated with Kabir and Nanak, and the torch of light was carried on by the successive nine Gurus, and then Tulsi Sahib, Swami Ji Maharaj, and afterwards by Baba Jaimal Singh Ji, and then by Hazur Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj, by whose grace the sacred teachings are being imparted even now to the spiritually hungry souls. Fortunate indeed are those blessed souls who had the privilege to be initiated by him. We must, therefore, make the best use of the short life span allotted to us. The greatest purpose of the

human birth is that it offers us an opportunity, rare as it is, to experience our own ‘self’ and God. None can help us to unite with God but one who is already united with Him. Gurbani says: *Some Godman may link us with the Power-of-God.*

That divine Power is, of course, within each one of us, for we live, move, and have our very being in Him.

*My Lord consort pervades in all beings,
But blessed is one in whom He is manifest.*

— Gurbani

It is this God manifested being or the Godman who can guide us Godward. The question here is as to why we cannot unite with God by our own unaided efforts? It is because the soul is under the powerful sway of mind, which in its turn is being controlled by the senses; and these senses are running riot with the sense-objects. We are thus totally identified with mind and matter and have no independent existence of our own. So it is the God-in-man who can link us with God. In other words, one who has established a contact with God can show us the way to effect this contact for ourselves. Thus, God in the garb of man is the Guru of all. When Guru Nanak was questioned on this subject, he replied: “Verily, it is the holy Word, *Shabd*, or the Sound that is the Master; and the soul in man permeating through and through in the physical body is the disciple.” Now what is meant by *Shabd*? The absolute God is *Ashabd* (Wordless); but when He comes into expression, He is known as *Shabd* (Word).

With one Word, the whole creation came into being.

— Gurbani

Again Gurbani says: *It is from Shabd that the whole creation comes into being and ultimately gets absorbed into it, and it is through it that regeneration takes place.*

This manifested Power-of-God which is the substratum of the entire creation is called *Shabd*. This *Shabd* then is the *Jagat Guru* or the Master-power. This very question was put to

Kabir: "O Kabir, who is the Master and where does the disciple reside? How did the two get together into an indissoluble union?" He replied: "My Master is in the Beyond, while the disciple is in this body. Both of them got together by means of Shabd, and now there is no fear of separation between the two." So the Master of all the world is the Shabd-power or the holy Word. Guru Gobind Singh has put it succinctly: "He who is one and the same in the beginning and the end is the manifested Power-of-God, the Shabd; and that is the real Master."

Thus the physical body in which the Shabd-power is manifestly working is worthy of all our adoration, for that power alone can draw the soul to Himself. The Master is not the physical body but the divine Power which is enlivening his body.

God speaks through a human frame, as without it how can He speak to us?

—Gurbani

The physical body is not the Master, but blessed is that body in which that Power is manifest for spiritual guidance. This Power-of-God as manifested on the human plane helps in liberating all human souls entombed in the meshes of mind and matter.

Swamiji says: *The great Power-of-God in the Guru helps in disengaging the souls from the shackles of the body and in raising it upwards.*

The living Master is competent enough to unite with God such souls that seek his guidance. The prime job of a Master-soul is to unite all the children of God under his saving protection.

Gurbani says: *Free from birth and death under the compulsive force of karmas comes the redeemer of souls; with a touch of his life-breath, he alchemises the human soul and connects it with the holy Word.*

Such great souls come into the world for the spiritual welfare of humanity. They are commissioned from above for this job. Now, perhaps you may understand what is meant by a living Master. He is, in fact, God-manifest on earth or the 'Word-made-flesh' to dwell amongst us, as Christ puts it.

Dwelling in the Guru, He doles out the holy Word.
—Gurbani

Man alone can be the teacher of man. It is with the help of some human instrument that God works for mankind. God does, from time to time, descend in a human garb for the uplift of the people stuck fast in the mire of the world and all that is worldly. A saint has a two-fold mission: to awaken people from a long-drawn dream of the material world, and to reveal to them the saving life-lines within. Like a radiant pole-star, he guides the erring humanity. When it rains, every place, high or low, equally gets the blessing of the life-giving showers. Hazur's name was Sawan; and significantly enough like Sawan-rains, he blessed the people with spiritual showers; and every one — Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, or Christian — benefited from his teachings.

Now, we revert to our original question as to whom should one love in the world? If we look critically, we find that love is an innate quality in man; and everyone is devoted to one thing or another: may be the service to one's family, community, nation or the country, or it may be to the development of some art or craft or any other such thing. And yet there are some who love themselves above all else, and self-indulgence is with them the be-all and end-all of life.

Once there was in our country a ruler Mohammad Shah Rangila. He was given over to bouts of drinking. When Delhi was in the throes of a wholesale massacre, the people petitioned the king to intervene. The king was so busy in drinking that he had neither the time nor the heart to attend to this appeal for mercy and exclaimed: "Let these papers of no importance be drowned in the wine." Similarly, it is said of Nero, a Roman emperor, that he fiddled while Rome was

burning. There is no dearth of such people in the world. He who worships his family is far better than the one who worships himself and lives for self-gratification only. So also he who loves and serves his society, religion, or country is still better progressively.

But all these varying types of love and devotion are more or less characterized by a sense of ego and smack of pride; and as such, more often than not, the result is a clash between family and family, class and class, or country and country. We have had what are euphemistically called crusades or holy wars fought in the blessed name of religion but born out of misguided religious zeal, and to speak plainly, out of sheer religious ignorance, bigotry, and intolerance.

But on the contrary, the love of God far transcends all these petty adorations as it consists in total self-abnegation and selfless sacrifice because of the knowledge that God resides in all hearts; and He is the substratum of the entire creation. God is an unchangeable permanence and everlasting. But we have not yet seen Him; and without seeing Him, how can we love Him and inculcate devotion for Him? So we have, of necessity, to bestow our loving devotion on the human plane where the Power-of-God is manifest. Guru Amar Das Ji says: *If you want to worship God, worship the Satguru who is God personified of the Word-made-flesh.*

He then grants contact with the holy Naam and helps us in crossing over into the Beyond. The worship of Satguru is really the worship of God. The easiest way of developing the worship of God is to develop *Gurbhakti* (love of the Master). In Gurbani we have: *The loving devotion to the Master is above everything else, and I love His holy feet with all my strength.*

Now what is *Bhakti* (loving devotion)? It is the love of God. God is love and love is God. The way back to God is also through love. Love knows naught but service and sacrifice. What is it that distinguishes love? He who loves desires to sacrifice his all for the sake of the beloved; and after having

sacrificed all does not look for any reward in return. God Himself bespeaks thus:

*If you desire to join me in the game of love,
Come unto Me with your head on your palm as an offering.
If you want to tread the path of love,
Never for a moment hesitate to offer your life.*
— Gurbani

This is the type of sacrifice that love demands; and in doing so, never think that you have done any favor. You should rather feel grateful that you have won love so easily.

Amir Khusro was a great devotee of his Master. One day he exclaimed with delight that he had received happy tidings from his beloved: "What is it?" the people asked. "My beloved has ordered that I be decapitated tomorrow in the open market," he said. "Has your beloved given you any assurance to see you and cast his loving glance on you?" inquired the people. "None, whatsoever," was the reply.

This is what love demands from the lover and complete submission to the will of the beloved without any rhyme or reason. Love is just a one-way traffic so far as the lover is concerned. It knows no bargaining. All it connotes is implicit obedience. "Not my will, but thine," cries the true lover. A Persian poet has defined love thus:

*What is love? It is to be a bondsman of the beloved.
And to go wandering and offering one's heart.*

Love then means to dedicate yourself — body and soul — to someone and to wander the earth over in his search.

A real devotee dedicates his very life to the service of his Master and dissolves his will in that of his. It is a life of complete surrender with no mental reservations. Sarmad, a great *Gurbhakt*, said:

I have given away my heart, my life, and my very soul;

Having passed on all my burdens, I know no greater gain than this.

All the ills of the world originate with the mental activity. We are stuck fast in the heart-focus from where the rays of the mind start, and passing from the sense organs, envelop the sense objects, and we get attached to the world around us. How little do we realize the great motor power of the soul behind, enlivening the mind and the intellect. If we could divest ourselves of these adjuncts and dedicate our very life to the service of a Godman, we would at once become a freed soul ready to go Godward. Can there be any greater gain than to escape from all the trials and turmoils of the earthly life? This is what we gain by practicing the presence of the personified God in our midst. He is a living embodiment of the God-into-expression Power and helps us to reveal and develop the same as he has done.

*Contemplate thou on the form of the Master;
Besides it, there is no other way of escape from bondage.*
— Swamiji

The term *dhyan* (contemplation) is derived from the root 'dhi' which means to fix the attention with the living Master. I may illustrate my point by taking the analogy of a newly wedded girl coming back to her parents' home. However busy she may appear to be in household chores, but all the time she thinks of her husband. In exactly the same way, the attention of the disciple should always be grounded in the Master — the Word-made-flesh. Guru is Godman, i.e. man *plus* God. Those who get attached to man only, remain entangled in the body; while those who see the God manifested in the man, the links of him are revealed to the disciple. He learns quickly how to rise above the body. As you think so you become. It is as natural as anything. If you will develop loving remembrance of the Master in your heart, the same ideas will come to you manifold by his divine radiation. It is he who loves us first, and our love is simply reciprocal. Mother loves the newly born child first, and the child loves the mother in return. Our love is but a kind

of reaction of the love of the Master who has drawn us to him. Gurbani says: *The Master loves the disciple with all his life.*

This is known as *Gurbhakti*. When you think of the Master with all your heart and soul, you cannot but obey him implicitly. Christ said: *If you love me, keep my commandments.*

Love calls for direct and immediate obedience and not merely lip service. In this respect there is a general weakness in all of us, and we fail miserably. We must learn to understand him and be able to do what he bids us to do, even though at moments what he says may not appear sound to us. He speaks from a higher level and sees things from afar to which we have yet no access. So, if all the time we think of him, no matter while we are engaged in worldly pursuits, we will gradually imbibe his spirit. Our outer entanglements shall not then bind us. In this way the more we will get off from outer attachments, the more his divine power will enter into us and transform us into his likeness.

Christ has said: *I am the vines; thou art the branches; so long as thou will remain embedded in me, you will bear ample fruit. So you cannot do without me.*

All this may be likened to a grafting process. When we engraft the twig of one tree in the body of another tree, then the fruit of the second tree will be of the quality and taste of the tree from which it got the graft. Similarly, if the disciple reasonably develops his receptivity by constant devotion, loving faith, and implicit obedience, he will, when asked, give you the same reply to a question as you would have got from the Master himself. When two hearts work in unison, they operate with the same vibrations as in telepathy. Such a disciple naturally gets from the Master his own impulses. So *Gurbhakti* is the *sine qua non* on the path of the Masters.

Swamiji has rightly said: *Those who engage in the practice of listening to the Sound-current without Gurbhakti, or devotion to the Master, are but fools.*

The essence of *Gurbhakti* is that our thoughts and feelings be detached from all else and be centered at one focal point, the eye focus. Our Hazur used to illustrate this sublime truth thus: “Suppose there is a pipe with many holes or small openings in it from which the water is trickling drop by drop. If we were to close down all these holes save one, then the water will gush forth from the one hole left open in a strong current and to a great height. Exactly in the same way, if we cut off all our worldly connections, then the sensory currents will get collected at one point and then shoot forth from the tenth opening at the eye-focus.” Hazur used to say that the Guru does not need our devotion; but if we adore him and offer our unstinted love to him, it is helpful for our inner spiritual progress. The principle of ‘as you think so you become’ works all this.

Swamiji says: *The holy Word or the Shabd is revealed just by the grace of the Guru, and then the long and strong arm of the Master pulls the spirit-currents out from the body below.*

Now you will understand the basic need of *Gurbhakti*. It does not mean dancing around the Guru or shouting this way or that. If you do not care to listen to what the Guru says or to understand and follow his behests, it is not *Gurbhakti* at all. Such persons cannot get any spiritual benefit even if they lived with the Master for ages upon ages. On the contrary, those who turn their backs upon the world and are wholly engrossed in the love of the Master, and make loving devotion as their ruling passion, they easily and quickly get transformed into the likeness of the Master. Just take a worldly example of a person full of lust and see how he lovingly dotes upon the form of his beloved and in her presence feels inebriated. Guru Ramdas says: “I feel highly elated with joy by looking at the physical form of my beloved Satguru.”

If one could, from afar, just get a glimpse of the glorious turban of Hazur while standing in the midst of thousands of persons, a thrill of joy would run through from head to toe.

Maulana Rumi says: *Even if I were to behold the face of my beloved, hundreds of times with hundreds of eyes, I would still like to see him again and again, for each time one gets a novel experience from such a blessed sight.* He goes on to say: *Just as a drunkard feels restlessly agitated by looking at a vintage splashing in a goblet of wine, similarly by looking into the cups of the deeply set eyes of the Master, the souls of the devotees soar high in ecstasy divine.*

Those who have attained the climax of love like this for the Master, — they feel divinity surging in the very fibers of their being. It was a matter of common experience to see people standing statue-like for hours on end with their eyes intently fixed on the radiant face of Hazur. The sweet and loving remembrance of the Master, the contemplation of his form, and carefully attending to his discourses are some of the tried methods for the purification of the mind. If the Master is full of piety, you will automatically become pious. After all, what is there in him which attracts us so much? He is charged with the spiritual glow and the divine glory which attract one and all alike. An Urdu poet says:

*Where there is no beauty, love cannot evolve;
And a nightingale finds no delight in flowers painted on the walls.*

It is the glory of the living God in him that attracts others. The radioactive rays emanating from his person sink deeply into the hearts of the devotees. So long as there is no inner charm, no one can charm the people around him:

*A soul entombed in the body cannot possibly do Gurbhakti,
When even the gods themselves are ignorant of His greatness.
How can the incomprehensible Satguru be comprehended;
He may be known as much as he may in his grace reveal himself.*

— Swamiji

Guru Nanak was considered by the worldly people as one who perverted the intellect of others. He was not allowed to enter

into the town of Qasur (now in Pakistan) lest he should misguide the people. But there were others who recognized in him a living God in the garb of man. So it all depends on how much he may choose to reveal himself to each individual. Similarly, Hazur was looked upon by many as a very pious old man; whereas those who had had the good fortune to go near him, they would see something higher in him. And still fewer who had developed some inner receptivity and devotion found him a veritable Godman.

Hazur used to explain the matter: "A highly qualified teacher attending to boys in a primary class would reveal as much of his knowledge as it may be possible for the novices to grasp. But the same teacher when teaching middle classes would impart higher knowledge to his students befitting their capacity to learn; and when he will go to the higher secondary, he will show more of his learning; till in a college, he will be at his best." In other words, as a student advances from class to class and his understanding ripens with the passage of time and experience, he imbibes more and more of his teacher's learning; and the teacher, too, tries to impart greater knowledge which may be commensurate with the capacity to understand and assimilate.

The time factor, thus, is important in any type of development. The more a person attends upon his Guru and diligently follows his instructions, the more he develops his receptivity; and in the same proportion, the Guru reveals to him more and more of spiritual experience. It all depends on '*upasana*' which means proximity to the spiritual preceptor. If you sit near the Master with heart and soul attuned, you are sure to be benefited a lot by his divine radiation and that, in turn, will develop your inner receptivity or power of assimilation. The easiest, the shortest, and the simplest way to get greater benefit is to lose yourself completely in the holy presence of a Sant Satguru. This, in fact, is the significance of Satsang. Swamiji says: *O Soul, be fully absorbed in Satsang at least this day.*

What then is 'full or complete absorption' is the question? It means that while in the company of a saint, listening to him or

otherwise, one should forget not only the place where he is sitting but become wholly oblivious of the very surrounding in which he is, and dissolve his very being, losing all consciousness except of the holy presence of the Master. This blanking of one's self is called 'absorption'. The more one empties himself of his worldliness and pettiness, the more he will be filled by the divine grace emanating from the divine presence before him. This is the secret of a successful Satsang.

Excuse me when I say that it is seldom that we get a Satsang or company of a truly perfect Master, for such highly advanced souls — souls one with the Lord — are very rare indeed. They are not easily available and recognizable; and if by some mighty good luck we do come across a Godman, we do not know how to derive the fullest benefit from his company or Satsang. The way to make the most of such a rare opportunity and derive the maximum benefit is that one should try to come to the place of Satsang as early as possible and sit silently in a prayerful mood, blanking the mind of all the worldly thoughts in the august presence of the Master, inwardly absorbing his words of wisdom. If by sitting close to fire we feel warmth and the proximity of a glacier gives a cold shiver, there is no reason why one should not be affected by the divine aura of a Master-saint whose radiation has an unimaginably long range.

The devotion to and the love of the Master are synonymous terms. Love is all-comprehensive and it knows only service and sacrifice.

Guru Gobind Singh, while speaking of his own descent on the earth plane, says: *Having merged in the Lord, I did not like to come down again into this mundane world, but was prevailed upon by God to do so — for the spiritual welfare of humanity.*

When loving devotion is at its highest, nothing remains of the individual self, for it becomes universalized and all-pervading.

*My heart is so filled in with the love of the Lord,
That I cannot think of myself apart from Him.*

—Hafiz

We have, therefore, to rid ourselves of the personal ego, for it stands between us and God. Gurbani says: *The true Lord is attained by Gurbhakti*. This is the way that He comes to dwell in us, absorbing the mind in Him. The main object of all spiritual practices and disciplines is that we should develop *Gurbhakti* or devotion to the Guru which, of course, grows out of love. This is why all saints and sages laid great stress on cultivating love.

Guru Gobind Singh says:

*What does it profit to close the eyes
and sit stork-like with folded wings;
And to take dips in the seas of the world,
gaining nothing here and hereafter;
And, while reveling in sense-pleasures,
waste time in useless disputations.
Verily I tell thee, listen all if ye may,
They alone get to the Lord who know how to love.*

Similarly, St. John in his first Epistle says: *He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love*. Again, in the holy Quran, we have: *A loving man cannot do without a beloved*.

It is, in fact, the beloved that teaches the lover the art of love and enables him to progress steadily on the path of love; as God is love so is the human soul a particle of divine love. The essence of love is at the core of all creation and more so in man. Man is he who has in him feeling of loving sympathy. What is it that characterizes a sage or a saint?

*He is a cup bubbling over with the love of God;
His proximity quickens in us the life of love.*

As light comes from light and life from life, so does love from love. Love does not grow in fields nor can it be had from a shop, but we may catch its infection from the love-laden eyes of a lover of God. There are some people who are fondly in love with the pleasures of the world and care not for the next. Then there are others who are carried away by hopes of a

paradisiacal bliss. But those who love the Lord share the things that really matter far better than either of them. Love ignites in us the flame of Living Light or the Light of Life. What type of love is that:

Meeting the God-intoxicated soul I inquired about the nature of divine love.

The only reply was that in its fullness, it could not be described.

The flaming love of the Lord cannot be kept under a bushel.

One may not open ones mouth, but tearful eyes belie and shed tears involuntarily.

A heart devoid of love is a charnel house,

An iron monger's bellows which breathes without the breath of life.

Kabir says:

Humility, simplicity, devotion, and courtesy are great virtues;

But he alone is great who observes decorum with all.

Decorum or propriety is the core of true living that ranks almost as high as truth itself. We must love all, respect all, and be courteous to all, which we seldom do. We generally play double-faced like Janus and apply double standards in all our dealings. Our head and heart do not work in unison, nor do our acts and words exhibit the same pattern. Guru Nanak says:

Humility tinged with sweetness, O Nanak, is the essence of all virtues.

It is from the abundance of heart that the tongue speaketh; and unless there is sweetness in the folds of our mind, we cannot speak sweetly. All the, sages, therefore, speak of love as the only way of salvation.

*Beauty, lineage, prowess, learning, and riches are of no avail;
Endowed with all these but devoid of love of the Lord, one is
as good as dead.*

—Nanak

How can we get the wealth of love? It comes to the elect of the Lord, and he showers it in abundance on whomsoever He pleases. The worldly-wise entombed in mind and matter can hardly aspire to it and do not get it. Once princess Zaibul-Nisa went to Sarmad and requested him for the rare boon of God's love. Sarmad said:

*O Sarmad, the burning passion of the Lord is not granted to the avaricious,
Nor the moth's love for the flame, to flies that hover round filth.
It takes ages to get revelation of the Lord in one's mind.
O Sarmad, this wealth is not doled out to all and sundry.*

Now, the question of questions is: Whom should we love? As love is the law of life, we cannot do without loving one thing or the other. We bestow all our love on the world and all that is of the world, the wife and children, the riches and possessions. But all these objects of the world betray us at one stage or another, and leave us rueful sooner or later. We must love something which may be eternal so that our love is not falsified. The former is not love in the strict sense of the word but blind infatuation commonly known as attachment. Why not then find something worthy of our love and which can befriend us both here and hereafter.

In this context, I place before you a small hymn of Kabir so that we may understand the subject better. *We must love one who will not leave or forsake us till the end.*

He alone is worthy to be loved who will stand by us in all the vicissitudes of life on the earth plane, and also lead us into the Beyond before the judgment-seat of God.

*O Nanak! snap all ephemeral ties of worldly relations and find the company of a true saint;
The former shall break away in this very life, while the latter shall abide with thee even after death.*

—Gurbani

The friends and relations in the world, howsoever near and dear they may be, do not stand by through thick and thin. Some of them leave off in poverty and indigence, some in prolonged illness and disease, and some in adverse circumstances and misfortune. At the most, a few may help you to the funeral pyre and that is all. The friendship of a saint is everlasting. He abides forever and forever and even stands by to help you before the judgment-seat of God.

*When in affluence, all flock around thee and feed thy vanity;
With the turn in fortune, all fly away and none comes near.*

— Kabir

Even the most sincere stand by helplessly when you are at death's door and gasping for breath. When they see you fighting and losing the battle against death, and helplessly struggling for life, all that they would do is to pray to God to relieve you from the tortuous agony of the last moments. What else can they possibly do?

*Serve the true Master and develop the holy Word.
The Master receives them on death those who have done their
best to follow Him.*

— Gurbani

We should, therefore, be the doer of the Word and practice it day and night. It is the 'comforter' of which Christ spoke. It helps us in diverse ways when we are helpless in death's trap or in treacherously odd situations. It materializes in the likeness of the Master to advise and encourage us, no matter where we may be — on the snowy mountain-tops, in the burning desert-sands, down in the ocean-depths, or high-up in the sky. And again, when one is in the last moments of one's life, in the radiant form of the Master, it appears to escort the soul into the Beyond, leads the spirit gradually from plane to plane; as and when he thinks fit, until he conducts you safely to the Abode-of-God. My Master used to say that a Satguru, while revealing the holy Word at the time of initiation, actually reveals his real form (*Shabd Swarup*), which always remains with the initiated soul till both merge in *Sat-Naam*, the primal

manifestation of God who then helps the soul to *Agam* (the incomprehensible), *Alakh* (the ineffable), *Anaam* (the Nameless, without form and attributes). It is because of this momentous and signal service and sacrifice of an eternal nature that we are advised to cultivate love for one who loves us eternally and befriends us both here and hereafter.

Maulana Rumi speaking of this love, tells us:

Love is different from sensuality in men, for senses feed upon the objects of senses, and thrive upon the food we take.

Thus we see that love is something sublime and sacred and should not be confused with lust which is the outcome of base desires and sensual appetites. It is love of the soul for the Oversoul or of the created being for the Creator. How then can we come by love is the next question.

Love neither grows in the field nor sold in the market; Even the high and the mighty who aspire for love have to pay for it with their head.

Love is the zest of life, for we live by the love of the Lord. Guru Amar Das has said: *Accursed is the man whose heart is bereft of love.*

Love is the Light of Life in which we live. What does it avail to have a human birth if we know not what love is and make the most of it? We must taste the blessings of love and be really blessed. That is the whole purpose of human existence. But what do we do? All the time we are busily engaged in doing things on the plane of duality, and are lost not only to God, but also to our own true self, forgetful of our essentially divine nature. Is there no remedy then? The reply is: Yes, there is a remedy: “*The love for Godman inspires love for God.*”

If you love one who is truth-personified, he will surely pass on his infection to you. This is the way to be inspired with the love of the divine. Live in the divinely awakened and you will live in the divinity. Hence the supreme need for cultivating love, the live-principle that will abide with you forever and

forever: *Without love, the mercurial nature of man finds no rest.*

Tossed in the seas of sense-pleasures, we have lost our moorings and are drifting rudderless along the stream of time. Until we find some safe anchorage, a haven of peace, we are ever a prey to chance winds and storms of life as it is. Every day we see strife and struggle everywhere, clashes in households, men set against men, tribe against tribe, and country against country. Why all this pother about? — Because of the lack of loving understanding, of loving toleration for the views of others. In spite of our man-made artificial barriers — national, linguistic, religious, and political — are we not members of one great family of man? So long as we do not rise above these petty, racial, and clannish prides and prejudices, which have bogged and clouded our vision, we cannot gain access to the bright sunshine of loving unity, and have peace within and without. And this will be possible only when we rest our soul in the causeless cause. St. Augustine tells us: *Thou hast created my soul, O God, after Thee; and it is restless until it rests in Thee.*

During my last world tour I had an opportunity of meeting national, religious, and political leaders in various countries; and I placed before them the principle of ‘live and let others live,’ and it had a chastening effect on them. I told them that God had put under their care and protection millions of His children; and if they could not, for one reason or another, take proper and adequate interest in them, they should pass over a part of their burden to others. This line of thought appealed to them; and at one or two places where relations had almost reached the breaking point, better counsels prevailed by divine grace.

Love works as a great healing balm in the affairs of the world. In our households if we could make use of a sweet tongue, we would have paradise on earth. A sword-cut may get well in a few days, but the wound caused by a sharp tongue festers all the while like a running sore. The more one ruminates on the bitter words, the more do they rankle in the mind.

The great epic of *Mahabharata* war was the outcome of just a few bitter words uttered inadvertently by Daraupadi. When the Kauravas visited the queen's palace, at one place the glittering surface of the courtyard looked like ripples of water. Naturally, they pulled up their nether clothes. Thereupon, Daraupadi facetiously remarked that the children of a blind progenitor could not but see things blindly. The result was a great homicidal war in which the most ancient culture and civilization of Bharat came virtually to an end.

This weakness for fault-finding and sarcasm has unfortunately become a common feature of the present day society. We are keenly alive to a mole in others' eyes, but cannot see a beam in our own eyes. We try to be clever in making allusions and speaking in oblique terms. This, in fact, is a very nasty habit, for it deeply hurts others' feelings.

I would suggest you all — old and new initiates — to maintain [introspection diaries](#); and at the close of each day, make a note of all your failings, during the day, from the path of rectitude, viz., truthfulness, purity, straight-forwardness, non-injury, selfless-service, and the like. In this way you will know your faults easily and try to eradicate them one by one. It will also enable you unwittingly to cultivate corresponding virtues on all levels — in thought, word, and deed. *Ahimsa parmo dharma* or non-injury is the highest of virtues. If you have love in your heart for all, you will not then try to deceive any person, for in doing so you will in the first instance be deceiving yourself. Far from this you will try to be of service to others. ‘Service,’ you know, comes before self and becomes sanctified by being selfless. All these are aids in purifying the mind; and the more the mind gets purified, the more it is fitted to receive in the light of truth, and the more you will be able to radiate it in your acts and deeds. I have always insisted on keeping such a diary.

*A seer of Truth can lead you to Truth,
And from death can take you to life eternal.*

—Gurbani

This then is the purpose of the prayer that the ancients were never tired of and repeated time and again: *O God, lead me from darkness to Light, from untruth to Truth, and from death to immortality.* And now we have seen how we can make this time-hallowed and time-honored prayer fruitful. Gurbani says: *He who links you with the Power-of-God, take him verily to be God.*

For who else but God can lead you to God? This is a profound truth, and you can verify it for yourself when by mighty good fortune you find a Godman or a Godman picks you up, for we all are engaged in the game of blind-man's bluff:

Satguru himself is doubtlessly the Immaculate One, Despite the human garb in which he appears.

Again:

Godman is but Godlike

In spite of the human cloak he wears.

In crystal-clear words, Maulana Rumi declares: *When you approach a Godman, you approach God; and when you move away from Him, you are farther from God.* Why? — Because Godman is a deputy of God Himself on the earth-plane. When we sit near a living Master with a vacant mind, we are filled with his divine vibrations which penetrate through the very pores of our body. This is the sign of his greatness and goodness. It is very rarely that we get a real Satsang, i.e., by a really God-intoxicated person. If we do get an opportunity, we hardly take full advantage of it. Unless we go to Satsang with faith and receptivity, we do not feel the effect of the radioactive rays that emanate from his person. When even a stone lying in water gets the cooling effect of water, there is no reason why a person, howsoever ignorant he may be, should not get intoxicated in the presence of a divine being. He will surely breathe the exhilarating fragrance of the Satguru, provided his mind is blank (free from worldly preoccupations). A living Master is Word-made-flesh, and the atmosphere around him is highly charged with spiritual vibrations, with the result that one begins to feel their effect and experience blissful

calm within. Once one tastes of this, one grows indifferent to all the pleasures of the world.

After all, there must be some specific spiritual gain in the company of a saint that all the scriptures of the world have spoken so highly of the value of Satsang and its necessity for progress on the spiritual path. But a Guru must be a perfect Guru and not a half prophet laying claim to the whole truth. It is not a matter of acting or posing, but one of revelation of the life-principle within. The bitter experience of fake masters compel the people to disown even the greatness of real teachers, and they prefer scriptures to direct experience. Once bitten, twice shy. But with the aid of a really perfect Master, there is no way out for a soul to escape from the shackles of mind and matter in order to enter into spiritual realms beyond to regain the kingdom of God now and to enjoy life eternal. Love of and obedience to such a Master unlocks the portals of heavens, and the soul is led by the ever-loving spouse and Radiant Guru Dev — safely from plane to plane and becomes eternally united with the Satguru (*Sat Naam* or *Sat Purush*, the True One):

*As the water of a river, in spite of the enclosing banks, remains water,
So doeth the Power-of-God manifested at a human pole is Truth itself.*

Guru and Satguru are but synonymous terms being just two phases of the Reality. Outwardly, he is a Guru for imparting spiritual instructions to the disciples; but inwardly he is a Satguru, for in him is working manifestly the power of *Sat* or Truth. He is, in brief, *Word-made-flesh* and dwells amongst us for revealing to man the lifelines within each individual:

*O Lalo! I speak nothing on my own;
I open my mouth only at His bidding.*

—Nanak

A Guru is one who has become the mouthpiece of God. The devotion to the Guru then is the first stage in spirituality, and it

consists in implicit acceptance of his commandments. *If you love me follow my commandments* was the exhortation of Christ to his followers. When you come across a real Guru, forget everything else and listen attentively to what he says; and even if you do not fully understand his language, it does not matter much. His radiation will of itself have a soothing effect on you. His magnetic rays have an unimaginably long range. If you sit quietly and listen, it will be to your benefit. Try to live up to what you hear; your life will take a change for the better. The sage Lukman used to say: “*When you go to a saint, sit quietly before him and listen attentively to what he says on his own.*” But do we do so? We keep either talking with others or keep interrupting the saint by useless questions, with the result that we return empty handed.

Today we are celebrating the birth anniversary of Hazur (Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj). It would, therefore, be a befitting tribute to his memory if you resolve to make your life a continuous saga of love and service — love of the Lord and service to His creation. As you have not yet come face to face with God, then for the time being you try to develop love for one in whom the Power-of-God is working for the good of humanity. The first step in this direction is to do what he directs you to do: *There is no difference between the Satguru and his words.*

We must learn to believe and have faith in what he says. Now that we are sitting in the sweet remembrance of Hazur, it will be a great day for us if we resolve to turn a new leaf in our life. For this purpose we must maintain a spiritual diary. It will enable us to introspect. At present we are unable to see the foibles lying hidden in the depths of our mind. But when you will try to plumb the unconscious, you will gradually be able to see them at the surface, at first in trickles, and then in torrents.

“O Mind! learn to love the Lord and love Him yet more.” This is what Kabir has said. In the same vein we have the words of Jesus: “*Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength.*” And again: “*Love thy neighbor as thyself.*”

Asked as to what should be the Christian attitude towards wrong-doers, he declared: *Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you that you may be the children of your Father-in-heaven. Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*

This then constitutes the love in the teachings of all the great sages from time immemorial, and it shall eternally remain the same. They all exhort us to mold our life on these lines. Courtesy does not cost you anything. All the time we are malevolently concerned with what others say and do; the world would be much better if we could stop involving ourselves in the sayings and doings of others. Again, we do not confine our mistakes to ourselves, but all the time busily sprinkling folly among our neighbors, with the result that we get from them hundredfold in return. What good does it bring after all?

On a day like this, I repeat with all the emphasis at my command, that Hazur was a veritable ocean of love; and we should and must, if we love him, learn afresh our lesson in love by following in his footsteps by diligently working at the spiritual practices that he gave out for our uplifting. By withdrawing his self from the physical plane, he has not forsaken us, for his godly power in its full radiance still sustains within; and he is, more keenly than ever before, waiting at the focus of our being to help and guide us.

God is not sitting on some throne in heaven. He is enthroned in the heart of each one of us. We must, therefore, learn to love and serve our fellow beings in distress and suffering. God Himself has declared: *“I love him who loves my created beings.”* This is the great lesson that Hazur taught us in the first instance; and if we put it into practice in our everyday life, his grace shall most surely descend and help us in our spiritual progress. Let us see what Kabir says:

Poor Kabir, from his life-long experience cannot help reflecting again and again,

Self-effacement is the only way that will take you to God and to your eternal home in heaven.

Kabir says that the only way to salvation lies through love. It is by love that you rise above self and become selfless. Without transcendence of the self (the ego) in us, the light of God does not dawn. When you are charged with love, love of God-in-man, you cross over from the stage of duality to oneness. How can we get to fount of divine love? Love can be imbibed from the love-laden heart of some God-inspired soul. In a few words, Kabir has provided us with the Master-key that unlocks the door of heaven: find out a Godman and learn from him the secret of love. Try to understand what he says and then diligently practice his teachings. He commands you to be chaste and clean in thought, word, and deed and to cultivate love for all that exists by the love of God. As God is not separate from his creation, you will see the spirit of God enlivening the entire universe. You will not then feel isolated from the world. Your little self, now cramped within the human mind, will expand, become universalized, and embrace the totality of all beings. This is the secret of success on God's path. There is no other shortcut to it. Try to be true to your own self and then you will not be untrue to anyone. Alongside, do *Bhajan* and *Simran* (sit in sweet remembrance of the Lord with rapt attention); make it a point to give daily nourishment to the soul as you do to the body. This is the love of which Kabir has given us a description in a few words. Mere lip-service and acrobatic feats will not do.

I would explain my point by means of a parable of two gardeners. A king had a fine orchard which was entrusted to the care of two gardeners. One of them was hard-working and would silently go about his job tending to the trees and flowers with due care and attention, keeping them in proper trim. The other was lazy but had a glib tongue and strong lungs. Whenever the king would visit the garden, the former would just pick up a few flowers and humbly present them to his royal master, while the other who did nothing would jump about and dance before the master and sing of the master's virtues, deportment, and clothes. Now who would the king

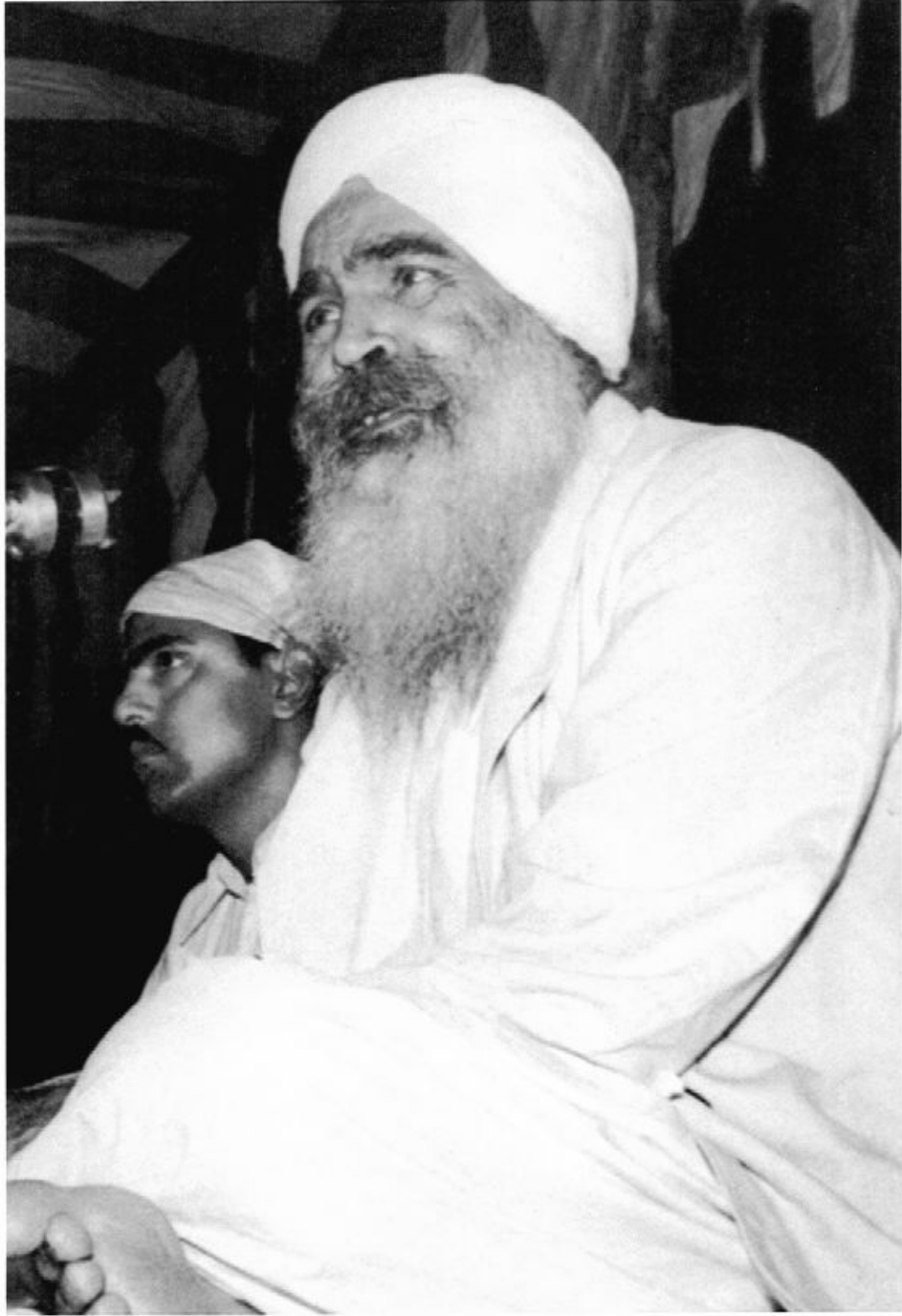
like? — You can give the answer yourself. — Certainly, the one who applied himself to his work diligently and honestly without making any fuss. Similarly, the all-knowing Master looks to your innermost intentions, the sincerity of purpose in you and honesty of efforts you make in following his commandments, and bestows on you the gift of his spiritual wealth according to your merits.

Kabir concludes his hymn with the following memorable words:

*He who gives precedence to the Guru over everything else and religiously follows his teachings,
O Kabir, such a person needs nothing to be afraid of in all the three regions.*

There are three mind zones or mental regions in which the embodied soul moves up and down in the giant wheel of life, propelled by the compulsive *karmic* force: the physical, the subtle, and the causal with no easy way of escape therefrom. Kabir tells us of a way-out through the kindly grace of some Master-soul that can lead a *jiva* unscathed from these into the Beyond, the purely spiritual realm — *Sachkhand* or *Muqam-i-Haq* of the Muslims or the Garden of Eden (New Jerusalem) of the Christians. The Master is the greatest gift of God to mankind.

Hazur used to tell us that we refrain from any evil act in the presence of a child of even five years. But, strange as it may seem, we have not even as much regard for the king of kings — the all-knowing Master — who knows even the innermost latencies of our mind. We shamelessly indulge in things which no sane person would do in the false belief that no one is looking at us. We must at all times remember that the Master in his subtle form is ever with us and watching all our deeds. Be careful to avoid misdeeds and misdemeanors at all costs. And, last but not the least, we should in no wise transgress the limitations imposed by him and pledge on this blessed day positively to follow his instructions with a rededicated zeal. Please make a careful note of all these things so that you may live in peace and be really blessed.



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