

SANT BANI

The Voice of the Saints

August 1989



Sant Ji Visits Italy

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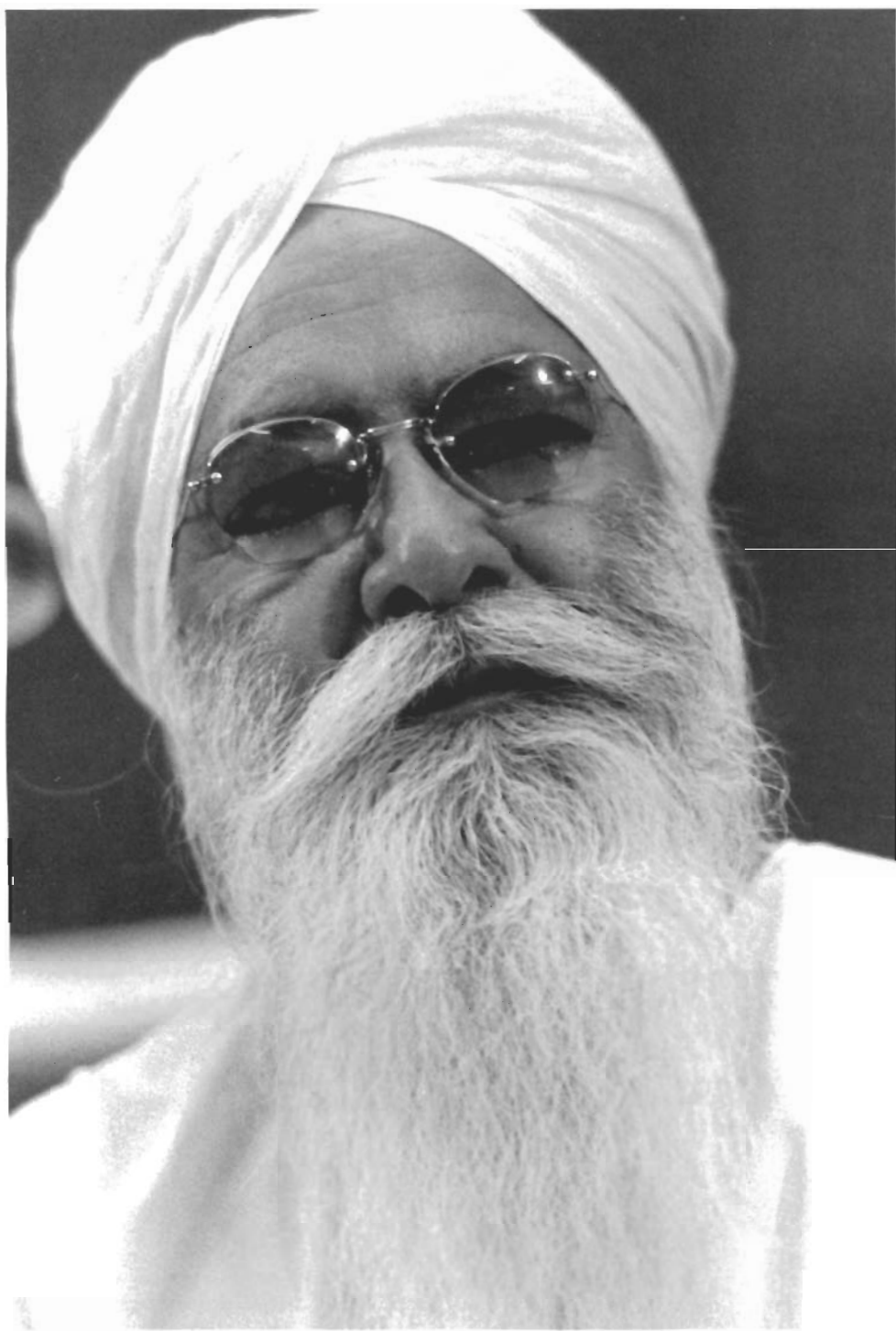
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The Real Ritual

Sant Ajaib Singh Ji

WE KNOW that whenever Saints and Mahatmas, the Beloveds of God, come into this world, They do not use rites or rituals in Their Satsangs, nor do They lay emphasis on righteous or religious deeds. They only teach Their disciples to do the meditation of Surat Shabd.

They do not come into this world to attach Their disciples to Their shoes or clothes or any of Their physical belongings. The fact is, They consistently teach and inspire the dear ones to go within, to meditate on Naam, and to realize themselves.

But it is a pity that whenever a Mahatma leaves this world, people begin doing rituals in His name; and whatever book He may have written, they understand it as the order of God or the voice of God and begin to worship it—even though we all know that books are written by bodies, and the Mahatmas also write books only after assuming the body.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj called the rites and traditions of His time (many of which are prevailing now) “deeds of hypocrisy”; He said, “No matter what religious deeds you do, it is all hypocrisy, and you will not become free from the beating of the angel of death.”

When He said that, the Muslims created an uproar and complained that

This talk, the fifth in the series of commentaries on the Asa Ji Di Vars of the Guru Granth Sahib, was given at Sant Bani Ashram, Village 16PS, Rajasthan, on December 30, 1986.

their religion, Islam, and their holy book, the Koran, which they said was “the book which had come down from heaven,” were criticized in the holy book Guru Granth Sahib. They complained to the Emperor Jehangir, and he had the Granth Sahib read through six times to find any criticism of Islam or the Koran. But he did not find any criticism there: he did find the praise of Naam—that without Naam one cannot be liberated, without the perfect Master one cannot get Naam, and without the Satsang we cannot know our shortcomings and failures.

It is a pity that Guru Arjan Dev Ji was tortured by the rulers of that time: He was made to sit on a hot pan, and burning sand was thrown on His head. His physical brother was friendly with the powerful people of that time, and he was the instrument of the torture given to Guru Arjan. What was Guru Arjan's offense? That He said, “All human beings are the same,” and, “Who is the real Muslim? Only he whose heart is like wax,” and, “We have been given this human birth to do the devotion of the Lord.” So this was Guru Arjan's offense: that He told people the reality.

It is very easy to say, “He was made to sit on hot pans.” Just imagine our condition if we were made to touch even a little hot place, or if we were forced to step barefooted on hot sand, what would happen to us? Just imagine what that Mahatma had to go through.

In the same way Lord Krishna and Lord Rama came into this world; but if we read the Bhagavad Gita which con-

tains the teaching of Lord Krishna, we find out that he did not come to establish or inspire any rites or rituals. He did inspire people to live a pure life; but after he left, how people misunderstood his teachings! They began the practice of dressing themselves up as Krishna, they began chanting sections of the Gita as a form of prayer, and they gave birth to a religion.

In His writings, Guru Gobind Singh has written about Rama and Sita, and called them very good and noble people. Sita was a woman who did very religious deeds; she was a very righteous person. But it is a pity that nowadays people think that by disguising themselves as Rama and Sita, going from door to door and begging in their name, and playing their parts, they are following them.

In today's and tomorrow's Satsangs you will hear a lot about them. Because, when Sheikh Baram saw people enacting the parts of Rama and Krishna and other deities, and performing plays in their name, he asked Guru Nanak, "Tell me, all these plays and rituals which they are doing in the name of past gods, is that right? Or is there some other play which is worth doing?" So Guru Nanak told him about that play being performed in the Court of the Lord which the Saints have written about: that play which is always happening and which the Saints are always enjoying.

*The hours are like the gopis
And the pahars are like the friends
of Krishna.*

Guru Nanak tells Sheikh Baram that in the olden days the day was divided into eight *pahars* or watches of three hours each (instead of 24 hours) and each *pahar* was divided into eight parts. So He says, "You can understand those 64 hour-like parts as the *gopis* or admirers of Lord Krishna, and the eight *pahars* or watches of the day as Krishna's friends."

*Their ornaments are air, water, and
fire*

*And the moon and sun, who are the
incarnations of time.*

What are the ornaments with which that play is made beautiful? Air and water, the sun and the moon, are the jewelry which remain on guard 24 hours a day and which support and protect us: they are the ornaments which make that play beautiful.

According to the Hindu Shastras, if a god comes in human form he is called an *avatar* or incarnation; and some Hindus believe that 24 avatars have come. They say that avatars are those who incarnate by themselves without taking birth from the womb of a mother; but it is strange that they refer to Krishna and Rama as avatars and also speak of their parents.

*And the riches of this earth are a
trap given to us to use.*

The earth produces food for the jivas to eat, which appears to be very useful; but that usefulness is in fact part of the trap.

*Nanak says, Without Knowledge
the creatures are deceived,
And the Yama devours them.*

Lovingly He says, "Those creatures I have mentioned in the above lines—if they do not have the Knowledge of Naam, the Yama or angel of death will devour them all." Guru Arjan Dev says, "Even this earth and sky will be devoured and go away; they will not remain forever."

*The disciples play music and the
gurus dance
They wave and move their feet and
heads.*

When the performers go from village to village to perform acts in the name of Krishna and Rama and all those other avatars, someone disguises himself as

Krishna and the others become “disciples” and they play musical instruments and dance before an audience. So when the person playing Krishna (the guru) makes a mistake while dancing, the audience and the “disciples” shake their head and say, “No, this is not right, you should do it again.” You see, Lord Krishna was the owner of the three worlds, but what is his condition today? He is dancing and repeating steps, dancing again and again just for the sake of money.

Bhai Gurdas said, “The time will come when the disciples will sit in their homes and the masters will go to see them. The disciples will play musical instruments and the masters will dance to that music.”

We do not mean to criticize anyone, as Guru Nanak Sahib had no intention to criticize anyone. Guru Nanak is describing what He has seen and what is still happening today.

*Thus they blow away the dust which
falls into their hair;*

*Looking at them, people laugh—
even back in their homes.*

In foreign countries there may be floors where people dance; but in India plays and dances are usually performed on sand. When people dance on it, the sand gets blown around and often ends up in their hair. The people enjoy that dancing and when they go home and remember how they danced, they laugh a lot.

*They dance for the sake of earning
bread*

*And for this they strike their heads
against the ground.*

When children go home after seeing these plays and tell their elders what they have seen, the elders tell them, “These are not the real Krishna or gopis; they are doing this for their own interest.”

*They sing and act as the gopis and
as Lord Krishna;*

*They sing and act as Sita and as
Lord Rama.*

Someone becomes a gopi from among them; someone becomes Sita; someone sings as Rama; what more insult could we give those Mahatmas? Can a son make his mother dance?

*The True Naam is the Formless,
without any fear;*

He has created this whole creation.

The Timeless Almighty God is the only One Who is fearless; only His Naam is worth meditating upon and worth remembering.

*Those servants who have good
karmas serve Him;*

*Those who have love for Him in
their minds—their night is sweet.*

When a disciple comes to the Master, he tells Him, “Master, I am very unhappy; I have suffered very much in this world. Tell me the means of liberation.” Master gives him, and tells him about, the best ritual: the meditation of Shabd Naam. He says, “Along with attending to your worldly responsibilities, do the meditation of Shabd Naam. Wake up early in the morning, sit in meditation for two or three hours every day, connect yourself with the *kirtan* or music festival happening within you, and absorb yourself in that. Only by doing this meditation of Shabd Naam can you get liberation from the suffering world.”

*By thinking upon the Word of the
Master, the disciple has learned
this:*

*Only by His Grace can one go
across.*

Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj says, “Who is the *sikh* or disciple? Only the one who has the teachings of the Master.” And

what are the teachings of the Master? The Master has taught us to do Simran and Bhajan—the meditation of Shabd Naam—and to attend Satsang and obey the good things the Master tells us. If the son of a worldly father obeys his instructions and molds his life accordingly, how pleased his father becomes! He even gives him his own earnings. Do you think that if we are working according to the Master's instructions and we are pleasing Him, He will keep anything hidden from us? No: He will also give us all that He has earned—the wealth of spirituality which He has earned for us. He will give us everything. When a disciple molds his life according to the instructions of the Master, when he obeys His commandments, then the Master sits within such a disciple, carrying all His wealth.

In the home of the Master, only those who do the meditation of Naam are appreciated and welcomed; only those who do Simran and seva are respected and appreciated. People who talk a lot and tell stories are not appreciated.

*The oil mill, spinning wheel, flour mill, potter's wheel,
Countless cyclones and storms—*

Now He tells Sheikh Baram, "You have seen people performing in those plays about Rama and Krishna and dancing in circles; in the circular form they go on dancing. But if one could get liberation just by dancing in circles, then why wouldn't the oil mill or potter's wheel get liberated? And what about sandstorms? They all move in circles; if that led to liberation, all these things would have it."

*The spinning tops, the churning sticks, the threshers,
Birds fly and roam without giving rest to their wings—*

Children play with tops, which move in circles; some birds fly round and round

in the sky. The threshing machine which is attached to a tractor, as well as the stick with which we churn milk, also moves in a circle; why are they not all liberated?

Many creatures revolve around an axle;

Nanak says, By moving around only, one does not know his end.

Now He is talking about a children's merry-go-round, how we put children on it and it goes around in a circle: if the circular dance leads to liberation, then all those children should also get it.

Saints do not intend to criticize anyone. Guru Nanak is not criticizing anyone here; but in order to dispel Sheikh Baram's illusion—that maybe those who go around in circles get liberation—Guru Nanak is giving him these examples of things which move in circles to show him how that is not possible.

They are bound in the bond as He has willed,

*They all dance for their livelihood;
They laugh and dance—in the end they leave weeping:*

They neither fly nor become siddhas.

Guru Nanak says, "Look here, dear one: all these people are doing what they are doing because of food and money. They have taken up this business because of their bad karma from the past; by following it they are creating more bad karma for the future. These people will neither become siddhas nor will they become liberated ones."

Playing and dancing amuses the mind;

Nanak says, Only those who have fear in their minds have love for Him.

All this dancing and jumping around is feeding the mind. Those who are the

devotees or beloveds of God are not afraid of anything: they have the fear of God, they love God, and they do not do anything like this.

*Your Naam is the Formless One;
By meditating upon it, one does not
go to Hell.*

Now Guru Nanak sings the praises of Almighty God. He says, "O Lord, only You are the One Who can shower grace on the souls and only You are the One Who can give liberation." In Sant Mat, Naam is given a lot of importance. Which Naam? That Naam (Name) which cannot be written or spoken in any language.

With firm determination, Guru Nanak says that one who has the Naam never goes to Hell. Tulsi Sahib also said, "Just as gold cannot be eaten by rust and iron by moth, in the same way, whether he is good or bad, the devotee of a perfect Master who has Naam cannot go to Hell."

*This body and soul is all His:
Share with all and lose nothing.*

Guru Nanak is telling His disciples, "God has given you this soul—the soul Who is the doer is given to you by God—and the body in which your soul is residing—in which you are residing—is also given by God." He has also given you many other things, and you should be grateful and thankful to Him because of what He has given you. If out of what God has given you, you are able to feed someone and to share some of what you have with others, you should be humble: not proud that you are doing it, because you are not doing anything; God Himself is doing it through you.

Baba Sawan Singh Ji used to quote from the words of Lord Jesus, that if you are giving a donation your left hand should not know what your right hand is doing.

Guru Nanak even says that after doing good deeds, you should think of yourself as one who has done bad deeds; He says that if God makes you do good deeds, you should think of yourself as a sinner with bad qualities on whom God has showered grace.

Master Sawan Singh Ji used to tell a story about a businessman who was very miserly and would never give anything to anybody, but whose wife was very good. She always wanted to feed the pundits and poor and needy people, but she never could because her husband was a miser. But she did what she could and her husband thought, "Well, today I should go the River Ganges and see if I can find some pundit I can feed without spending much money." So he found four pundits sitting on the bank of the Ganges doing their rites and rituals, and when they had finished he asked them all, "Pundit ji, how much will you eat?" They told him they would eat ten kilograms of ghee, sweets, milk, and whatever they were used to eating. That man thought, that will cost too much; so he left that place. Finally he found a pundit who was very thin and emaciated, and he thought, this pundit is fit for me: he won't eat very much and it won't cost me too much, and maybe I will be able to please my wife. The pundit saw right away that he was a miser, so when the businessman asked him, "How much will you eat?", he thought, if I tell him everything I want he will run away; so he said, "Well, you see I am very thin, and I always have a fever, so I am not able to eat much. But whatever you give me—wet or dry—I will accept." So the businessman thought, "This is it! He's a good person," and he invited him to his home.

When he got home, he told his wife, "Today I have found a pundit and he will be here soon. Whatever he demands, you should give him." His wife was very

pleased that at last he had invited somebody and given her permission to give him what he wanted, so when he got there, she asked him what he wanted. He told her, "Ten kilos of milk, five kilos of ghee, fifteen kilos of sweets, plus clothes, and all that stuff." And then he demanded a thousand rupees for the wear and tear on his teeth. So after he got all those things, he went home.

But he was afraid because he had deceived that businessman, so he gave everything to his wife and told her, "Today I have brought all this from a miser's home, and now it is up to you to keep it: because when he finds out about it, he may well come and take everything back." His wife was very clever; she said, "Don't worry about it. When he comes, lie down on the bed and cry and act as though you are sick. I will take care of the rest."

When the miser found out what the pundit had done, he went straight to his house, where he found the pundit weeping and sighing and saying, "I feel as though I'm dying." The pundit's wife began to weep and to say, "I don't know where he has been today; I don't know who the sinner was that gave him all the food. He must have given him poison and now he is going to die! What will happen to me? Who will take care of me after he leaves the body? I don't even have money to get him medicine!" When the businessman observed all this, he was afraid: he thought that the police would investigate him because the pundit had taken food from his home. So he gave the pundit's wife some more money and said, "Take him to the doctor and get him treated."

This is the condition of misers. They want to give donations, but still they are misers; so they act like this.

*If one wants one's good,
Doing good, one should call himself
the lowly one.*

Sheikh Baram told Guru Nanak, "Master, I have supernatural powers within me and the angel of death will leave me alone." Guru Nanak said, "Sheikh Baram, if you are that strong you should prevent old age from coming; you should remain forever young. If you are able to do that, I will accept your might."

*If one postpones the appearance of
old age, still it comes:
No one remains here when the cup
is full.*

In the old days they had a container which was used as a measure to weigh wheat and other things. Guru Nanak says that when that measure is filled with breath—when all our breaths have been used up—no one stays in this world.

Nowadays people connected with various religions and institutions give lectures and talk about making life better for the people. They all talk about freedom, but they do not know what freedom really is. Whatever we have done in the past, we are suffering the consequences of that; and now we are free to do the karma whose consequences we will have to suffer in the future. Freedom is, that we should do such a thing which makes us free from a suffering world and which does not make us come back again.

The effect of the Kali Yuga is in its full force. Nowadays they have made movies in the name of past Masters: Kabir, Ravidas, Guru Nanak, and many others. People go to see those movies, and take their families to see them. I have often heard that those people who make movies in the name of past Masters boast that they can make more money that way than what is collected in gurdwaras and holy places. People go to see those so-called religious movies thinking they are going to get some inspiration, but instead they earn sins, and get more in the habit of watching movies.



You know that the teachings of the Saints are for our improvement, to teach us how to purify ourselves, and you know how the men and women and youth of today are indulging in lust and destroying their own lives.

Saints do not criticize anyone. They

tell us how to discipline ourselves and purify ourselves, and how to do things in this world while keeping ourselves in the Satsang and improving our lives. So according to Their instructions and teaching we should improve our lives.

Separation and Yearning

a talk given January 20, 1964

Sant Kirpal Singh Ji

[Madame Hardevi sang a poem by Master Kirpal to his Master Sawan Singh. It told of the anguish he feels in his heart on being separated from him.]

THE HYMN just now read out is a prayer from the disciple to his Master. He says: "It is you who have lacerated my mind, my heart. There is no remedy other than your own self. The remedy for the wound in this heart lies only in your hands. No other doctor can heal it. You are going away, but don't forget us."

That is a prayer. Well, Master does not forget—that's right. But still, out of the anguished heart come the words of the disciple: "For God's sake, don't forget us! We cannot forget you; but you also must not forget us. We are, after all, your own. If you forget us, who will heal the pain in our hearts? What will be our own remedy?"

What remedy can there be for the heart which is aching to have a glimpse of the Master? Nothing else—no words, no consolation, will help.

In the time of Lord Krishna, there were many *gopis* who were very much in love with him. Once, it happened that he remained away from them for some time—say, about six or eight months—and they could not reach him. They were crying disconsolately. (Separation is a very bad thing. Two times are very difficult for a man who has developed love in his heart for someone. One, the time which has just passed in awaiting him; and the other, when he leaves him. Both are hard

times.) So Lord Krishna sent Uddho as a messenger to go and console them: "Con-
sole them, 'Look here, God is everywhere; Master is everywhere; He is in your heart of hearts; He is the very controlling power of your own self in the body. Why are you worrying? He is the soul of your soul' ..." Uddho went to them and spoke to them the best he could. With all that, they listened to it very calmly and finally told him, "O Uddho, what you say is all right. But tell us, what remedy do you have with you for the eyes that are yearning to see the form of the Master?"

This is a prayer from the disciple to the Master: "Don't forget us!" And usually you'll find, as a matter of fact, that the Master himself never forgets. But the disciple cries, "I have only one heart and that you have now taken possession of; what am I to do? I can think of no one other than you yourself."

There cannot be ten or twenty hearts. You cannot devote one heart here, another there, and then another there. It is only one heart. Well, it is the throne of God; don't let anybody sit on it except God. What do we do? We let every worldly thing sit there, and we dethrone God.

Guru Arjan said, "The Master loves and remembers his disciples with every breath." Can a mother forget her small children? She might be working in the kitchen, and the child might be lying in his room; but there's a connection. If the child moves, then her milk begins to come from her breast. If the little child cries,

she at once runs to him and leaves everything behind, even the most valuable thing.

Similarly, we are the children of God — of the God-in-man. He does not forget us. But because of the yearning of the heart, his disciple does pray like that: "Don't forget us. Even if you go away, we are still yours, after all."

But I tell you, it is the mother who first loves us — the child. The child's love is only reciprocal. The love that a Master has for his children — for his disciples — comes from the level of the God in him. He loves his disciples as hundreds of mothers won't love their children. But he loves the soul, the development of the soul, with no consideration, no recompense; nothing of the sort. A mother may love her children with the hope that when they grow up they will help her and care for her in her old days. But the Master does not do that. He simply sees that they are all souls. The God in him thinks, he is my child.

The more we have yearning like that, the more our mind is cleansed of all the dross of the world; it is washed away with the tears that roll down from the eyes — that's the water. With that water alone can the dross of filth of many past births be washed away.

There are two ways to go to Mecca from India: one is on the sea, the other over land. But the way on the land is very sandy; there is a dearth of water; there are no communications through the deserts of Arabia. So it is very hard to reach the place of pilgrimage if you go on foot — or even on horses; and no car can cross the sands. But there is a way, across the sea, that takes you there in three days. So, somewhere Maulana Rumi said, "If you want to make a pilgrimage to God, go through the waters of tears. You'll go quicker than you can on the land or through the sands."

What is meant by that? Any prayers that are said, any rites or rituals that are performed or any scriptures that are read mechanically, with dry hearts, like a gymnastic, won't help you to reach God. Your heart should be full, and that heart should overflow through the eyes.

Once there was a pundit who was relating the story of Rama, reading it out of the scriptures in Sanskrit. An illiterate man was sitting, listening to him and shedding tears like anything. The pundit thought, perhaps he has followed me very well. When the talk was over, the pundit called him and said, "You understood my sermon very well."

The man said, "I did not follow a word of what you were saying."

"Then why were you crying and weeping?"

"I had the scene of Lord Rama before me; my heart was full and I was shedding tears, all the time watching that scene. I never heard a word of what you said."

So this sort of love is the foreshadow of coming things. When rain is coming, there are first clouds. When there are blossoms in the fruit trees, there is hope for fruit. Similarly, the heart which is yearning, which is overflowing with tears, can reach God the quickest. And sometimes we never remember God. Days and days pass by, and we never think of Him.

Perhaps we have not seen all the aspects of keeping the spiritual diary. There is one very important thing about it; that during the day you are remembering the God-in-man; otherwise you won't remember him. At least at night you will think back, what have I been doing? I have to fill in the diary. Is it not a great blessing? We never realize the truth of the things that are given to us. All the time you say to yourself, O my Lord, I have not to do this, not to do that. So you are always thinking of the Master or the God in him. Such a heart becomes the fittest to receive Him a quicker way.

So that was a prayer, so very full of pathos, of yearning: "O Master, you are going away, but don't forget us; we cannot remember you unless you remember us." Our love is reciprocal, as I told you.

So when two disciples of the Master sit together, naturally the remembrance of the Master comes, is it not so? This is the first reason why you are asked not to miss attending the group meeting. When you sit together, you think of the Master. And someone might say, of his own accord, "This is like this; the other is like that"; and that way, the remembrance is revived. Another thing is what Christ said: "When two or more sit in my name, I am there." And moreover, you will develop receptivity.

When Master initiates anybody, he resides with him from that very time. And he never leaves him, unless he takes him to the lap of the Father. That is what is called God Power or Guru Power or Christ Power. So, such an attitude, such time spent, makes us fit; and when it comes, just sit in sweet remembrance. You will have response when you are there.

This is one of the poems I wrote when I was away from my Master. This state of mind cannot be expressed in words. It has not been given to words to express the feelings of the heart, the yearning of the heart.

So, such an attitude radiates in the atmosphere. It goes to cleanse away all foreign, external thoughts for the time being. Just as when an eagle comes, all the sparrows fly away, so when the eagle of love comes anywhere, no thoughts arise there. So all Masters say, "The heart has been given to you as a sacred trust. Don't misappropriate it. It is meant for God; let only God, and no other thing, sit on that throne."

Suchlike prayers help you. These things gush out afresh from the heart; only

suchlike prayers help. Sometimes we have models, specimens of prayers given by past Masters. But those are only the words they gave out. The words should come out—should gush out—from our very hearts. Only a mechanical repetition of something cannot have an effect.

If you love Him, you abide in His heart: "Let my words abide in you, and you abide in me." How can you abide in Him? When you remember Him. The more you remember Him the more He reacts—do you see? And what does it cost? Anything? And times flies away, like anything.

At the time of separation from my Master—one time it was for eight months—these things came out of my heart. The heart is only one, not two or three. How many have you got? One? Well? He wants your heart. When you give your heart, what remains? Where the heart goes, everything goes—both the body and soul.

This is what is meant by surrender and devotion. Simply following in an intellectual way or by philosophical ways of thinking won't help you. Hafiz said, "If the learned men come to know just an iota of the madness we have got yearning for the Lord, they will forget everything, and they will dance like anything." Do you see? Such a heart is the abode of the Lord. Even when we say prayers, we are thinking of the worldly children and this and that thing. Tulsidas said, "Just clean your mind, so that God, your Beloved, may manifest Himself there." Then he defines what is the cleansing of the heart. He says, "The heart in which no other thought other than that of God comes up is the pure heart." A heart in which there is love for God, yearning for God, is a fitting thing in which God manifests. That is why it is said: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Purity means that.



To Trust the Master

from a talk given June 4, 1989

RUSSELL PERKINS

SANT JI'S VISIT to Italy was beautiful, and it seemed to me that this Tour in Italy went about as smoothly, and as successfully, as any Tour has ever gone. And this is due to a great deal of love and cooperation among the European Satsangis—and some Americans too, who went over and did seva for several weeks or months before the Master arrived.

The ashram in Italy is one of the most beautiful places on this earth. It is absolutely exquisite; it's like a jewel. It's in the Appenine hills, not very far from Saint Francis' country, in Tuscany, what we might call the "spiritual" part of Italy; and it is not far from the coast either, although you can't see the coast from the ashram. What you do see is a magnificent, beautiful sweep of mountains and hillside; and of course when the Master is there you see all kinds of tents and travel vehicles, etc., dotted on the near hillside, and all kinds of people who are there because of Him.

The place is beautiful, and the way in which things were handled was extremely appropriate. And I think that the Master was able to accomplish what He went there for with a minimum of problem—which is always the aim in preparing for a Tour: to make His work, work, as well as it can.

And He gave a great deal. I think He gave a great deal to everyone. From my point of view I see it through a prism of infinite protectiveness and very tender care, with which I was surrounded. My brothers and sisters in Italy knew that I had been sick, and they treated me accordingly. Sant Ji ordered me to rest, and I did rest; I rested a lot. But just by virtue of being with Him at the times that He wanted us to be with Him, we had to do a great deal of movement also; so I got a very wonderful combination of rest and exercise—which I think was just perfect—especially coming when it did, after the period of rest that He had made me have instead of going to Ghana.

There were about three hundred people there from all over Europe, and what was provided for them was perfect. The langar was wonderful. Initiation was given in five languages—which is standard for Europe. There's no other way to do it, since the people don't all speak the same language. So it was given in Italian, in French, in Spanish, in German, and in English. I was fortunate enough to be given the job of taking care of the English part, and that was the first large, sustained thing that I had done since I had become ill. It was hard work for me, but it was possible. I was extremely grateful that the Master Himself had given that to me, and had made sure that I could do it, before giving it to me. He also gave us a lot of time, and a lot of attention, which I needed very much. And I soaked it up.

I found the Satsangs in Italy extremely interesting. And yet, I would find

myself—I would be listening to what He said and then I would realize that I was still pondering something He had said several paragraphs back, and therefore I often missed things. So I don't feel that I have a particularly good grasp of the totality of what He said. But still, I found that the Satsangs were extremely thought-provoking.

He told a number of stories. One struck me as a very important story, as important as any the Master has ever told. Sant Ji has told it before, and I think Master Kirpal also told it. It's the story of Mana, the disciple of Guru Arjan Dev, who refused to do what his brother and sister Satsangis told him to do. He was supposedly a sevadar; he was at Guru Arjan's ashram; and he wouldn't do seva, because the people who were giving him orders were his equals. He told them, "I'm not going to obey you; I obey only the Master." So people complained about him, and he was taken to the Master. And the Master said, "Well, what is this?" and Mana said, "Well, I don't want to obey them, Master, because they are my equals. I only want to obey You. You give me an order and I will obey it." And Guru Arjan looked at him and said, "All right. Go into the forest, build a fire, and then jump into it and burn yourself to death." Mana said, "Yes, Master." He went into the forest and built a fire, but he didn't jump into it; he realized that he didn't really want to do that, and he started to ponder what to do next.

In the meantime, a thief who had just stolen a lot of jewelry from a house, and who was being chased by the police, ran up to Mana and asked him what he was doing. Mana told him and the thief said, "All right, I will give you the jewelry that I have taken, and you give me the Master's order; I will jump in and do what He said."

So Mana said, "Well, that's a good deal," and he took the jewelry, and the



thief jumped into the fire, burned himself to death, and was immediately met by the Master and taken up. In the meantime Mana was there with the jewelry and, predictably enough, the police arrived a few minutes later. Mana was the only one there, and he had the jewelry, so they arrested him. And although he protested and told them what had happened, they quite understandably didn't believe him. So he was hanged, which was the penalty for thievery in those days.

Now this story is disturbing on the face of it, because of the idea of the Guru giving you horrible orders — the kind which the Guru never does. (I mean, who wants to be told to build a fire and jump into it?) But if we think about it, we can see the point of this story. For one thing, there is an obvious point here which is sometimes very difficult for us to grasp. That is, *the difference between saying something and doing it*. It was very easy for Mana to say, "I will obey the order of the Master." In fact, he couldn't do it. He couldn't come close to it. And for any of

us there is this discrepancy, as in the story of the swan and the crane—the idea of imitating the Master. It is possible up to a certain point only. Beyond that point, we don't have the ability to do that. Mana declared that he would only obey the order of the Master; he would not obey the orders of his equals. And yet in fact he couldn't do either. And he didn't do either.

The other thing is of course the principal error, and obviously Sant Ji was making a point here about the satsangis cooperating with each other, and the way in which the Master works. That is to say, some satsangis are given authority for certain jobs, and others are given authority for other jobs, and so on down the line; and if we don't cooperate with each other, obviously, how is it going to happen? And in the Tour situation especially: we were in the middle of something which could not have happened had not people obeyed their equals. There was a great deal of seva to be done, and it had to be organized and directed, and it was; it was organized very

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A Meditation Talk

given May 23, 1989, in Ribolla, Italy

Sant Ajaib Singh Ji

We have been showered with very much grace by our Beloved Masters Sawan and Kirpal. All the Masters have said that God Almighty is an Ocean of Grace, a very big sea of mercy. And as the ocean, when it is in its full force, brings out the pearl which is the food of the *hansas*, in the same way, when in the Will of God Almighty, that Ocean of Grace comes in the human body, He also gives our souls food as the ocean gives food to the *hansas*.

Master Kirpal used to say that spirituality is like a contagious disease, and a person who has that disease of the spiritual practices can give that disease to others. Masters spread this disease of spirituality among all of us. When any disciple goes anywhere—wherever he sits, wherever he lives—he spreads that disease—he spreads the Path of Spirituality, of doing the meditation, among other people also.

So our Masters have showered very much grace upon us. Even in His old age, with a very old body, Master Kirpal made many trips abroad. Wherever there was any thirsty soul, He quenched his thirst and He made him drink the nectar of Naam.

That Ocean of Grace showered so much grace upon us that even though He was born in India, still that Ocean knew no limits; He went everywhere in the world. If that Ocean of Grace had not showered grace upon us, we would never have been able to sit here together and we would never even have thought of doing the devotion of God.

Paltu Sahib said, "What wish or what interest do the Masters have? Why do they go all over the world? To liberate the souls, They suffer so much." He also used to say that the Giver has come all the way from His Home to give us His grace. Everyone who went to Him, according to his receptivity, according to his vessel, received the grace from Him. Even now He is showering all His grace upon us. So let us all go within and get His grace, because within us He is showering all His grace.

All of you please close your eyes and start doing the meditation. I hope that until I tell you to leave off, you will not open your eyes. The dear ones who are not in the habit of meditating for one hour in their homes, for them it is very difficult to keep their eyes closed for one hour. Many times they open their eyes to see whether everybody else has left or is still sitting. I assure you that we will not leave you without making you leave off. So I hope that you will devote all your attention to the Simran and you will keep your eyes closed.

(continued from page 15)

successfully. So it was kind of a living example of what is required. But if we won't do that, it's like refusing to understand the extent to which the Path permeates our life. I use the word "permeate" advisedly: it is intermingled, intertwined; there is no compartmentalization possible. What Mana didn't understand—and we often don't understand—is that the orders that his equals were giving him were, in fact, what the Master wanted him to have.

Now the idea of our circumstances being a gift from the Master can be misused, and no one has to remain in an ugly situation because they think it's the Master's wish; Master doesn't want that from any of us. But still, to a great extent we don't see the way in which our present situation, whatever it is, can be used for our own growth *if we grasp that it has been given to us by the Master*. And this was Mana's big mistake, and it is the big mistake made by me, as well as other people.

Now, when Guru Arjan gave him the order, the really heavy order, to build a fire and jump into it and burn himself to death—what was being demanded of Mana at that point was exactly what was demanded of Jesus. Or Guru Arjan Himself, a few years later. Or for that matter Sant Kirpal Singh, our own Master Kirpal—Who wasn't killed by anybody, but still, when He was asked at the very end of His life, His last words—I'll read them directly: "Master was gasping for breath. A young American then asked the first question: 'Master, why don't You heal Yourself? You're all-powerful.' Master repeated, 'Why don't you heal yourself?' Then a radiant smile appeared on His face and He asked so sweetly, 'Anyone whom you love, if he gives you something, would you refuse it? Tell me, what does he hope for you? You should gladly accept it.' "

Notice the wording here: "Anyone whom you love, if he gives you something,

would you refuse it? Tell me, what does he hope for you?" In other words, there is a *reason* why we are given something; something is being accomplished that way. Master Kirpal was in His final illness, He was in a very terrible way, giving darshan when He could barely talk—"What does he hope for you?" There is *something*; it's not arbitrary.

So we should consider the order that Guru Arjan gave Mana in that light, and also realize that no one can die until their fate karmas run out, and no one knows when that is going to be, except the Master. When the Master gave Mana that order, He knew very well that Mana didn't have very long to live; and therefore He was giving him a way to go which would have short-circuited lifetimes of karma. By obeying the Guru's order, taking Him on trust, and doing that, he could have accomplished a lot. Actually he could have accomplished that which *was* accomplished by the thief, who took it over from him.

Mana was hanged. He *didn't* live very long, as a matter of fact. And the Master looking at him must have known that. And the point is that when the Master gives us something, He does know that. And when we have problems with what He gives us, we are not trusting Him.

I had a problem like this. Before the Tour I spoke about the stroke that I had, and I said that there was a point when I finally faced up to the fact that I couldn't move my left side. I was not brave; I was not a good disciple; I gave in to despair. You might say, "Of course not; that's very understandable." But the Master made it clear to me that, had I been able to be brave and trust that what was being given to me was from Him and was in my best interest, had I not lost faith at that point, even for the very short time that I did, had I been able to surrender what I wanted (to be able to move the left side of my body)

with the knowledge and confidence that what He was giving me at that time was what was best for me . . . then I would have been the gainer, as Mana would have been the gainer had he been able to follow the order that his Master had given him.

But the Masters don't make that error. They climb the cross. And the point is, we are not Them, but how do we become Them? These are the ways in which we are able to partake, to share in, what They have. When they offer us short-cuts like this, very steep kinds of things, we can take hold of Their Hand (as Master Kirpal used to say, the little finger), and *not worry*. And in that sense we can share in the crucifixion.

The *points* of our life are fixed by fate karma, but how they happen are not fixed. That's up to us. We can die obedient to the Master, or we can die being hanged as a thief. We have those options. And when we suddenly find that things are not proceeding the way that we want them to—and O God, no one knows more than me how hard that is—I am so attached to the way that I want things to be, that when I find that they are not going that way, it is hard for me. But where is the trust? This is where we have to trust the Master. Otherwise the Path is nothing. If it's just something we give lip-service to, and *say* we believe in, and maybe do a little bit of practice in the morning and evening, then what does it amount to? It's the *Stuff of Life*. We are given it precisely because there is real knowledge involved.

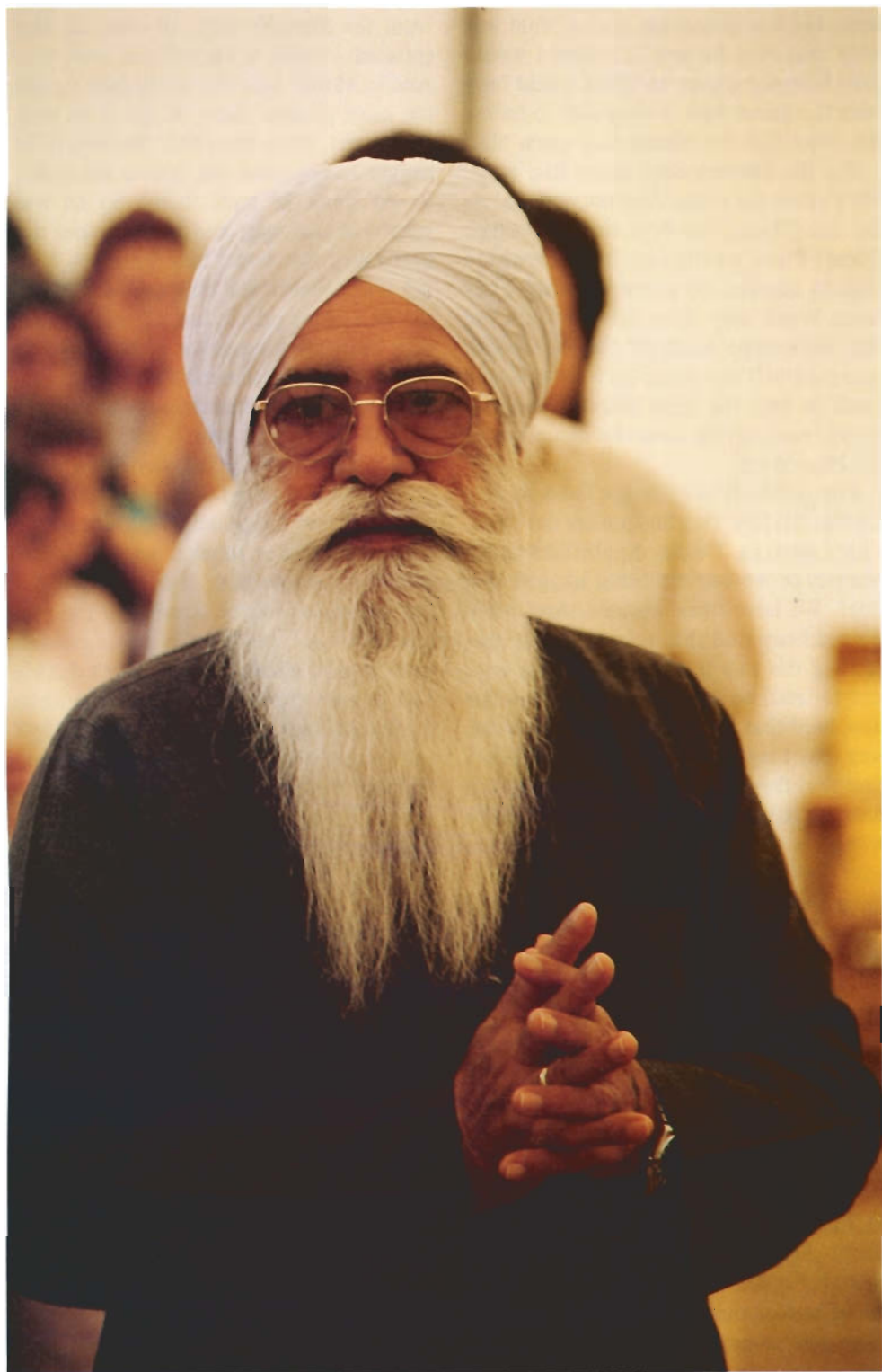
So the thief came, and took over from Mana his fate. This is similar to a lot of parables that Jesus told, most of which end up with the phrase, "So the last shall be first, and the first last." There was Mana, an initiate of many years, and suddenly this thief comes out of nowhere, probably at the very bottom of anybody's social ladder, and suddenly grasps what has to be done, accepts the order of the

Master, and is able to get it! Of course, from the Master's point of view, he also counted—which is part of the story too. And in Mana's lack of trust he failed to see the most glaring factor of all: if he took the jewels from the thief, he would be caught red-handed! Of course the police would think he stole them! So he was caught in that way, and he died—but not in the way that would have benefited him. We know that in the long run Master will not let anyone perish; but still at the same time he could have saved himself a lot.

And Sant Ji indicated that to me: that had I been able to maintain my trust at the darkest moment, I would have gained a lot—in the same sort of way. Now I am not wallowing in self-recrimination; what happened has happened. But I know that when the Master rebukes us, He is not talking about the past; He's talking about the future, or maybe sometimes the present. He is not interested in making us feel bad or guilty about what we didn't do; He just doesn't want us to repeat the same mistake, if the same situation arises. He is concerned about the present moment, from here on in. He points out our mistakes, so that we can have a better understanding the next time, and not commit the same error.

* * *

At one point during the stay, a very distinguished elderly gentleman from Brazil came to see me. I had never met him before. He was an initiate of Master Kirpal, initiated at the inauguration of Manav Kendra in the early seventies. He told me that after Master Kirpal left the body he was very confused; he didn't know what to do, and he lost touch with people. People came through Brazil but he wasn't convinced by them; he didn't feel good about them, and he didn't know what to do. And fifteen years went by. He was called to Europe on business, and in Florence he met a Sant Ji initiate, who somehow un-





Sant Ji blessing the food at the langar in Italy, which He did every day at noon. Right after blessing the food He graciously gave darshan to the seated dear ones.

derstood that he was a Kirpal initiate. The Sant Ji initiate gave him my book, *The Impact of a Saint*, which is why he was talking to me, and he said that in reading that and in talking to the Sant Ji initiate, he suddenly understood the connection. And he had never heard of Sant Ji before. And he found out that Sant Ji was in Italy at that precise moment! He didn't make trips to Italy often; he lives in Brazil. But there he was in Italy right at that moment and he had twelve hours free. So he made his way to the Ashram, met Sant Ji, had an interview with Him, attended the Satsang, and was ecstatically happy. And he told me that he was extremely grateful that he had been led to the Master in His new Form, after fifteen years.

I find things like that very sweet, and I was extremely happy to meet him. There were a lot of things like that—many individual stories, many of which never get told; but for the people involved they are the whole world.

I am extremely grateful to Him for having shown me all that He has shown me. And on this trip, in some ways I would say that His love, and His Power, and His all-encompassing protectiveness, were clearer to me than ever before. It was extremely blessed to be with Him at this time.

Master Kirpal used to say, "If those people over there knew how much I love them, they'd be dancing all around." And you know, He really does love us like that.

Tell Your Mind to Wait

recollections of Sant Ji's Visit to Italy

BY MILDRED MEEH

THE ITALIAN ASHRAM is situated north and west of Rome in beautiful hills. It looks out over sweep after sweep of lovely ranges. Unlike our hills, only some are wooded up to the peaks. Others are mowings or pastures or orchards of silver leaved olives.

The vast amount of work done there became immediately obvious. Everything for Master and for the comfort of the dear ones had been done, but all of those involved said that only the Master could have caused that miracle to happen. Shortly after my arrival, someone took me to see Master's new house—beautiful, simple, immaculate, smelling of new wood and pristine purity. Appropriately it sits atop a hillside in that lovely hilly countryside. All else lies spread out just below, flowing along the slope at Master's feet—the Meditation Hall, the kitchen, the tenting areas, the two original buildings, and the langar. The dorm in which I stayed allowed me to look up at Master's House and that felt good. Then I could look outward to a pasture where a large flock of sheep contentedly grazed. That too, so appropriate: our Shepherd above caring for us as does that other shepherd out there protecting his sheep.

As yet, Master had not arrived. Expectancy and waiting took on a very special and positive quality. We were told that He would give us a very brief darshan when He arrived at the Ashram after the long voyage from Ghana. Sitting in the Meditation Hall, we waited until finally He entered and stayed a short time. We were grateful for that, aware of His giving despite His fatigue.

When people ask me how Sant Ji is, I remember the enormous spiritual power

that radiates from Him. Do we need to recognize that His spiritual strength is not necessarily reflected in His physical body? Sant Ji was driven to the langar to bless the food and give darshan, to the children's darshan, to the Meditation Hall and to the interview room. He did take the walks that are so necessary to His health. We have been reminded that each of us must do everything we can not to deplete His physical strength. That reminder is: Simran, Bhajan.

The day after His arrival we learned that He would come to the langar. Again the expectancy and waiting grew strong. The feeling became an actual physical thing; it seemed that it could be touched. It seemed that the vast langar had become too small, the yearning pushed the high cathedral ceiling even higher. Each of us was filled and over-filled with longing. The hunger, the love seemed audible too. They seemed to throb. At last, the car arrived and soon He entered. First He blessed the food and then He stopped before a seventeen-year-old girl, looking at her for a long, long time. He walked up one aisle and down another giving and giving. One loving mother, called out, "bambino, bambino" knowing that nothing of greater value than that darshan could be given to her child.

And then He left. It seemed as though everything had gone. Truly, the metal supports for the langar seemed to shorten, and the ceiling lower and everything contract and become heavy, heavy. Some people were sobbing, others smiled wide, wide smiles, and tears slipped down the cheeks of others.

Later, when I saw the young girl, I said, "That was very special for you."



She answered, "Everyone tells me that. But what is it?" I told her that I did not know but that the Master had chosen her for some very special giving. "Yes, I know," she said, and her joyful expression indicated that indeed, she did know.

The waiting in front of the room in which Sant Ji gave interviews also assumed a very special quality. Far from empty, as waiting sometimes can be, it became a full and rich experience. Sometimes entire Italian families would enter together—grandparents, parents, children, grandchildren—a little later they came out, so happy, sometimes hugging one another. Sometimes a person or a couple would enter, heavy stepped and burdened, then exit radiant. I began to feel as though I should not look, all that I was seeing seemed too private, too personal, too much of a Master-disciple relationship for others to see. But clearly, our Great Master was working His miracles in that room. Through the sheer luck of having been born into a French speaking family and through great grace, I was given the privilege of translating for the French initiates who wished to have an interpreter with them during interviews. Both sitting with them at their very special times with Sant Ji and the waiting outside were truly great gifts.

During the first Satsang, Sant Ji seemed to be flooding us with love

throughout His discourse and while Pappu and Sirio were translating. It flowed over us like waves—wave after wave. After the Satsang, someone asked me if I thought we had been receiving a great deal of darshan. "Oh yes." Throughout those days, over and again, I heard disciples marvel with one another about the power, the love covering us. "Are you sensing an enormous power?" Was it that Master had softened us so that we could be more receptive? He melts us even when we go to Him as hard as New Hampshire granite.

Sometimes when Sant Ji began His evening discourse, He would say, "This is a very important Bani, you should listen very carefully." The final three discourses seemed to be specially powerful. Based on the writings of Bhai Gurdas, they built up steadily into a potent crescendo. Bhai Gurdas, his name meaning, "Brother, servant of the Guru," had served four Masters, but he himself never gave initiation because no Master had told him to do so. Although his writings are not part of the Guru Granth Sahib, they are seen as a key to it. He, too, must have been a Saint. Over and over Bhai Gurdas describes the perfect disciple and says again and again, "I will sacrifice myself for that disciple." The power of that repetition and the precise definition of the true follower, night af-



ter night, presented us with the kind of discipleship to which we must aspire.

First we would hear Bhai Gurdas' words describing the perfect disciple, then Sant Ji would expand on that, and then back to Bhai Gurdas, "For that disciple, I sacrifice myself." Here follows but a brief sampling.

He who while living in this world and even though he has everything, yet understands that all belongs to God and understands himself only as a guest in this world, I sacrifice myself for that disciple.

He who surrenders himself to the Master and does the meditation of Naam, I sacrifice myself on that disciple.

He who gives up pride of wealth and position. He who lives in the will of God and always accepts the will of God no matter how much he has to suffer; no matter if anything goes wrong, he always says this is according to the will of the Lord and he says he does not know how much the Master has helped him. I sacrifice myself for such a disciple.

He who very willingly walks in the path of the Master, who while living in this world always does the devotion of Naam. For such a disciple I sacrifice myself.

I sacrifice on him who not only does

not criticize others, but he stops others from criticizing.

I sacrifice myself on those who do the meditation of Naam given to them by the Master, wholeheartedly with all their mind and body.

He who lives according to the teachings of the Master, he who does his bha-jan and simran, is called a disciple of the Master. I sacrifice myself for him.

For those husbands who do not look at any other wife and those wives who do not look at any other husband; they look on others as their brothers and sisters, I sacrifice myself.

I sacrifice myself on those who earn their livelihood by honest means. For he who following the path of the Master always is humble in his within, I sacrifice myself.

Even now, as I listen to the tapes of those Bhai Gurdas satsangs, I feel again the power of the words and the enormity of His love sweeping over us.

Sometimes, Sant Ji gives a helpful saying that can be packed up, taken home, and used. That happened for me one morning just before meditation when He said, "Repetition of the Simran is very holy. It is very special. Tell your mind that you are doing something very holy, very special and that he must wait."

On Taking Responsibility for Ourselves

a member of Sant Ji's party offers a brief report on Italy

BY DEBBIE ASBECK

THERE WERE two things that really struck me in Italy. The first was the way that He makes us change. The Negative Power has so many traps and subtle ways to ensnare us and keep us here, but the Master Power only has one weapon He can use on us—His Love. At Satsang, there was the Godman just sitting there in front of us, explaining the value of taking the Naam initiation from a living Master. The Master isn't allowed to perform miracles or use any supernatural powers or anything like that to convince us to live up to the Path and to fight the mind. All He can do is talk to us and hope that we'll listen.

The second thing that struck me was a sort of wondering whether we're using the Master the right way. Some of us have been with Him since the beginning of His mission (1976)—thirteen years. Sant Ji was fifty years old then, He is sixty-three now. How many years are left? I could not help remembering the story many of us have heard about Sawan Singh—that some astrologers had predicted He would live to be one hundred years old. When someone mentioned it to Sawan Singh, His reply was something like, "Yes, that's true, but only if people will meditate and make use of me for the purpose I came; if you trouble me with your desires for worldly matters, I may go early also." But people brought Him their problems, and Sawan left fourteen years early.

And what are we doing to Sant Ji? During tours we make Him sit in a chair four to six hours a day and listen to our problems. Are we cutting down on His lifespan by making Him do that instead of His work, which is to give the Satsangs and convince us to meditate? Sure it's

great to go in for a private interview—Master is the great happiness giver—but do we unload all our difficulties on Him instead of doing our work?

He keeps telling us that the true and lasting peace and contentment comes from meditation. If we meditate at all we know that's true; but it's always so much easier to get the darshan and the instant joy instead of working at fighting the mind and doing the meditation steadily. How fair is that to Him? Can't we do a little more to hold up our end of the deal and take a little more responsibility for ourselves?

Towards the end of the visit in Italy Sant Ji gave three talks based on hymns of Bhai Gurdas Ji. One of them was particularly powerful. In it He talked about seva. He mentioned how good it was to do seva and He thanked those who had gone to the Ashram early to set up, and those who had donated money to make the facilities possible: they receive some of the benefit of the meditation of the other people who come to the program. And He thanked those who had meditated and had done the Simran, because that was also doing the Guru's seva.

The last day—a rest stop in Rome with no program planned was wonderful because Sant Ji was able to rest. (A four-day program was scheduled to start as soon as He arrived back in Delhi.)

The whole tour was pretty wonderful, now it's time for all of us to live up to what He told us to do: fight the mind and meditate. He said that every moment that we remember Him is counted in our devotion. How many lost moments are there every day that we can find to think of Him? They all add up. Simran is the only thing that counts.

Only by Going Within

Sant Ajaib Singh Ji

NOW YOU can ask your questions.

Master, this is a question about the pralabdha karma. It is my understanding that when a disciple is initiated, their sanchit or storehouse karmas get destroyed and the disciple is only left with the pralabdha karma in this lifetime, and I am wondering Master, out of all the karma from our past lives, good and bad, how is it determined what will be our pralabdha karma for this lifetime?

First of all I would like to tell you that in order to understand such a deep thing, Masters always advise us to go within because this is such a thing which we can not understand unless we have gone within. But when the Masters do not find many people who go within, what do They do? By giving us worldly examples and talking to us in an easy-to-understand way, They touch our soul with Their astral intellect and They put us on the Path of Naam. When we are put on the Path of Naam by the Master, then our search for such a deep understanding begins.

Still I will try to explain to you very lovingly about this. It is just like when a farmer sows seeds in a field, he does not use up all the seeds he has, he puts some seeds aside in the storehouse and if his crop fails then he lives on the stored seed which he has kept aside. When we get the holy Initiation from the Master, the Master takes our responsibility on His

shoulders; He takes care of all those sanchit karmas stored from the past lifetimes, whether they are good or bad, all those karmas which are stored in Brahm. He does not touch the pralabdha karmas because pralabdha or fate karmas are those karmas by which God Almighty determines all the incidents or accidents or whatever is going to happen in our life. Masters do not touch that because that is something which has to happen in the Will of God and Masters are not allowed to touch them. But as far as the sanchit or stored karmas are concerned, Masters take all those karmas upon Themselves and They have to pay off those karmas. Often I have said that it is up to the Negative Power how he wants the Master to pay off those karmas. So this is something that the Master has to take care of, and the disciple does not need to worry about the sanchit karmas.

But for the pralabdha karmas Masters always say, "Whatever has been written in your fate whatever your pralabdha karmas are, whether pain or happiness, whether good or bad, you have to pay off those karmas and while paying off those pralabdha karmas you should always feel happiness, even in the state of pain, you should feel happiness and you should understand that it is coming in the Will of God, because the fate karmas or the pralabdha karmas are nothing but the Will of God for us in this lifetime." So that is why Masters always tell us that when a disciple gets Initiation he should forget about the sanchit karmas but for the pralabdha karmas he should always

This question and answer session was given December 25, 1988, in Rajasthan.

accept the Will of God, and for the *kriyaman* or the present karmas, we should only do the karmas after thinking about their consequences.

There are many dear ones sitting here who concentrate and go within and for them it is very easy to understand the answer to this question. Masters always tell us that we should not give Initiation to anyone unless Master has authorized us to do so; we should not give out the Initiation instructions to anyone without the permission of the Master. Because when we give out the Initiation instructions or when we initiate other people without getting authorization from the Master we become their Master and then we have to take care of their karmas. You know how difficult it is for us even to take care of our own karmas, so how can we think of taking care of the other people's karmas.

So that is why the Masters always tell us, "You should never do such a thing, you should never become responsible for others as long as you are not able to be responsible for your own self and even then you should not give Initiation unless you have permission from the Master."

Masters come into this world in the Will of God. They are the form of love and grace, and They shower grace and love upon the people only because it is in the Will of God. They give Initiation only because They are compelled by their Master to do so. They know how difficult it is and what is involved in giving Initiation. It is the mission of the Masters to come into this world and to awaken the sleeping souls and put those lost souls who have forgotten their Home back on the Path. And even though it is Their job to do this, still They do it only when Their Master has told Them to do it.

Master Sawan Singh Ji used to say,

"Giving Naam Initiation is not only giving out the words, it is taking up the responsibility. If it were only giving out the words a five-year-old girl could also have done that. Only the Masters know how severe, how strong, the karmas of the person They are going to Initiate are, and how They have to purify that soul and take her within; that is why They are the only Ones Who can decide about giving the Initiation."

You know that a turtle lays her eggs in the dry ground and she herself returns to the water to live; only through her attention she hatches those eggs. Afterwards, when the babies are born, even though there may be many other animals there, those baby turtles would never go with anyone else, they would at once recognize their mother, their parents and they would go and live with them. Imagine how it is possible that those baby turtles recognize their parents at once even though the mother has been away from them for quite a long time.

As the turtle's concentration of thought hatches the eggs, in the same way, the cuckoo bird lays her egg in the nest of a crow but she wanders here and there away from that nest. But she sings and speaks to her baby, and even though the baby cuckoo bird is still in the egg it is receptive to her. And when it comes out from that egg it doesn't care for the crow who has hatched it, but at once it flies out and goes to the cuckoo bird. Another bird lays her eggs in the mountain but she herself goes and lives on the plateau, and using her simran, using the remembrance of the eggs, she hatches the eggs.

There is another bird which is called the *anul* bird; it is mentioned in Kabir Sahib's *Anurag Sagar*. You may have read about it. That bird lives in the sky, it never comes down on the earth; when she lays an egg, by the time that egg

touches the ground the baby bird is already hatched and she flies out back to her mother.

So the laws of nature are applied to everyone and the same law of nature applies to the Masters also. Masters nourish and protect Their disciples through Their Simran and only through Their concentration and remembrance of Their disciples and through Their Simran do They take care of Their disciples; the distance does not make any difference. Behind the Simran given to us by the Master, His Initiation, His hard work, His meditation works; and that is why His Simran is more effective than the simran of other people. And just as outside He tells us all these things: He gives us Satsangs, He explains things to us—in the same way, within us also through His Simran and through His concentration and remembrance He teaches us all the things. Those disciples who go within know how much the Master is working within us also. He tells them about those sounds which they should catch and those sounds which they should not catch and how they should proceed on the inner journey.

When you go within, Master tells you about everything; and there these subtle things can be understood very well because these things need very deep understanding and we get to know all these things only when we go within.

Guru Nanak Sahib says, "Just as the mother takes care of the baby, she walks around, she moves around, she does everything while at the same time she is also feeding and taking care of the baby. In the same way Master also provides us with all the things we need." He does not become careless after giving us Initiation; He knows about our every need and He is aware of everything. That is why, even after giving us the Initiation, through that Simran, through that con-

centration and through the remembrance of the disciple the Masters always nourish and provide things for Their disciples.

Dear Ones, before we jivas enter the womb of the mother the number of breaths that we are supposed to take and the number of days that we are going to live on this earth are already written, because before entering into the womb of the mother our pralabdha karmas are already determined. That is why we are helpless in front of the pralabdha karma; we cannot do anything because God Almighty has kept everything in His hands. Those moments which we have to live in this world and the time when we have to leave this world, everything has been kept in the hands of God Almighty.

Dear Ones, why do we cry and suffer when we see our friends and relatives leaving this world? We know that God Almighty has kept everything in His hand and we cannot increase or decrease the moments we are supposed to live in this world, but still when we see our friends and relatives leaving this world we cry and suffer. Why is it so? Because we have not yet understood the reality, we have not gone within. Those who have gone within, those who have understood the reality, never become unhappy—they never cry, they never suffer—because they know that for a Satsangi the day he leaves the body is the happiest day of his life.

Master Sawan Singh Ji used to say, "Usually people consider the wedding day as the happiest day in their life. But for a Satsangi, when he knows that he is about to leave the body and go back to his Real Home and meet his beloved Master, he becomes the happiest person. For him that is the happiest day of his life, because he knows that all the sufferings of this world are going to end and he will be going back to the home which is full of peace and happiness."

Master Sawan Singh Ji used to say, "Those who are Initiated by the Perfect Master for them the beloved Master always comes at the time of their departure from this world, and they will definitely report that the Master has come. You can experience how much happiness he feels at the time of death by sitting very quietly and patiently with that person who is about to leave the body. Don't feel anxious and don't even let him feel anxious; just sit there quietly and do the Simran and you yourself will see how the Master has come to take him, and he will also report that the Master has come to take him and he will say how much happiness he is feeling."

That is why Masters always tell us that we should prepare ourselves for that time. How can we prepare ourselves for that time? How can we die while living? We can do that only by concentrating our attention at the Eye Center and withdrawing our attention from all over the body and everywhere outside, and coming to the Eye Center.

Master Sawan Singh Ji often used to talk about His mother, what happened when she left the body. Master Sawan Singh's mother was very devoted to Baba Jaimal Singh, she was a very loving lady, and she used to do a lot of Bhajan and Simran. Sunder Das got many opportunities to be very close to Master Sawan Singh. (Sunder Das is the person whose stories you have read in Mr. Oberoi's book.) He had seen Master Sawan Singh's mother also and he often told me how devoted she was and how much meditation she used to do. At that time Master Sawan Singh Ji was posted at the Murree Hills, and she would never write a letter to Master Sawan Singh when she became sick because she was worried that if Master Sawan Singh learned of her sickness He would come at once to be by her bed, and she didn't want Him

to be disturbed. So even though she became sick many times, she never complained and she never wrote to Master Sawan Singh. But when her end time came Master Sawan Singh was cabled, and when Master Sawan Singh arrived He asked, "Mother, do you have any pain? Any difficulty? What kind of help would you like me to give?" His mother then replied very lovingly, "I don't have any pain; I don't have any complaint. But I am wondering: before this last illness I used to have the darshan of Baba Jaimal Singh but lately I have not been having the darshan of Baba Jaimal Singh. What is the reason?"

Her end time had already come and she was only waiting for her son, and Baba Sawan Singh had already come there so she was going to die, so she requested him to find out from Baba Jaimal Singh why she was not having His darshan. Baba Jaimal Singh told her why she was not having the darshan. He said, "Many times it happens that when a person is going to be sick, or he is sick, or if anything bad is going to happen, he stops having the darshan of the Master. The Master thinks that if this person has the darshan of the Master, instead of enjoying that darshan and utilizing it for going further within, this Initiate will start asking favors from the Master, and it is possible that the disciple may even ask the Master to remove that pain or suffering. And Master does not want the disciple not to pay off his karmas. Master wants the disciple to pay off all the pralabdha karmas which he is supposed to pay, so that it will be easier for the disciple to go within." Because Masters never touch the pralabdha karmas, They always want Their disciples to pay off the pralabdha karmas so that by squaring off all the karmas in this lifetime, in this plane, they may go within and finally go back to the Real Home.

When Baba Sawan Singh told his mother about this explanation, she was content and said, "I don't want to request to Master Baba Jaimal Singh about removing this pain; I am content." And at once she had the darshan of Master Jaimal Singh and she left peacefully.

So this is how the Masters work for their disciples. Masters know how They have to make Their disciples pay off their karmas, and what kind of karmas the disciples should pay and which are the things that the Masters have to do for a disciple's liberation. Those who go within know how much pain of separation they feel when they do not have the darshan of the Master, but when they go within they also know why they are not having the darshan of the Master.

So these are only worldly examples through which I have tried to explain to you how we have to pay off the karmas and how much the Master helps us to pay off the karmas and which are the karmas which the Masters do not touch. But the real understanding about this question of the pralabdha karmas can come only if you were to go within and see with your own eyes inside how all this theory of karma works.

Master Sawan Singh Ji also used to talk about two initiates of Baba Jaimal Singh who were farmers; they were so devoted that every day they would have the darshan of Baba Jaimal Singh. Sometimes the Masters test Their devoted disciples to see how much devotion the disciples have, how much faith they have in the Master. So one day when they were farming they did not have the darshan of Baba Jaimal Singh, so one of those two disciples, named Mucha, told the other one whose name was Ramdita, "O Ramdita, today I did not have the darshan of Baba Ji." Ramdita replied, "Yes, Mucha, I also did not have the darshan of Baba Ji." On that day they

were supposed to get water from the well and water the field of corn. It was very hot that day and they knew that if they did not get the water, all their corn would dry and they would lose a lot, but still they said, "Well even though we have to do this work but we should first sit down and have the darshan of Baba Ji, if this crop will die, it is the Master's and not ours."

So both of them left their work and sat in meditation and after an hour they both got the darshan of Baba Jaimal Singh and then they resumed their work. So such disciples who go within and who know the value of the darshan of the Master, even though outwardly it may seem to them that what they are doing is not profitable, still they will not allow their faith to waver and they will surrender completely to the Will of the Master.

In the same way, dear Glen Jarman, who used to live in the ashram in California, came many times to this ashram. He had the habit of saying "Sat Sri Akal" to me whenever he would see me and he would always be so happy seeing me.* The last time he came to see me he had already been told by the doctors that he did not have a long time to live in this world and he knew that his death was coming. So when he came to see me for the last time he told me, "Now I am seeing a very bright light and I am very happy. Even though I know I have to leave, I don't have any complaints; I am not unhappy, I am very much happy that I am leaving this world. Ask Michael and Sally to take care of me until I leave this world." If someone tells us that we are going to die how would we feel? We would even give up eating and we would die beforehand, because we know that the fear of death is very terrible. But because of the Power of the Shabd he

* A traditional Sikh greeting, roughly translated as, "Hail Truth Eternal."



did not feel that fear of death, he accepted it very lovingly and when he left, he left very peacefully and he was happy.

Many dear ones talk about those dear ones who have left this world peacefully, having the experiences of the Master. You cannot hide the truth, and based on their experiences we should also understand, we should also concentrate at the Eye Center because our progress on this Path depends mainly upon our concentration.

Master, I still need Your help in understanding just what exactly is my soul and what affect Your darshan has on it and how meditation is food for it.

It is a very simple thing; if you try to split the hair it is not possible and we may waste all our energy and time. But if you want to understand there is a very simple way to understand this. You know that your body needs food and you feed your body and it is only because you feed your body that your body gets strength

and is able to function normally so that you can do everything you want. In the same way, only those who do the meditation know about how the meditation works as food for their soul. Those who are feeding their soul know how much confidence and how much determination they are getting in their soul and how much bliss they are getting within. They do not get confused, they do not become worried, and they do not wander away from the Path whenever anything small or big happens. Whatever happens they accept it as the Will of God and they are always steady on this Path of the Masters.

Now what is the soul? Soul is the same essence as that of Almighty God. Soul also has the same qualities, the same attributes as God Almighty has. It is like God Almighty is a vast ocean and our soul is a drop of that ocean, as long as the drop is separated from the ocean it is called a drop, as long as our soul is separated from the Almighty Lord it is called a soul. When she becomes one with that

Almighty God she also becomes the same.

Kabir Sahib has said, "O Kabir, soul is the essence of the Lord; as you cannot erase written things very easily, in the same way, you cannot erase or destroy the soul." When you burn a piece of paper on which something was printed or written, unless you smash that piece of paper after burning it, you cannot erase or remove the print or writing which was on the paper. Even after burning that paper, you can still see that something was written on the paper; such is the existence of the soul. The difference is that the soul cannot be erased; the soul cannot be destroyed, it cannot be cut by any sword, it cannot be burned in any fire and it always remains the same. No one can hurt the soul, no one can beat the soul. Of course you can beat or hurt the body in which the soul is residing, but as far as the soul is concerned it cannot be hurt.

Guru Nanak Sahib says, "Within the soul, where the knowledge of the Naam of God is manifested, pains and happiness do not exist."

Master, how does one develop unconditional love, and remove fear from the mind?

We can develop unconditional love only when we rise above the snares of mind and matter, when we go within, and when we remove all the covers from our soul. Only then that unconditional love can be developed or created within us. We cannot even call it as unconditional; it is the selfless love. That love is developed within our soul and the soul always loves the Oversoul because she is of the same essence as that of God Almighty. And God Almighty does not have any self interest in us. His love for us is selfless; the only thing that He wants for us

is to go back to the Real Home, He wants us to come back to Himself, and that is why He loves us.

We disciples should look in our within and see whether our love for the Master is unconditional, whether it is selfless or not. You know that we may be sitting for meditation for just a few minutes a day, but we may be spending hours requesting and praying to our Master for doing this or that for us. We always tell Him, "Master, do this thing for us, or do that thing for us." You know these desires are all created by our mind and we want our Master to fulfill those desires for us. So can we call our love unconditional or selfless for the Master? If there is any such thing which can be called unconditional or selfless love that is the love of the Master for us.

Often I have said that before I met beloved Master Kirpal many of my relatives came to see me; they all had their own desires; they all wanted me to fulfill their desires. Nobody listened to me and nobody cared for how I was doing. Even though I tried to tell them they were not interested in how I was doing. Instead they all told me what they wanted and how they were doing. But when beloved Lord Kirpal came, He did not ask me anything except this: He asked me how I was doing in meditation? I always remember that, and in one of the bhajans I have written, "Many of my relatives came and they all sang their songs, nobody asked me about my welfare; but today I am a very fortunate one because my beloved Lord, the Saint, has come and He has asked about my well being, He has asked me about my meditation."

So Master is the only one who asks us about our welfare; He is the only one who asks us about our meditation and our soul, because He becomes very happy and is pleased knowing about our soul.

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Sant Kirpal Singh Ji, giving darshan, during His last illness