

SPARKS OF THE TRUTH
Second Edition
Fourth Printing (November 1988)

From Dissertations of
Meher Baba

by Chakradhar D. Deshmukh

An Avatar Meher Baba Trust eBook
June 2011

Copyright © 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1971 by The Universal Spiritual League in
America, Inc.

Copyright © 2011 Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust,
Ahmednagar, India

Short publication history: *Sparks of the Truth from Dissertations of Meher Baba*, by Chakradhar D. Deshmukh was originally published by Pandit Rao Deshpande for the Avatar Meher Baba Centre, Nizamabad, India. It was republished in a second edition by Sheriar Press (Myrtle Beach, South Carolina) in 1971. This eBook is based on the fourth printing of the second edition.

eBooks
at the Avatar Meher Baba Trust Web Site

The Avatar Meher Baba Trust's eBooks aspire to be textually exact though non-facsimile reproductions of published books, journals and articles. With the consent of the copyright holders, these online editions are being made available through the Avatar Meher Baba Trust's web site, for the research needs of Meher Baba's lovers and the general public around the world.

Again, the eBooks reproduce the text, though not the exact visual likeness, of the original publications. They have been created through a process of scanning the original pages, running these scans through optical character recognition (OCR) software, reflowing the new text, and proofreading it. Except in rare cases where we specify otherwise, the texts that you will find here correspond, page for page, with those of the original publications: in other words, page citations reliably correspond to those of the source books. But in other respects—such as lineation and font—the page designs differ. Our purpose is to provide digital texts that are more readily downloadable and searchable than photo facsimile images of the originals would have been. Moreover, they are often much more readable, especially in the case of older books, whose discoloration and deteriorated condition often makes them partly illegible. Since all this work of scanning and reflowing and proofreading has been accomplished by a team of volunteers, it is always possible that errors have crept into these online editions. If you find any of these, please let us know, by emailing us at frank@ambppct.org.

The aim of the Trust's online library is to reproduce the original texts faithfully. In certain cases, however—and this applies especially to some of the older books that were never republished in updated versions—we have corrected certain small errors of a typographic order. When this has been done, all of these corrections are listed in the "Register of Editorial Alterations" that appears at the end of the digital book. If you want the original text in its exact original form, warts and all, you can reconstruct this with the aid of the "register."

The Trust's Online Library remains very much a work in progress. With your help and input, it will increase in scope and improve in elegance and accuracy as the years go by. In the meantime, we hope it will serve the needs of those seeking to deepen and broaden their own familiarity with Avatar Meher Baba's life and message and to disseminate this good news throughout the world

Sparks of the Truth

From Dissertations of

Meher Baba

A Version by C. D. Deshmukh

SHERIAR PRESS, INC.

Reprinted from the AWAKENER MAGAZINE by special permission of the author.

©1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1971 by The Universal Spiritual League in America, Inc. All rights reserved.

First Printing: November 1971

Second Printing: January 1973

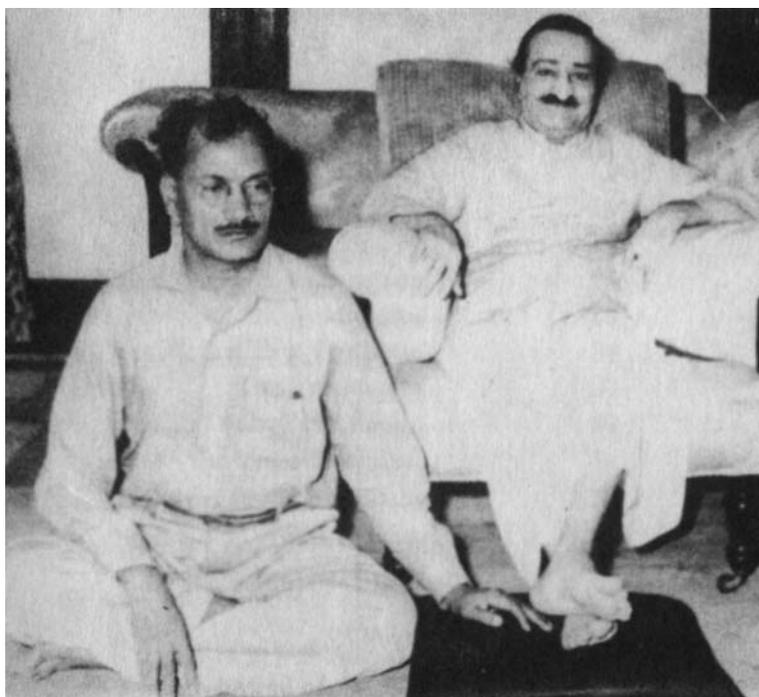
Third Printing: November, 1974

Fourth Printing: November 1988

Printed in the U.S.A. by Sheriar Press, Inc.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the publisher, except by a reviewer who wishes to quote brief passages in connection with a review written for inclusion in a magazine, newspaper, or broadcast. For information contact: Sheriar Press, Inc., 3005 Highway 17 ByPass N., Myrtle Beach, South Carolina 29577

ISBN 0-913078-02-6



Dr. Chakradhar D. Deshmukh Avatar Meher Baba

Guruprasad, Poona, 1949

Blank Page

Contents

Foreward
Introduction

Part I

Release from the False	9
The Ocean of Truth	11
Creeds and the Inner Path	15
The Market of God	20
The Give-and-Take of Impressions	24
Miracles	29
Reclaiming Lost Wayfarers	34
The Preparation	37
Special Train of the Master	39
The Truth-Individual	44
The Work of the Divine Hierarchy	50
Secrets of Divine Working	55
From Suffering to Peace	59

Part II

The Nature of the Soul	61
Transcendent Understanding	65
The Meaning of Life	70
The Fulfillment	74
True Freedom and Creativity	77
True Spirituality	84
The Past and the Present	89

Part III

Sayings of Meher Baba	91
-----------------------	----

Foreword

It is the privilege of *The Awakener Magazine*, together with Sheriar Press, to bring out this second edition of *Sparks of the Truth, From The Dissertations of Meher Baba*, by our dear friend and co-worker, Dr. C. D. Deshmukh of Nagpur, India. In this edition we have made only a few minor typographical and grammatical clarifications.

Meher Baba constantly said, "I have not come to teach, but to awaken." Nevertheless, He imparts knowledge for our guidance. Dr. Deshmukh, both in the original Indian Discourses and the later Sparks of the Truth, has been most instrumental in preserving this great teaching for us all. May it reach the aware audience it deserves.

The Editors
October, 1971

Introduction

In commemoration of the 42nd anniversary of the great and unique Silence of Avatar Meher Baba, we have great pleasure in offering to the Baba-lovers *Sparks of The Truth*, a book based on Beloved Baba's explanations on the Eternal Truth, delivered by Him from time to time to His disciples at Meherabad and recorded by them in the form of "notes", in the 'Meherabad Diaries', made available to Dr. Chakradhar D. Deshmukh by Shri Aspandiar Rustom Irani, (known as 'Pendu') and by late Shri Vishnumaster Deorukhker, at Meherabad during the Great Baba-Seclusion at Meherabad in July 1949.

Dr. Chakradhar D. Deshmukh of Nagpur, a very devoted and earnest lover of Beloved Baba, has rendered the above "notes" into "dissertations" in his inimitable style and language. We are very grateful to him for having permitted us to publish them for the benefit of all Baba-lovers.

There are altogether 20 dissertations in this book. They are grouped in two parts. Those which have been grouped in Part I convey practical hints and guidance to the *sadhakas* or the aspirants on the Path towards Self-realization. They deal with the Eternal Truth, the Truth-realized Master and the right relation between such Master and his disciples. They are very lucid and strewn with apt analogies, parables and anecdotes, which help considerably in assimilating spiritual truths otherwise difficult to grasp.

Part II deals in an abstract manner with the Eternal Truths concerning the nature of the Soul and the meaning of life. These dissertations also throw an abundant light on the nature of *sanskaras* or impressions and their subtle and complex working in the world of illusory values.

Part III contains very valuable and instructive "Meher Baba-Sayings," most of them being hitherto unknown.

May the Sparks of the Truth guide us in our journey towards Self-realization.

P. G. Nandi

Blank Page

Part 1

Release from the False

Truth has nothing to do with the present organized religions. It is far beyond the limited dictates and bare doctrines of religions. Truth implies simply giving up Maya, *i.e.*, release from the false. The false expresses itself through the bindings of *Kama*, *Krodha* and *Kanchana*—lust, anger and greed. Anybody can aspire for the Truth; and every one can attain it. Here there are no restrictions of caste or prejudices. The more you think of the false, the greater is your anxiety and the greater the fears attendant upon it.

And what are these fears and anxieties? They are the refuse, the "*badbu*" of your own mind. The Maya or illusion is so very strong that it subdues and captivates even great heroes. To subdue the forces of ignorance is, therefore, the real task before true heroes, who are very rare. He who is disinterested in materialistic life becomes either the greatest sinner or a real Master in spiritual life. The great Masters of their times have been most disinterested in materialistic life. They were the heroes of the spiritual world.

Seek that Truth, which will give you everlasting bliss and real knowledge. You will then be able to raise others also and save them from the entanglements of the world. Keep your mind quiet, steady and firm. Do not submit to desires; but try to control them. One who cannot restrain his tongue cannot restrain his mind. One who cannot restrain his mind cannot restrain his action. One who cannot restrain his action cannot restrain himself. And one who cannot restrain himself cannot gain his Infinite Self.

To give up the false life does not mean committing physical suicide. But it means living without any thought of the self. It is

to invite an utterly selfless life or living death. Giving up the false life means the death of all thoughts, desires and even the ego-mind itself. People die a thousand deaths; but they are where they are, chained to the wheel of births and deaths.

Once you surrender yourself to a Perfect Master he *has* to do his duty towards you. He cannot escape that. The only thing which is required is that you should have unbounded and unswerving faith. And that will enable him to do his duties towards you. So, take your Guru to be your God. And give unto him the surrenderance of full faith and the ungrudging service of unfaltering love.

The Truth-realized Master is here to give. He comes down for duty. He is the fountain of spiritual force; and the waters of pure spirituality flow from this source as in a river. Whoever needs it and has a desire may bring his vessel and fill it with knowledge and bliss, each as he deserves and according to his own requirements. The disinterested services of thousands of selfless workers cannot come anywhere near what one God-realized person can achieve for humanity. One who realizes God gets the authority for service. His very existence is a boon to mankind, and even to the universe. God's grace bestows on the soul the human form; but the Master's grace absolves it from the round of births and deaths.

It is difficult to understand the grace of the Master. If by temporarily hurting, you permanently effect a healing, your apparently cruel act of hurting is, in reality, a blessing. Similarly, if by effecting temporary healing, you are creating a permanent hurt, this apparently kind act of yours is, in reality, a curse. A doctor cutting open a boil and causing much pain to a patient may, at first sight, be considered an enemy. But when all impure matter is removed and the disease cured, he is, after fuller appreciation of the results, considered to be a friend. So the Master is at first taken to be an enemy when he tries to remove the sins, take away the desires and wipe out the impressions of the aspirant by imposing strict discipline. But when, through the grace of the Master, the ecstasy of union with the Divine Beloved is attained, he is seen to be a real friend. There is always the difference between the apparent and the real. Of course, one should go to a Perfect Master. To consign one's soul to an imperfect Master is like making a mad man sit on one's chest with a razor in his hand.

The **Ocean of** **Truth**

The infinite God, in His original state, may be compared to the ocean. When the ocean is completely still, it cannot know itself as might, since it is bereft of all movements. In order to realize itself as a mighty ocean, with all the immensity of its stored-up energy, there must come into existence some movement within it. Now the wind that creates a stir in the ocean of God is the impulse which God has in His original state for realizing the fullness and immensity of His own infinite being. This wind creates bubbles of different dimensions in the ocean. They correspond to the innumerable forms of evolving life from atom to man.

The highest bubble is perfect in consciousness and may be compared to a boat. It is the human body. The driving force of the evolution is the same as the original impulse to attain self-knowledge. But it gets wrapped up in diverse impressional dispositions. Therefore, that impulse, which has been likened to the wind, now expresses itself as ingrained mental dispositions, or active inscriptions which each action or experience scrawls on the evolving mind. The wind that drives the boat of the human body gets its directions from the determinative mental imprints. The impressions, left by experience and action on the evolving mind, are not mere idle imprints or entries. They have stored in themselves inexorable driving power or directional force.

The average man occupies the boat of his body, but he has no control over the driving of the boat. In the boat his hands and feet are, as it were, tied down by his accumulated impressional dispositions. He cannot himself drive the boat as he pleases. But he finds that the boat of his body is driven hither and thither by his ingrained impressional dispositions. As he breathes, he adds to the wind, *i.e.*, he creates further new impressional dispositions. It is not himself, but these freshly acquired dispositions, which have the determinative power for driving the boat.

If the man has good actions to his credit, the wind of his impressional dispositions leads the boat to a Boatman, who can not only freely guide the boat on the surface of the ocean, but even knows all the ins and outs of the ocean. The Boatman can not only lead on the surface, but also to the very bottom of the ocean. He knows the immensity of the ocean in its fullness. It should never be forgotten that it is the ocean itself which becomes the man in the boat, the boat and the Boatman. The moment the man drowns himself in the ocean he gets lost in the ocean, like a sugar-doll; and he realizes "I was and am the ocean, though previously I knew it not."

The Boatman, who has perfected himself in the supreme knowledge of the Truth, occupies and drives his own boat and also drives the boats of other bound souls, dragging them along. Such Boatmen are rare. There are many souls who become one with the Truth. But they retain no special connection with the sailing boats of men on the surface, though they are themselves one with the ocean. Only a few rise to the surface, plying their own boats with hands and feet completely free and helping other boats of bound souls to reach their goal. These Boatmen derive their inspirational strength, not from any impressionary dispositions, but from the Truth itself. They not only steer the boats of other men who are on the surface, but lead them to their destination of being dissolved in the infinite depths of the ocean of life.

These Masters or Boatmen relieve the surface sailors of all unnecessary fears, free them from the distracting temptations of the surface and ultimately *win them over to getting themselves drowned and lost in the infinite ocean of Truth*. They come to be

known in the world and are the real Saviors of humanity. They take them away from the superficiality of human life to the depths of unending divinity or the infinite knowledge, bliss and power in the indivisible Truth of Being. These Boatmen are not only the Masters of the unlimited, but also the Masters of all that is finite. Their experience is all-comprehensive, leaving nothing outside its scope.

However, in order that the Boatmen should be able to discharge their duty towards the bound sailors in the surface-boats, the sailors have to give themselves over to the Boatmen. The surrender must be complete. The sailors whose hands and feet are tied have to hand over completely the charge of their own boats to these Boatmen. The bound souls have to *transfer the charge not only of the gross body, but also of their subtle and mental bodies*. They must not retain anything for themselves. This complete surrender of body, desires and ego-mind is something symbolized in the East by offering to the Master a coconut.

The symbolism of the coconut fruit, conventionally offered to the Master in certain areas, may be explained as follows. The outer threads on the hard cover of the coconut represent the physical body. The outer hard covering represents the subtle body with all its surging impressional desires. The inner kernel in the coconut represents the mind with seeds of impressions. And the inmost water is essentially not different from the water of the ocean, from which it is ultimately soaked up by the roots of the trees on the shore. It may therefore be likened to a portion of divinity itself. Now, because of the sheaths of the inner kernel, the outer cover and the thick layer of threads, the inmost water remains completely hidden from view; and the identity of the inmost being of the coconut with the ocean itself is not even suspected. So the coconut, with all the covers, is symbolically offered to the Master in order that he may reveal the inmost essence of the soul as it is.

The Master takes off the threads on the exterior one by one. This is like relieving the burdened mind of ordinary men. It corresponds to *taking from them all bodily attachments one by one and ultimately taking away from them the attachment to body itself*. Destruction of the body through physical death does not

solve any problem, because the ego-mind grows new bodies in new incarnations. Through utter non-attachment to the physical body, the soul is relieved of the limitations of the outermost covering, symbolized by the threads of the coconuts. When the hindrance of the physical body is removed, the body begins to function consciously. This is the state of the Yogis.

But the sheath of the subtle body, with all its surging desires, has also to be shed. This corresponds to the Master's breaking open the outer hard covering of the coconut. And when the obstructivity of the subtle body is removed, the soul begins to function consciously through its mental ego-body. This is the stage of the advanced souls. The ego-mind corresponds to the inner kernel of the coconut; and the Master has to break open even this inner kernel to take the soul to its own essence, which, in this analogy, corresponds to the inmost water in the coconut. Breaking the inner kernel means that the mind of the person ceases to function completely. It comes to a standstill since the seeds that activate the ego-mind are all burnt up. When the hindrance of the ego-mind is removed, the Master, as it were, drinks the inmost sweet water and makes it unite with the ocean of life that he is, Lover and Beloved have become one consciously.

When the Master enables the soul to get at its real essence by shedding its sheaths of bodies, it may be said to have the innermost water of the coconut. The Master now takes that water, which is the essence of the coconut, and mixes it up with the water of the ocean itself, by showing that it is not any different. This is like drinking the water and making it unite with the ocean of life, which the Master is. The water has not been destroyed; it has become united with its source. The lover and the beloved have become one. This is the bestowal of God-realization and the true knowledge and the enjoyment of the unbounded ocean of Truth. The soul has now gone back exactly to the state from where it started, with the only difference that it now knows itself to be the mighty ocean of Truth, whereas in the beginning, it was unconscious of this fact.

Creeds and the Inner Path

The majority of persons are comparable to blind people, who are inexorably committed to the life of ceaseless wandering in mountainous regions with hills and dales, peaks and valleys. Human beings have come to a sort of plateau after ages of groping through the sub-human kingdoms; but they are subject to the gathered momentum of their long-drawn-out past. Their animal ancestry invites them again and again into the dark unfathomed valleys of unconscious inertia or the brutal life of undirected impulses.

To guard against a precipitous fall, life has provided automatic suffering that inevitably betakes those who slip back. But even those who do not slip back and walk on the table-land find themselves bumping against many stones and inviting upon themselves new types of ceaseless sufferings, until they come to develop the desire to climb up to the place of safety. For those who are desirous of climbing, the religions play a very important part. Even a blind man has reasonable chances of rising to considerable heights if he, through spontaneous inclination or training, gets reconciled to any one of the religious creeds.

The established religious rites and ceremonies are comparable to spiral or winding staircases. They take man on a daily round of

duties; and when a day begins, man finds himself doing exactly the things which he has done on previous days. He might soon get tired of his round of duties, thinking that they lead him nowhere, and desire to go back to the ground-floor to the aimless wanderings to which he had got accustomed before he got on the staircase. But much of this discontent is due to inaccurate appraisal. He seems to be moving in a circle. But, in fact, he is climbing up the spiral steps and has actually risen a little higher, though it seems that he has come to the same point.

Meeting a Perfect One is the law of the spiritual life. After one meets the Perfect One, His words should have greater value than the established codes of religion. If there is a clash between the established codes and the orders of the Perfect One, His orders should be followed without fear or hesitation. The codes, though generally helpful, do not cover all possible cases. There are important exceptions. He who follows a guide is saved by His watchful care. This may be illustrated by means of an anecdote.

Once upon a time a sage sent his son to a debtor's house to recover a loan. The son was advised never to sleep under the shade of a tree, or pass the night in a city during the journey, or sleep at the debtor's house. But the sage also instructed the son to obey the commands of an experienced guide, if perchance he happened to meet such a one. The boy started on his journey and by sunset he met an aged person, who seemed to him to be a man of much experience. The old man said that he too wanted to go to the same destination and offered his company to the boy, which he willingly accepted. After some time they came to a big and shady tree where the old man decided to halt for the night. The boy remembered his father's words that he should obey the experienced guide. So he raised no objection to sleeping under the shade of a tree, though this was against the general command which he had received. He soon fell asleep and was lost in dreamland. The old man, however, kept watch, and when, at midnight a big snake appeared under the tree, the vigilant guide soon killed the snake and the night passed off safely.

Next morning the boy and the guide resumed their journey. At night, they came to a big city. The old guide decided to pass the night there. This was contrary to the general advice of the boy's father. But the boy again accepted the order of his guide and

agreed to spend the night in the city. The king of the city had a daughter. Anyone who got married to her never came back alive after the wedding night. This happened invariably in the case of all who were successively married to the princess. And when this fact became known to the inhabitants of the city, no one in the city was willing to marry the princess. So the king decided his daughter would marry a young man who came from outside the city. When the king heard of the arrival of the two strangers, he accordingly summoned the boy to his palace. The old guide, however, gave some definite instructions to the boy before he was taken from him. When the boy found himself in the royal harem he got bewildered. But he scrupulously stuck to the instructions of his guide and the result was that he passed a safe night and he was the only one like him to tell the tale next morning. Plus, he was allowed to go his own way. He returned to his guide and they again resumed their journey onwards.

Ultimately, when both reached their destination, the debtor of the boy paid back the loan. The boy was about to return immediately, but the old guide insisted upon their availing themselves of the hospitality offered by the debtor to spend the night under his roof. The boy, who had all the while met no harm by following the order of the guide, decided not to disobey him even this time. After supper the host inquired as to where they would prefer to sleep at night. And the old man requested that they be allowed to sleep in the verandah. Both slept there for awhile. But at midnight the old guide awakened the boy in his care and asked him to come with him inside the house. Two sons of the debtor were sleeping inside. The old man requested them to change places with them, since they, being new to the place, could not withstand the cold outside. The sons of the debtor agreed to the suggestion and obliged the guests. In the morning when the boy got up, he witnessed a gruesome tragedy. The host was wailing and weeping over the murders of his two sons who, he declared, were killed by robbers that night. The fact was that the debtor himself, in his uncontrolled greed and miserliness, had committed the foul deed, believing that the two persons in the verandah were the visitors and hoping to get back the money which he paid the boy.

When the old guide started their return journey, the boy began to assert that all the restrictions which his father had put on him were

groundless, since he discovered through his own experience that every time he disregarded those restrictions he came to no grief. The old man smiled and reminded him that among other things, his father had also given him the instruction to follow an experienced guide. The boy, however, felt sure that the other instructions imposed by his father were meaningless. Then the old guide discussed all the incidents in the journey and convinced the boy that he would surely have come to grief and even might have lost his very life by disregarding the initial advice given by his father, had it not been for the fact that he was saved every time by the intervention of the one whom he had accepted as his guide.

The established codes of religion and morality are like the general advice given by the father of the boy. They are for the well-being of mankind. But when a person gets the advantage of living wisdom, it has to be accepted in preference to these established codes. This may be done, not only without coming to any harm, but with much benefit. As stated by a seer, wealth may be sacrificed for health; wealth and health for self-respect; and all three (wealth, health and self-respect) for one's own religion. But to gain God, everything, including religion, may be sacrificed without hesitation.

The established religious conceptions, organizations and ways of life do conserve a great many values and a great deal of gathered energy and momentum. But when they get loosened from the life force of inspiration, they can, for those who are uncritical, easily become hindrances. A staircase of steps is a help for one who has the grit and the undaunted will to climb. But it is a regular series of stumbling blocks for one who, though desirous of climbing, has a recurring inclination to revert to the original habit of merely walking on level ground. And if he has no desire to climb up, the staircase does not come to him even as an obstacle. He develops the soothing belief that the step which he happens to take is his last landing. Or he blindly takes to the gradual slopes, which lead him to the depths of ignorance or to the precipices from which he has a sudden fall.

For many people, the round of duties given by established religions is a definite help and a boon. However, after a certain point, these rounds of duties begin to degrade rather than elevate the person concerned. And there arises a need for some other mode

of ascent. This is like getting into an elevator or flying in an airplane. This is the inner life of spiritual endeavor which transcends one limitation after another. The guide to the inner life of spiritual endeavor must be one who has seen the mountain top, *i.e.*, one who is spiritually perfect.

The knowledge of truth gained through the established creeds is like the knowledge of a town which one may get by seeing it on a map. To see the town in one's own experience, one has to take the trouble of actually going there. The truth of creeds may also be compared to the cow seen in the picture. It is one thing merely to see the picture of a cow. But it is quite a different thing to have a real cow and drink its milk, So all the religious creeds, though useful for the time being, have to be completely left behind; and the inner spiritual path has to be actually traversed before anyone can realize the infinite Truth in his own immutable experience. It is while traversing the inner spiritual path that critical thinking, as well as submission to the direction of the Perfect Ones, have both their legitimate functions. But the goal of untrammelled Divinity is the really important thing.

The

Market for God

There is no market for providing the realization of God. And even if anyone were to offer such realization, there would be extremely few customers for it. The world is so immersed in ignorance that it has no capacity to assess the value of spiritual Truth. Yet the Masters have again and again tried to help the fumbling and bungling masses of humanity by describing Godhood in a language which they could understand. By descending to their level, only some glimpses of that Truth can be imparted. However, for the most part, those who are thickly covered with ignorance remain impervious even to this bestowal, because their minds have become stiff and unyielding due to the usual worldly habits of thought and feeling.

The world mostly fails to appreciate the value of the really important things. And even among those who appreciate it, most persons are held back from deriving any benefit from them. This may be illustrated by means of a story. A devotee of God spent much of his life in worship in one village. After years of worship, there arose in his mind a new longing to have the realization of God as Truth. He became so restless that he wanted to have the supreme experience instantaneously. One day he came to a Sage, who had just newly arrived at that village on a casual visit. Approaching the Sage with great respect, the man said, "I have wandered as a pilgrim from one place to the other; and I also visited many sages and saints to get their help and blessings. But I am nowhere nearer the fulfillment of my one desire; and I have waited long enough. Now I approach you in full surrenderance to get from you such light and help as I may."

The man said this in all sincerity, believing that he was really ready to receive the highest spiritual experience, not knowing that he was really thoroughly unprepared for the receiving of such a vast thing. He did not know what he was asking for. So, in order to bring home to him how he really needed much further preparation, the Sage first took out of his own robe a precious stone which looked like a marble. Then, handing it over to the man, said, "Take this stone; and bring from the market five pounds of vegetables." The devotee, who knew not the real value of the precious stone, took it for ordinary marble. And, in his ignorance, he began to hesitate, thinking that it was no use starting on an endeavor which, in his view, was doomed to fail. However, when the Sage asked him not to bring in his own considerations, but just to proceed about doing what he was asked to do, he decided to try.

When the devotee asked for five pounds of vegetables in exchange for the stone, everyone laughed at him for expecting so much in barter for such an insignificant thing as a piece of marble. One, however, thought that it might be a nice thing for his child to play with, but he offered only four pounds of vegetables. The devotee returned to the Sage with an account of what had happened. But the Sage now asked him to bring, in exchange, five pounds of sweets.

When he went to the market on this new errand, everyone again laughed at him. But there was one who wanted to set a precious stone in his ring; but he could not afford to purchase it from the market of precious stones. Now, though he believed that this stone was only a marble, he thought that he might set it in his ring as a false jewel. So he agreed to purchase it in barter, but offered only four pounds of sweets. The devotee again came back to the Sage and recounted to him what had happened during this second attempt.

The Sage now asked him to fetch from some goldsmith one hundred rupees as the price of the stone. When he went to the market on this third errand, everyone again laughed at him. One goldsmith, however, thought that it might turn out to be a genuine precious stone; but he offered only ninety rupees for it. The devotee was now coming to the end of his patience. In all his three attempts, he had failed. So he requested the Sage to put it back

on his own robe since he could never succeed in getting for that stone exactly what the Sage wanted.

The Sage, however, now asked him to try to get one thousand rupees from some jeweler. So he went to a jeweler with that stone. The jeweler immediately recognized it to be a really valuable precious stone and knew that its real price could in no case be less than twenty thousand rupees. He thought that here was the chance of his life to exploit someone who was totally ignorant about the truth of jewels. So, in his uncontrolled greed and desire to exploit to the utmost, he offered only eight hundred rupees, thus losing the real bargain.

Now, the devotee lost all his patience; and throwing away the stone, said to the Sage, "I came to you for realizing the highest Truth and attaining union with God, not for being harassed in fruitless errands. Either give me that for which I aspire or allow me to go back to my own usual duties." The Sage then replied, "You can never attain unity with God unless you have inexhaustible patience. If you cannot stand an ordinary trial like this, there is not the slightest chance of your being able to stand the severe ordeals which a real aspirant of the most High must successfully face. It is best for you to go back to the world. But before you do that, I would like you to gather the meaning of what you have seen during the four attempts you made to dispose of the precious stone."

The Sage then continued, "The dealer who offered four pounds of vegetables is like the multitude who know nothing of that divine immortality which is known as God. They do not even suspect that one day they must possess this invaluable treasure. The dealer in sweets, who offered only four pounds, is like serious-minded or thoughtful persons, who sometime become conscious that their mode of life needs to be changed, but who are content to accept another false thing for the false thing with which they have been fed up. They are not keen about having something real. All that they want is some change, because they are thoroughly dissatisfied with what they have been able to make of life.

The goldsmith, who offered ninety rupees, is like a seeker who knows that there is a higher life and wants to have it, but who

does not have sufficient earnestness to make any real effort for it. And the jeweler, who knew the real value of the precious stone but offered only eight hundred rupees, is like an advanced soul who knows the real worth of eternal life, but who wants to have it without giving its real price, which is the surrenderance of separate ego-life. He expects to cheat the Master by offering to do many other things which fall considerably short of his minimum standard.

The Sage then closed as follows, "And you, my dear man, are like those unfortunate ones who refuse to learn from experience. In your successive errands, you had ample opportunity to note that the stone which I had given you was being valued at an increasingly higher rate as you went to more and more thoughtful persons. But you still cling to your initial belief that it had no value. You further had the audacity to throw away a really valuable thing in your desperateness. You need more experience and need to learn from that experience and also from the experience of others. Come to me after sufficient experience."

Those who can appreciate the real worth of the life spiritual are few. But even among these few, most persons continue to be swayed by petty considerations to which they feel constrained owing to dispositional inclinations.

They miss the opportunities of assimilating in their own lives the great values which they perceive as being true. The most that they do about these values is to talk or write about them for others, or think about them as an entertaining way of filling their idle hours. Value is not value unless it is lived. When a man is merely revolving the idea of value in the mind, this idea is exactly like any other purely intellectual concept—a toy to play with.

The energy which is expended in mere thinking, talking or writing is like the steam which escapes through the whistle of the railway engine. It makes noise and is even interesting, but it cannot drive the engine itself, even to the extent of one inch. No amount of whistling can move the engine onwards. The steam has to be harnessed intelligently and used in order that it may actually take the engine to its destination. That is why the sages have all along insisted on practice rather than theory. This is particularly true of those who want to know and realize God.

The
Give-and-Take
of Impressions

The give-and-take of sanskaras or impressions is constantly going on in the play of life. Where there is mutuality, there is this give-and-take, but it is not a mechanical process. The same action can create different impressions, according to the motive which inspires that action. A man who, out of the motive of doing good to another person, gives him food or clothes, at once catches his good impressions. The man who slanders another person with an evil motive or steals his belongings at once catches his evil impressions. Killing an animal for sport, pleasure or food means catching all its bad impressions, since the motive is selfish. But no such bad impressions are caught from snakes or germs and the like, which are a danger to humanity, when they are killed out of philanthropic motives and only when absolutely necessary. Such killing, when it is not a duty, will certainly create binding impressions.

Conversation, movies, books, radio, meetings, travels, crowds and so on are various mediums through which there is give-and-take of diverse types of impressions on a stupendous scale. In short, the cycle of impressions is interminable except when the aspirant slowly and patiently takes to the emancipatory, uphill, spiritual path under the guidance of a Truth-realized Master, with his blessings.

The impressions in the ego-minds of all, whether gross, subtle or mental, are largely similar. But their colors are different and of innumerable variety, according to the spiritual position of different individuals. Consciousness gets committed to some illusion or other, owing to these mental impressions, which are ever active in spite of the daily respite of dream and sleep. The gross consciousness of the physical body gets dissolved in the dream-state of the subtle body; and the dream-state, in its turn, gets dissolved in the sleep state of the mental body. But this daily dissolution of illusion is temporary. After some time the impressions again begin to prick and clamor, "Spend us! Spend us!" Thus, latent consciousness is again brought back to its gross illusion.

If the whole world were to go to sleep, it would be the great dissolution of the entire world. All the individuals would recede into their mental bodies and be absorbed in utter oblivion for some time until they re-enter the panorama of the threefold world in a new cycle of existence. The impressions of the unrealized individuals remain exactly the same even during this universal dissolution, which takes place by the Divine Will. In the new cycle they take up their evolution where they had left it. Universal dissolution is not without some purpose. The usual theories of evolution advanced by scientists are based only upon intellectual data. They never do justice to God's hand in the game.

When the world is put to sleep with all its current ideas, theories, beliefs, ideals and models of individual and collective life, it is easier for the world to change its direction of search and fulfillment in the next cycle of creation. It has to start where it left off, but it can reorient itself in a new direction from the place where things had previously stopped. This means that in the new cycle of existence, the ideas, theories, beliefs and ideals and modes of individual and collective life begin to develop entirely on new lines, according to what has been planned by the Truth-realized Masters. The old modes disappear, yielding place to new ones. The Masters plan not only for humanity in general, but also for the new Circle-to-be,* for which the seeds are sown hundreds of years before the time when they actually manifest themselves.

* See discourse on The Circle, Awakener, Vol. 3, No. 1

The physical body is nothing but the gross form of impressions. The mental impression in the mind of the male parent first takes a subtle form, which then is released in the gross form of mating. The mass of sanskaras of impressions thus released ultimately reach the mind of the female parent; and it is from the mind of the female parent that the process of physical incarnation starts. The soul, which is awaiting reincarnation in the gross body, can descend only if, during the process of sanskaric or impressional exchange between the male and the female, their minds have come as near to stopping as possible. The physical body is produced by the working of many impressions and is the result of their very embodiment. It is therefore no wonder that it has a tendency to bind the soul which inhabits it. Love for the physical body is only a form of deep ignorance. Swine take delight in refuse—and so do the ignorant ones take delight in the body.

From the spiritual point of view, there is nothing more pitiable than slavish submission to the desires and demands of the physical body. Because of its incessant claims on the attention of the mind, the physical body often becomes a hindrance to real life; it is like a cage to the soul. But the soul cannot find its real freedom by putting an end to the physical body. The physical body itself has to be intelligently used and made to subserve spiritual ends. What is the use of a body which resists the dictates of the mind? It is no use clinging to the comforts of the body, which one day must be given up. It is only an instrument, and one should make the maximum use of it.

Impressions are contagious. Eating meat is prohibited in many spiritual disciplines because the person thereby catches the impressions of the animal, thus rendering himself more susceptible to lust and anger. Sometimes, innumerable strong impressions are transmitted through the mere touch of the physical body of another person. A gross body, even a corpse, can quickly impart numberless impressions to the person who touches it.

Sex contact outside wedlock is the worst form of exposure to heavy and binding impressions of lust. In wedlock, the impressions exchanged are much lighter and less binding. But just as bad and binding impressions can be caught from others, good and emancipatory impressions can also be caught from others. Food or edibles prepared or given by others bring their sanskaras with them. The

prasad—some sweet, fruit or drink given as a vehicle of grace by saints and Masters—gives spiritual and emancipatory impressions to the recipient. The custom of touching the feet of the Master with the head is based upon the fact that the spiritual and emancipatory impressions from the Master thereby go to the very mind-heart of the recipient in a fraction of a second.

The Truth-realized Master transmits dynamic impressions of faith and love for God through appropriate spiritual experience. Faith of any kind is, in a way, ultimately based upon intellect. There can be no faith without some form of intellectual conviction, which again is founded on experience. Many people say that they believe in God or that they have faith in Him; but though they say this out of conventional fear of God, what they say is far from being true. If they really believed in God, their actions would be different from what they are. They fear God as something unknown, a power which they have been taught to respect and obey through tradition and mythology. They fear Him as one who is supposed to give due rewards to the virtuous and punishments to the wicked. But neither their fear nor their beliefs are deep-rooted or sincere.

If their belief in God were sincere, they would earnestly start to find out what God is. They would want to have God and realize Him; and all their actions would be entirely different. If they were really to take God seriously and want to know what He is, their very first glimpse of divinity would disarm them of all their unjustified fear. It would reveal to them that God is Love and that His plan for all, including themselves, is to raise them to the highest pinnacle of perfection and bliss, of which the earthly pleasures and even the happiness and joys of the subtle and mental worlds are but poor, faint shadows.

The very first descent of divinity into the heart awakens love for God. When love for God comes, fear of God disappears. Love for God removes all fear and prepares the aspirant to be lost in Him. The intensity of their love unites the aspirants with God. They thus eventually get the supreme "I am God" state. Those who persist until the end get there. Those who get there are, however, very few; though many, without getting there, feel tempted to claim that they are God. To be an honest atheist is no fraud. But

to claim that one is God before attaining real unity with Him is definitely fraud.

There are two types who do not have any use for religion: the materialist, and the one who is Self-realized. There are two who are indifferent to money: the brute and the one who is Self-realized. There are two who are free from lust: the child and the one who has attained Truth. Though the Truth-realized person is, in the above respects, like the materialist, the brute, and the child, he stands completely apart from all these. He has attained unity with the infinite existence of God, while the others have not.

The Master enjoys the *Madhur Bhava* at will—that is, the sweet mood of Love, where duality is illumined by the realization of the immensity of the One in the duality. Or he enjoys the *Maha Bhava*, or the vast consciousness of unlimited Oneness, which has no room at all for any apprehension of manyness. *Maha Bhava*, or the vast consciousness of unlimited Oneness, is much rarer than *Madhur Bhava*. But the Master can enjoy it even when he is engaged in acts like eating, talking and so on. *Madhur Bhava* can be communicated by imparting suitable spiritual impressions to the disciple. But *Maha Bhava*, which is essentially beyond all impressions, is incommunicable. In the ripeness of time, it dawns from within.

Miracles

The powers which the yogis use are based upon an energy which is comparable to electricity, though it is different from and much more powerful than electricity, which is under the control of scientists. However, for the purposes of intellectual explanation, we might look upon that energy as a sort of 'electricity', which is in the third layer of the world and is inexhaustible. By means of breath control and other practices, the yogis combine this inexhaustible source of cosmic energy or 'electricity' with the energy or 'electricity' in the third layer of their own body. And this combination enables them to perform many miracles.

After combining the two stores of energy or 'electricity', the yogis have merely to think to obtain the desired result. Any desire which they bring into their mind finds its immediate fulfillment. They can read the past and the future. They can read the minds of others. They can see or hear happenings from any distance, e.g. they can see from America what one is doing in India. They can split up stones into pieces. They can even raise the dead. As compared with the limited powers of human beings, these powers are indeed very great. But they have nothing to do with the Truth or with true spirituality. The Truth is far beyond the exercise of such powers.

The yogi can make things appear entirely different to you from what they really are. It is like putting colored glasses on your

eyes, so that a thing which in fact is white, appears to you to have the color of the glasses you are wearing. There can be no spiritual advantage in being shown a white thing as colored. The colored as well as the original white thing are both false. They are both parts of a waking dream. A Perfect Master would never bother to exchange one illusion for another. He would on the contrary show the illusory nature of the entire world and would exhibit the Truth in its bareness and unqualified simplicity.

In the same way, a juggler or a magician may, before your eyes, convert a cardboard into a bottle. But what does it avail you to see the transformation, since the cardboard as well as the bottle are both false? It may appear anyway and anything to the eye; but it is false. It cannot reveal to you the unchangeable Truth. Such miracles may serve the purpose of attracting the multitude and winning the admiration of the world; but the Perfect Master is not interested in any of these things. He is interested in making you realize that everything except God is just illusion; and this knowledge cannot be given by any yogic powers.

Suppose a man wants to know what is happening in a distant city. He will have to go there personally, if necessary even on foot, to find out for himself. The yogi is able to get there in his higher body in no time and find out what is happening there. But he has to go there. This is like a person who would go to the spot in a motor car much more quickly than a person who goes there on feet. The difference between the one in a car and the one on foot is only of degree. Both have to go, and both take what they see to be real. But they have not found the Reality. They have looked upon their waking dream as giving them substance.

What they all 'find' after going to the distant city is only a part of the Great Illusion. The Perfect Master is concerned only with taking the mind away from the Great Illusion by means of which the multitudinous things of this world appear to exist, though in fact, what really exists is only the invisible Reality known as Self or God.

The powers of the yogis, great as they are, are nothing compared with the infinite powers which one gets upon union with God. God may be compared to the Sun. The yogis are nearer to

this Sun than ordinary persons and they can therefore attract to themselves some rays of this Sun.

These rays become their diverse occult powers. But in order to use these powers, the yogis have to manipulate these rays and make efforts; the miracles of the yogis are wrought laboriously. But the miracles performed by the Perfect Master involve no such effort—the Perfect Master is one with the Sun itself and all his miracles are effortless. The Perfect Master has the authority to use the Infinite Power of God with whom he has established union. But he rarely uses his power. When he does use it, it is only for the spiritual purpose of leading the bound souls to God or Truth.

The Perfect Master can not only show you what God is, but he can also lead you to the Goal of attaining complete Union with Him. But this does not mean that the seeker should, time and again, pester the Master with his pressing demand, "Show God to me!" The desire to see God and realize Him is all right. But to imagine that God can be shown or seen like some object in the cinema is to falsify the real search. You cannot see God without rising to the necessary mental state. The nothingness and emptiness of the gross world has to be thoroughly realized before one can get a glimpse into the nature of God. There is absolutely no use in putting the cart before the horse. The immediate objective of the aspirant should be to struggle with those psychic limitations which bind him to the false. God will automatically make His appearance when the blinders—which man has fastened upon his own mind—are removed.

In fact, God is not very far at all from the seeker. Nor is it really very difficult to see Him. He is like the Sun, which is always shining right above your own head. But you yourself have held on your head the umbrella of your variegated mental impressions, which hide Him from your view. You have only to remove the umbrella, and the Sun is already there for you to see. He doesn't have to be brought from anywhere. But such a tiny and trivial thing like an umbrella can deprive you of the sight of such a stupendous fact as the Sun. Impressions are like this umbrella. Though they might seem to be insignificant in themselves, they create a curtain between you and God. The Perfect Master helps you to remove these impressions; and when this curtain is removed, you are face to face with God as Truth.

It is never possible to give a purely intellectual proof for the existence of God. Any arguments which appeal merely to the intellect will have a tendency to induce belief in God. But they can never be absolutely convincing. How can that which is really above the intellect be brought within the domain of the intellect? To ask for a purely intellectual proof for the existence of God is like asking for the privilege of being able to see with the ears. Ears can only hear. They cannot see. In order to be able to see, you have to make use of your eyes. If you close your eyes tightly and clamor that your ears may be given the sight of things, how can anyone help you in the fulfillment of such an absurd demand? And yet, it is this very absurdity in which the so-called 'educated' get trapped. They want an intellectual proof for God as if God could be known through the use of bare intellect, howsoever keen.

The fact is that these intellectuals are not at all interested in God. They are only keen about argument and their own vanity. If they really wanted to know God, they would pay the price for that knowledge. They would forthwith renounce the things that prevent them from seeing God. They would begin by being humble and selfless and loving. And they would start attaining complete purity of heart. This will lead them on to God more surely than any amount of barren argumentation.

People are not willing to part with their worldly attachments even for the sake of seeing God. They would risk their very lives and even die a brave death for securing the objects of their attachment. But they find it difficult to fast even for two days for the sake of spiritual advancement. This shows the firm grip which ignorance has on them. God will surely reveal Himself to those who are willing to welcome suffering for His sake. They have to be staunch in their determination. God will certainly come to those who have the courage to burn up all desires. Worldly attachments and entanglements may be carried on forever without leading you anywhere. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the seeker to be aloof from the allurements of this world. That is why the Masters of all times have, like Jesus, called: "Sell all and follow me."

When anyone wants an intellectual proof of God, what is sometimes desired is the performance of some miracle, giving a rude shock to the complacency of the ordinary man who is immersed in the world and treats it as the ultimate and unchallengeable reality.

But God is not to be confused with the supernatural world or its happenings. What miracles can prove is that there is something beyond the things in which the man of the world is fully engrossed. But they cannot bring him the vision of God. From unreality he moves on to another unreality only to be caught up again in the next illusion. And he will be nowhere nearer the Truth. The Perfect Masters have always treated the demand for miracles with disdain. They know the real goal of life and they are bent upon taking the world to that goal, instead of catering to the idle curiosity of the worldly minded. They wish to enlighten humanity, not to astound it or stupefy it. If and when they perform miracles, it is always for leading men on the spiritual Path. It is never for self-display. The only miracle which for them is really worth doing is the miracle of making man realize that he actually is the Truth.

Reclaiming

Lost

Wayfarers

Some Yogis seek to realize the Self by trying to be forgetful of the gross universe. Instead of eliminating the binding impressionary dispositions, which twist and goad their mind, they often end by adding new impressionary dispositions of the inner planes. It is very rare for a Yogi to go beyond the fourth plane, where the greater supernatural powers come and often retard the progress of the spiritual pilgrim.

The Perfect Masters, therefore, effect the undoing of the impressionary dispositions by safe stages. In order to avoid the heaping up of an unmanageable load of impressions, the Masters generally isolate the disciples, sometimes even prohibiting them to eat at the hands of others. The food that a man eats brings with it the impressionary tendencies of the person who gives it. The Master not only stops the further accumulation of binding tendencies, but changes the entire outlook of his consciousness, directing it by stages from the gross to the subtle, from the subtle to the mental and from the mental to the Divine Sphere of existence.

Some wayfarers on the Path develop on the line of '*Masts*.' The *Mast* or the God-intoxicated person, who loses his gross consciousness of the body or the world, often behaves like a person who is stark mad. He may, like mad persons, throw stones or filth at others or abuse and bite them. Yet, he is essentially different from mad persons, since all that he does has a radically different motivation and effect. The actions of mad persons can be distinguished

from the actions of real *Masts* even as they can be distinguished from those of a drunkard. The difference between a drunkard and the mad person is that, while the drunkard always totters while walking, the mad person does not so totter. It is by means of this single movement that a mad person can be easily distinguished from a drunkard.

In the same manner, there are some outward signs by means of which it is possible to distinguish between the real *Masts* and the mad persons, though in many respects the *Masts* behave like mad persons. The *Mast* might sometimes behave like a mad person or like a child or a ghost. But his action is never meaningless. It is always charged with some deep spiritual import; and almost always it hits its target unflinching and effectively. But though the state of the *Mast* is often very exalted and his powers great, he often gets dazed and loses his balance. He then needs the care and help of a Perfect Master, as much as and sometimes even more than ordinary seekers.

In most *Masts*, the heart is all right, filled with divine love. But the mentality is completely undermined, with the result that they are incapable of rendering any useful service to others on the Path. They also get stuck on the Path for lack of any inward steering. In such cases, the Master fills the *Mast* with mentality, rendering him susceptible and responsive to environmental reactions, and thus giving him an opportunity to advance further through discriminative acts of service to less advanced persons. He has to come down in order to go higher up; and he could not have come down without the help of the Master.

Some Yogis can perform miracles like creating gold out of lead or iron. Others can even shake the whole world, if they want it. But they are not necessarily perfect. Such Yogis, though really far from perfection, get caught up in their own unmanageable powers. They become like a deer for a real Master to hunt. The Master of perfection, as it were, hunts them in the woods in which they roam about missing their way and whiling away their time in ignorant pursuits. And when the hunted ones pray for the right Path, the Master shows it to them, thus saving them from rounds and rounds of lives, which they would otherwise require to arrive at the further stages of the inner Path. The Master can subdue the

Yogis into the right course, because his powers, unlike the powers of the Yogis, are unlimited, though he seldom uses them. He is interested not in the exercise of powers, but in the imparting of spiritual knowledge, which is far more difficult and is the only thing of real value.

There was a Yogi who acquired great occult powers. One day he went to a town and offered food out of a small bowl to the inhabitants.

Thousands and thousands of persons partook of the rice given from his small bowl. But the bowl never got emptied. And those who were amazed at his extraordinary powers began to admire and follow him. As this Yogi was thus exploiting the people through his miraculous powers, a Perfect Master approached him and begged of food from his well-renowned bowl. Now the Yogi, according to his practice, was determined to give food to this newcomer until he was satisfied. But as he went on giving food the Master went on eating, never coming to a stop, until at last the Yogi got tired of giving. The Yogi then intuitively knew that he was now face to face with one who was spiritually much greater than himself. And as soon as he realized this, he was humbled and surrendered himself to the Master, beseeching him to give him the true spiritual light. It was through his humility that he won the redeeming grace of the Master.

The

Preparation

For real spiritual preparation, the disciple has to be ready for all eventualities. He must learn to adjust himself to any type of circumstances, favorable or otherwise. Others may not pay any heed to him or may treat him contemptuously or even slander and kick him in the wrath of reckless folly that does not stop to understand. But he remains unmoved by all this; and he resists the onslaughts of worldly pride by his unyielding humility. He is like a football ready to be kicked by all. The very kicks he courageously accepts from others raise him higher and higher, as in the case of the football. For him, the real failure lies in betraying the truth, and not in accepting worldly defeat or ill-treatment or ill-fame. Such dogged loyalty to the truth of his search leads him on to the higher sphere of the unlimited divine life of real fulfillment. Real humility is immense strength and not weakness. It disarms the prowess of arrogance and ultimately conquers it. It must and always will prevail as against the threatening forces of ignorant pride. The disciple prepares himself and others through unassumed humility and untiring adaptability without being disgruntled under the severest of ordeals.

The Master may test the faith and surrenderance of His disciple through ordeals and trails which only the true lovers can face. This may be brought out by means of the story of Sultan Muhamood. All the courtiers of the Durbar pretended that their obedience to the Shah was unquestioning. They made much ado

about their assumed loyalty. But the Shah knew better. He loved Ayaz, one of his slaves, who, though unassuming, had real unswerving faith in the Shah. The test was dexterously planned by the Shah himself. The Shah called all those claiming to have faith in him to his Durbar. Placing the most precious diamond in his crown on the table, he asked his Vazir to break it into pieces. The Vazir knew how the diamond had been won through many ceaseless wars in which he himself had a share. He argued that it would be unwise to break the pride of that entire kingdom, since the very prestige of the royal dynasty depended on the possession of that diamond. Then the Shah asked other courtiers to break that diamond. But all of them refused to break it and argued that such a suicidal act would completely undo the tremendous sacrifices of millions of people killed in securing it for the kingdom. The Shah then asked Ayaz to break it. Without any argument or hesitation, Ayaz forthwith broke that most precious diamond which was being coveted by all the other kings of the world.

All the courtiers got annoyed at this act of sheer rashness. They began to ask Ayaz why, instead of giving wise counsel to the Sultan, he rushed into that deed of unfathomable folly. Ayaz then, with all the humility of the slave, replied, "It is not for me to question why, when an order is given by the Shah himself. He must have very sound reasons for asking us to break this diamond. It would be sheer impudence on my part to ask him to explain the reasons. However, I frankly think that whatever has been done here today is for the real good and happiness of the people of our kingdom. The precious diamond, coveted by all the other neighboring kingdoms, was sure to invite invasions from outside, thus breaking the peace of the land forever. I would any day shatter to pieces a precious stone rather than break the peace of our beloved land."

The Shah then explained why he loved Ayaz more than himself, saying, "I cannot escape being a slave of my own slave. He has complete faith in me; and his submissiveness is unrestrained by any other considerations." What the Shah said about Ayaz is applicable to the Master and his disciple. When the faith and the surrenderance of a disciple are unrestrained and complete, the Master has to do his duty towards him. He cannot escape it even if the disciple is spiritually unprepared.

Special Train

of the

Master

If you want to go to a distant place and have no intention of getting off in between, you will naturally take the quickest train to that destination. The masses who follow rites and rituals to attain God as Truth are, as it were, on the freight train, which is indefinitely detained at various stations. Those who sincerely take some name of God with devotion and dedicate their life to the service of humanity are, as it were, in an ordinary train, which stops at every station according to the scheduled timetable. But those who seek the company of the Truth-realized Master and carry out his orders in full surrenderance and faith are, as it were, in a special train, which will take the aspirant to the Goal in the shortest possible time without any halts at the intermediate stations.

God is the eternal fountain of life and power. Different souls in the world share this life and power in varying degrees according to their spiritual proximity to God. The nearer one is to God or Truth, the less separated does one feel, and the greater is one's life and power. Those who become one with God are the infinite reservoir of all power, life, wisdom and bliss. But others also share all these in a limited degree, according to their station in the universe. If the God-realized Master is compared to the main power-house where electricity is generated, other souls may be compared to sub-power houses or storage batteries, which receive and conserve a limited degree of electricity and also can use it within the limits of their respective capacities.

The mind cannot be turned to the Truth by sheer force. In the beginning it has to be coaxed and won over from its usual rambles, just in the same way as it is necessary to coax children in order to induce them to give up their play and take to study. The Master wins over the aspirant to the Truth with infinite dexterity. When the mind is won over to the Truth, all the senses automatically follow. If the senses are like soldiers, the mind is like their commander. When the senses retire from their distracting activities, it is easy for the ego-mind to consume itself in the blazing fire of Divine Love.

One of the ways by which the Master takes the aspirant to this goal is initiating him into spiritually enlightened service. The type of service which liberates consciousness from its bondage is very rare. Many worldly people, who seem to have devoted their lives to the service of humanity, are actually serving their desires. They are really trying to achieve greatness or fame. Even when service is rendered with the sole idea of conferring some benefit upon others, the veil of duality is still there. In spiritual service, there is no room for obliging anyone. On the contrary, the person who renders spiritual service should feel that he is himself being obliged by being given the opportunity to serve. Even this phase, however, has in it a shadow of slight illusion, for the thought of separateness from those who are served is still there, though not in an aggravated or aggressive form. In perfect service, there is no thought of any separateness between the one who serves and the one who is being served. But such service is possible only for the God-Man.

Ordinarily, the universal mind of the Master is linked up both with the world and with God. It is ceaselessly active even without the interruptions of sleep, which bring psycho-physical rest to ordinary persons. If the Master wants to have rest from his work, he has to get away from the world. But as soon as he does this his universal mind has a tendency to get merged in the Truth. The link with the world is in danger of being snapped altogether. This difficulty is usually surmounted by taking recourse to physical activity like climbing mountains or running or playing. Such physical activity gives him the much needed interval of psychic rest or relaxation without snapping his link with the world.

It is for the Master to take the disciple to the heights of attainment when he is willing to tread the Path. But the choice of whether or not he is going to tread the Path rests with the disciple. It is for the Master to give the clarion call of "Awake! Arise or remain fallen forever!" and to precipitate the awareness of the urgent need for spiritual advancement. It is for the disciple to pay heed to his clarion call and gird up his loins for treading the arduous spiritual path which is far from being a bed of roses.

The spiritual line requires a readiness to face the severest of difficulties. It requires an iron will and a heart which does not melt at the sight of worldly scenes, but which remains firm on the Path. One yogi actually saw his wife jumping from the gallery to the floor and dying for him, but he remained unmoved by the attractions of Maya and did not stop even to look at her. He steadied his mind only in his Master's command that he was to give up everything and follow him. The Path often calls for such resoluteness. The disciple must be able to face the blame or the ridicule of the world as if it were only the chirping of birds. He should be able to stick to his considered decision in the face of all opposition.

Once the disciple makes up his mind to stick to his Master and follow him, he should not allow any other worldly considerations to derail him from his determination. The Master rarely gives a disciple an order to give up everything and follow him. He does so where the disciple happens to be a member of his Circle owing to his long connection with him through past lives. Even if such a member of his Circle happens to be at the other end of the globe, the Master has his eye on him.

Other friends of such a disciple might want to drag him back to the material life of self and desires. But the Master draws him to the freedom of the Truth, sometimes apparently against his very wishes and quite regardless of whether he happens at that time to be a great sinner.

In such cases, the fact often is that the Higher Self of the disciple has already made its decision to attain the Truth, though the temporary surging up of desires sometimes makes him feel that he is not keen about it. His having been accepted by his Master at his own request, and on his voluntarily surrendering, imposes upon the Master an inescapable duty to save him from a further

life of enslavement and ultimately to give him spiritual perfection.

But this is the privilege only of those who, through their past connections, have entered the circle of the Master. With regard to the masses, who constitute millions, the attitude of the Master is exactly the reverse. They often judge themselves to be ready for the highest spiritual attainment. They come to the Master with sincere prayers to be taken up and relieved of their worldly responsibilities and sufferings. They want to take to the spiritual line of renunciation and advance in it. Yet in spite of their loud clamoring and pressing requests, the Master makes them live in the world and stand the hardest of tests for years and sometimes for several lives. Though they are thus made to stand and wait, they acquire little by little the right to enter the circle of the Master if they faithfully carry out his directions in the midst of their worldly contexts in which their past karma happens to have placed them.

The masses are given guidance and are then left to work out their own destiny by stages until they really earn the right of being accepted into the circle of the Master. But the members of the Circle, on the other hand, are actually out of their limiting contexts and even in the face of their apparent unpreparedness for spiritual life, they are taken through the Path. Of course the Master never draws anyone by physical or mental force. But he simply adjusts his inner working in such a manner that the disciple gets drawn to the Path of Truth.

When the Disciple is thus drawn on the Path, he has to stand firmly by the Truth and his Master instead of allowing himself to waver and change like a weathercock. He must not leave the Path of his choice even against great odds. He must be like a rock, unaffected by the raining of hardships of physical, financial, mental or emotional difficulties. He, however, is not merely expected to be firm on the path. The Master gives him the necessary strength and is always behind him with all the infinite powers attendant upon his spiritual perfection.

The Master voluntarily chooses to come to the world for its upliftment, in spite of all its painful shortcomings and perversities. He may choose to give the benefit of his vision and powers to the worst of sinners. And when such a sinner sincerely makes the most of this benefit, he can in due time surpass even

the best of saints who have not the humility to surrender themselves to a Truth-realized Master in spite of their plodding on the Path by the momentum of their temperament. Those who have the advantage of being taken up by the Master do not have to follow different spiritual Paths or Yoga in their separateness. All of them get beautifully welded into one without any need for special efforts.

In sincere surrenderance to the Master, the disciple comes very near to the stopping of the mind, which is the object of most yogic processes. In thinking day and night of the Master, the disciple nearly achieves the ultimate objective of the diverse practices of meditation and concentration. By putting the work of the Master above his own personal needs, he achieves the aim of all renunciation. In obeying the Master at any cost and serving him selflessly, he nearly arrives at the culmination of the Path of Action. In understanding the Master as he is, he comes to the end of the Path of knowledge. And in loving the Master above everything else, he becomes one with him as Truth and thus attains Godhood, which is the ultimate goal of all search and endeavor. When the time is ripe, the realization of divinity comes inevitably through the Master. It is never given before the time is ripe: but it is also never held up even for a split second after the time is ripe.

The **Truth-Individual**

The Eternal Truth has three aspects—*Dnyana* or knowledge, *Shakti* or power, and *Ananda* or bliss. The *Sakshatkara* or realization of this three-fold divinity or Truth is the target of the seeker. Persons who are on the path of action become *Mahatmas* and get its eternal power. Those who seek wisdom get its eternal knowledge. Those who take to the path of *Prema* or love get its eternal joy. But at the end of the path, all have to come to the indivisible completeness of the Truth, in all its aspects, though their paths might have been different. The one who arrives at the goal is the *Truth-Individual*.

The path of love is the quickest. The love awakened in the aspirant may be likened to the physical appetite. The appetite is followed by thoughts of food and then successively by striving for food, getting the help of a cook, and lastly, the fulfillment of eating the food. So spiritual love is followed by thoughts of God, which then successively result in longing for God, getting the help of the Truth-Individual and lastly in the realization of God. This is the inheriting of the eternal bliss. It is the fulfillment of all other minor or major ecstasies of the path.

The *Prema-yoga* or the path of love leaves no room for halting or resting in the middle of the sojourn. It takes the aspirant inevitably to the Truth-Individual and through him to the Truth itself. This love makes one forget oneself and the world, bringing in its wake the ascending ecstasies attendant upon the intoxicating glimpses of the Divine Being. In Hafiz and other Sufi poets, it is likened to wine. Divine Love and wine are both often alien to the established creeds of religion. The former is beyond the creeds; and the latter is forbidden by them. Both are intoxicating and make

man forgetful. But while wine leads to self-oblivion, Divine Love leads to self-knowledge.

The Truth-Individual sees himself in everyone. He dwells in non-duality. The same water, when placed in different-colored bottles, appears to have different colors—green in one, yellow in the other, red in the third. The difference is only in apparent colors; but the water is the same. So, in diverse and variegated forms, the same Self is seen by the one who knows the Truth. A child in its ignorance may be impelled to quarrel with its own image in the mirror. But the grownup person knows that it is his own image. He has no such binding impulse. Similarly, the Master is free from the binding impulsions of duality.

Slowly and gradually, the Master takes his disciples to the illimitable Truth. If there is too much hurry, there is the risk of the disciple dropping his physical body or of being a *majzooob*; for, in that case, his ego-mind gets annihilated prematurely. Every individual requires separate and individual treatment, just as the different parts of the body, when out of order, require specific treatment according to the nature of their disorder. Specific treatment enables the different parts to be restored to their normal and healthy functioning. Then they can all work in perfect harmony for a common purpose. All individuals are, as it were, parts of the universal life of Truth and each requires special treatment.

In the worldly stages of established religions, as well as in the earlier stages of the inner path, there are diverse, helpful rules according to the approach taken (*Margo, Talim* or *Rah*). But the aspirant should know from the beginning that in the final illumination there are no rules at all. Nor can the final illumination be brought about by the observance of any rules. It has to be entirely left to the grace of the Truth-realized Master. The mind of the accepted disciple is like a wheel, turning most of the time in only one direction. It is unwinding the acquired impressions. But the mind of others, seeking without a Master, is like the balance-wheel of a watch. As a rule, it moves in both directions. It sometimes unwinds the impressions, but often it also winds them up.

It is, however, very rare for the mind of man to be finally turned away from the allurements of the world. In order to awaken you

from a smooth and pleasant dream, some frightening thing like a tiger has to appear in the dream itself. In the same way, some ghastly and unwelcome thing has to occur in the life of those immersed in the world, if they are to get disillusioned and reverse the direction of their mind. Such reversal of direction first expresses itself through increasing detachment from the body.

The physical body is nothing but the food which man eats. The body assimilates that portion of the food which is useful for body-building; and it throws out that portion which is useless. What is thrown out is as much food as what is assimilated. If man is so supremely indifferent to the eliminated refuse, why should he not have the same detachment to the assimilated food which becomes his body? Why should he shed tears when, after death, the body itself has to be thrown away?

After all, the body itself is a sort of food for the soul, when it serves some purpose of the soul. But when it is rendered useless, it is dropped by the soul as something which no longer serves any of its purposes. There is absolutely no point in lamenting the loss of the physical body, no matter whether we ourselves have lost our body or others have lost theirs. When one body is dropped, the soul can take up another body when it needs one. As long as food advances the health of the body, it is welcome. But if it is poisoned and becomes a danger to the body, it is rightly shunned. As long as the body is useful for the spirit, there is some meaning in attaching importance to it. But if it cannot serve that purpose, it is sheer ignorance and weakness to lament its loss.

The body is perishable by the unalterable law of nature. Why weep and worry at the time of its dissolution? The soul remains untouched by death. You are the soul, not the body. However, it is a mistake to belittle the physical body; and it is the greatest spiritual blunder to try to put an end to it. It is only in the physical body that the soul has any chance of attaining God-realization. Even the *Devas* long to get a physical form on earth. It is a sheer act of folly not to take proper care of the body; or to put an end to it for flimsy troubles and supposed sufferings. But while it is right to take care of the body, it is wrong to be attached to it, to pamper it or be dominated by it.

When one turns his back to the world, and his face to God, he may hear sweet melodies, smell fragrances or see light-globes.

In the light-globe he generally sees the figure of his Master, revealing him in his resplendent divine glory and perfection. The exquisite brilliance and splendor of such light-globes is so enchanting and bewildering that the aspirant seeks nothing else and is completely absorbed in gazing fixedly at them. This *Noor* or light-globe is a real object. It is no dream or hallucination. But it is only the first stage of a long path. It should not be mistaken for the goal, which is to become the shoreless and formless ocean of Truth.

Look at your own shadow. It seems so near to you. It is adjoining you. But you cannot grasp it or overtake it in a race. You may follow your shadow till doomsday, but it will still evade you and be a bit ahead of you. Seeking God through the ego-mind is like trying to go ahead of your own shadow. It cannot be done, not because God is in any way far off, but because you can never get to the Real through the false. God is nearer to you than your own shadow. In fact, He is not only within you but is your very Self. But you can never get at Him, for you seek Him through the ego-mind which converts Him into a will-o'-the-wisp. It is no easy thing to realize God, as some seem to think. The ego-mind must meet actual death if God is to be seen and realized.

A person who is bound in the illusion of the world is like gold mixed up with ore. As he turns away from the world, the impurities in him gradually get eliminated until at last he becomes like pure gold without the ore. Now, when he comes back to the world, it is like consciously accepting the dross. That is why he suffers. But he knows that he is really gold and not dross. This knowledge sustains him. When his work in the world is over, he again goes to the state of illimitable purity. And even during his work he never allows the dross to be anything except his superficial covering, which he takes on and off at will, without getting mixed up with it. The really difficult process is the first ascent, during which the gold of self is separated from the alloy of illusion.

Even a person who is stationed on the sixth plane is still in illusion. One who is on the sixth plane experiences that everything proceeds from God (*Hameh Az Oost*), and also that God is everything (*Hameh Oost*). This is the direct vision and experience of *Valis* who see the universe as emanating from God Himself. But this experience that God is everything must not be mixed up with the supreme experience, "I-am-God." This supreme experience can

come only when the mind is dropped. Just as the knowledge given by the physical senses is multifarious, the knowledge given by the supersensory perceptions and revelations can also be multifarious. But in order to attain the Truth, all these props and pegs of supersensory perceptions have, like ordinary perceptions of the physical senses, to be cast off at the threshold of the final merging of the soul into the Infinite. The true experience of God comes only when man and God get united so completely that there is no possibility of any demarcation, far less of actual division.

In the final stages of the ascent, when the mind is metamorphosed into the Truth, the general rule is that all the three worlds (the gross, the subtle, and the mental) disappear from the range of consciousness. In very few cases, Truth-realization can come concurrently with the soul's having the experience of the threefold world. The experience of the threefold world in such extremely rare cases becomes itself, as it were, the receptacle of the "I-am-all" consciousness of Truth-realization. If the Truth-Individual has had a wide range of world-consciousness prior to his realization, he wields greater hold upon the relativities within the illusory existence than if he has had a narrower range of world-consciousness. He also enjoys greater authority and has for the use of his power the entire expanse of the threefold world, which becomes the field of his divine working. However, these are only rare and exceptional cases. Here, it is out of the material of the individual's world-experiences that there precipitously emerges the transcendent experiences of the illimitable Truth, the *non-dual* being the culmination of *understood duality*.

But as a general rule, before Truth-realization there is a complete disappearance of the consciousness of all the three worlds. With the dissolution of the ego-mind, consciousness is held up in nothingness, with the result that the limited ego has no successor. But when the Truth which is realized in this nothing-consciousness begins to assert itself, it comes as a state of "I-am-God." In the merging, the soul is bereft of all individuality; but in the assertion, it is bestowed with divine and unlimited Truth-Individuality. The Incarnated Truth gets full control over the universal body (sometimes called *Virat Swarupa*), by means of which the Master can appear in his physical body at different places at one and the same time in instantaneous response to any

agonizing calls from the devotees of God. This body does not go into operation except in very special circumstances.

It is no pleasant progress for the Truth-Individual to come down after attaining Godhood. He is always reluctant to descend into the illusion of duality again. It means so much sacrifice on his part and so much suffering. But sometimes he does come, his sole object being to fulfill the spiritual mission of saving other individuals. His mission takes concrete shape according to the times and the circumstances in which he takes his descent. He himself has nothing to gain by descending from the shoreless ocean of Truth into the relativities of illusory existence. But in such descent he also does not in any way lose his spiritual attainment. He now combines in himself both types of knowledge, *viz.*, the knowledge of oneness and the knowledge of relativities.

The Truth-Individual who descends into the world of illusory duality is referred to as *Qutub*, which literally means "the center." The Perfect Master becomes the center of the universe. He finds himself as the only absolute and changeless point around which the entire universe is constantly turning. The universe is like the grinding mill; and the Truth-realized Master is like its central pin. As Kabir has stated, none can escape the eternal crushing that goes on in this grinding mill of the universe. Only the Master is unscathed by the happenings of the universe, though he is in its very center. Each Truth-Individual is in the center, but the center is only one. Each has a distinct identity (*Husti*) of his own. This core of identity becomes the nucleus of affirmative divine individuality of the Truth-Incarnate, without blurring or limiting his oneness with the all-inclusive Truth.

The Work ***of the*** **Divine Hierarchy**

The whole universe becomes the body of the Truth-realized Master. Others who do not know his real seat or functioning, may falsely identify him with his physical body, which they see in front of them with physical eyes. This physical body is only one among the innumerable bodies in which he knows himself as dwelling. His link with this particular body is in no way greater than with other existent bodies in the universe. The Perfect Masters live in all and feel equally for all. They can therefore coordinate all Divine Work of the Spiritual Hierarchy with wisdom and justice.

It is important to understand how the Universal Body of the Masters stands in relation to other bodies. The gross body is a sort of reflection of the subtle body. It is the exact counterpart of the subtle body. Or we might say that the subtle is a sort of gaseous impression of the gross. Such impression is in a very fine form in the mental body or the mind. The mental body is like a brilliant spark. When the souls, who have attained the supramental Truth, come back, they assume the Universal Mind, which has as its medium the Universal Body. Krishna showed this Universal Body to Arjuna. The Universal Body, sometimes called *Mahakarana Sharira*, is thinner than every other thing. It includes and embraces all the existing bodies and pervades the Universe.

The Universal Body of the Master actually includes, in fact,

all worlds and the whole creation. They are all in him. They are all within each soul; but each soul is not conscious of this because of ignorance. It is difficult to believe that huge mountains and forests and towns and even earths and worlds are within, but it is exactly so. The physical eye, which sees all these huge things, is small, yet, it sees them. It does not require huge eyes to see a huge mountain. The reason is that though the eye is small the soul that sees is greater and vaster than all the things which it sees. In fact, it is so great that it includes them all in itself. This does not become clear until the inner mental eye, which really sees through the physical eyes, is inverted.

It is not the physical eye that really sees. It is the mental eye which sees through the physical eye. It is not the physical ear which hears. It is the mind which hears through the ears. This mind, which is most aptly linked to the eye, is ordinarily extrospective, looking outwards and getting bound up with the things that it sees, But when this mental eye is inverted, the universe disappears; and the mind itself becomes the Truth. If the Truth-Mind is again turned towards the universe, it knows itself as permeating and including within its universal body the whole universe.

Through the Universal Body, the Truth-realized Master actually finds himself in the minds and the bodies of everyone. It is no difficult task to raise the greatest of sinners to the level of the greatest of saints. The person who plays with the kite and makes it fly freely in the skies, has in his hands the controlling end of the string. He can bring the kite down or allow it to soar as high as he pleases. Likewise, the Perfect Master is in possession of all the controls of the spiritual evolution of everyone.

Suppose it pleases the Truth-realized Master to raise an ordinary person to complete consciousness of the first plane. All that he has to do is to use the infinite energy of the Universal Body and draw his subtle tendency towards the first plane. Such working upon a mind which is entangled in the gross world and freeing it from its cherished bonds, can in itself be no more pleasing than vivisection by a surgeon. The surgeon removes an inflamed appendix by cutting its attachments to adjacent portions. The process in itself can hardly be a pleasure for him. But he does his duty

with extreme patience and persistence, because he knows that it is necessary for the physical well-being of the patient. In the same way, the Master has to undertake the spiritual operation, when he uses his infinite skill, knowledge, power and patience disentangling a soul from its enmeshments. He can do so only because he is aware that what he does is for the real good and happiness of the soul on whom his grace has descended.

The ascending soul may experience much psychic agony. The Master is in sympathy with him and also knows himself as being in him; he cannot, therefore, himself escape the suffering involved in the ascent of the aspiring soul. But he is, in all that he does, sustained by his own infinite bliss of Truth-realization. It cannot remain in abeyance even for a moment. What he uses is his infinite knowledge and power and love. He does not use his bliss, which is his sustaining reservoir to fall back upon in all endeavors fraught with acute mental and spiritual suffering.

Though the Truth-realized Masters have at their disposal the infinite powers of the Universal body, they do not always perform miracles or take recourse to super-ordinary ways of action. The reason is that the law-makers cannot themselves be law-breakers. God has ordained certain laws for the universe. They are followed by the sun, moon and stars and everything that breathes. These laws are not binding for the God-realized ones. But they nevertheless respect and observe these God-ordained laws, because they have become one with God. In a sense, there is no such thing as a violation of any law. The so-called miracles are performed by using the hitherto unknown powers and forces which operate according to their own laws. The Masters do often perform miracles. But they do so strictly for spiritual purposes. And while doing so, they do not throw off the spiritual laws of the universe. They are above all laws. But even their super-ordinary achievements are according to the eternal Law of Truth.

The whole universe with all its laws is subject to the supreme Law of Truth. It is ever being administered impersonally as well as through the spiritual Hierarchy. To the superficial observer, it may seem that there is no reign of Truth in the universe. The truth does reign and reigns unceasingly and unfailingly. Even the insignificant business concerns and other private and public

institutions have their laws and cannot function without laws. Much more so is it true of the universe. This vast universe, with all the multitudinous occurrences within it, is subject to some self-justifying law. Sometimes, it does appear as if sincere toil is lost or the virtuous are condemned to suffering and the vicious are enthroned with power or endowed with success. But all this is either a fractional view of the realities or an illusion in the garb of judgment.

To one who can take a complete and unclouded view of events, the inexorable reign of Truth in all happenings, great or small, individual or collective, is a clear and unchallengeable fact. The reign of Truth may be described in different ways as the Law of God or the Law of Justice or the Law of Karma. It is the Law of Cause and Effect or the Law of Divine Love, according to the angle of vision or the limiting perspective given by the particular standpoint of the intellect. But the important fact is that whatever may be the manner in which this Law of Truth is apprehended by the intellect, it unchallengeably exists. It is a supreme and self-justifying power, that unfailingly and irresistibly reigns in the universe and it has no exceptions. All seers have announced the reign of this Law of Truth. It operates both impersonally and through the conscious working of the Divine Hierarchy of Masters and their agents.

Though dwelling in the universal mind with its seat as the universal body, the Truth-realized Masters do not neglect the coordinative and organized working required for the execution of the Divine Plan. Their plans for the world are made far in advance of the times, sometimes centuries before the time when they are intended to be executed. They dwell in eternity; and they have in their view, the past, the present and the future. They are the custodians of God's process of self-fulfillment working itself out through the march of the variegated incidents in time.

The cooperative and organized working of the Perfect Masters expresses itself through the functioning of the Spiritual Hierarchy. The Masters, being one with the supreme Godhead, convey the Divine Will and Impulse to the advanced souls, *Maha-Yogis* or *Pirs* of the mental world. The advanced souls catch the impulse originating

in the shoreless Truth and pass it on from the mental world to those who control the subtle world. In the gross world, it may manifest itself through many natural upheavals, e.g., earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, floods, changes in the structures of the ocean-bed. It may also manifest itself through the upheavals in the life of mankind (e.g., rise and downfall of empires, wars, epidemics, births, deaths, catastrophes and other major episodes in the history of humanity). All happenings in the history of humanity are subject to the Divine Plan, as released and implemented by the Perfect Masters through their Agents in the different worlds.

The causes of what becomes patently manifest in the gross world are to be found in the commotion in the subtle world. And the causes of the commotion in the subtle world are to be found in the directives that obtain from the mental world. And the origin of the directives of the mental world is seen as being none other than the Will of God, as released by the Masters who are consciously one with God. Thus the Masters are indirectly in charge of the execution of the Divine Plan. They make use of the infinite power and understanding to further that plan in all the three worlds. And their working gets particularly accelerated and coordinated during the Avataric Periods, when the Avatar as the inspiring force of the Divine Hierarchy, assumes the principal directive role in the divine task of giving a spiritual push to humanity.

Secrets of Divine Working

Life often presents enigmas which cannot be unraveled by ordinary persons. It seems to them to be full of questions which are unanswerable. Unrestrained chaos appears to be the law of the world; and there appears to be no justice or significance in the march of its events. Even those who believe in God get puzzled and waver in their faith. But it is only impatience and lack of true vision that are responsible for such an outlook. We embrace ignorance and we fail to see that whatever life brings is charged with great meaning. God's ways are always unchallengeable and irresistible though they might be mysterious and inscrutable. The secrets of His working in the world cannot be truly understood even by advanced souls.

This may be brought out by means of an anecdote of a great saint, who is very much respected up to this day in all quarters of the world. Once upon a time, this saint encountered an angel and requested him to be allowed to be with him in his wanderings on earth, so that he may understand something of the secret workings of God. The angel at once granted him permission to be with him and observe all his doings on earth. But he laid down his strict condition in the following words. "You are only to observe my doings (at any stage and in any way), without asking me the explanation for my actions. You would not be able to judge and understand God's ways. Even if you are not able to understand them, you must not ask me the why of all that you see me do, while you are with me." The saint promised that he would merely observe and that he would not pester him with any questions even if such questions arose in his mind. Only then was he allowed to follow the angel in his wanderings on earth.

Once they got into a boat to cross the sea. The boatman offered his services to them without charging them his usual fare; just because it pleased him to help them. When the boat was in the midst of the ocean, the angel took off one side-plank from the framework of the boat and threw it away in the water. The saint at once got worried and exclaimed, "Why are you damaging the boat? Shall we not all be drowned along with the boat?" The angel reminded him that he had already agreed not to ask him any questions whatsoever and asked him to remain quiet. After landing, they came upon an Arab youth. To the utter bewilderment of the saint, the angel at once killed the youth on the spot. The saint found it very difficult to remain quiet and asked him excitedly, "Why did you kill that growing life?" At this, the angel replied, "Did I not tell you that you would not be able to understand God's working? You must keep to your promise that you will not ask any questions." The saint realized that he had failed to fulfill the condition which he had accepted; and he wanted to be excused.

Then they both came to a village where they requested the villagers to give them some food. But the villagers only treated them contemptuously and drove them away without giving them alms. When they came to the outskirts of the village, they saw a dilapidated wall in ruins, which was intended to protect the village from the invasions of enemies. The angel went to the wall and repaired it, spending much of his valuable time. Again, the saint could not contain himself and asked, "Why did you repair that wall for the villagers who did not even give alms to us? You have done this labor of love for nothing. For so much labor in the village, we would easily have got sufficient remuneration to procure food and allay our hunger." To this, the angel replied, "You have again asked a question in spite of your having promised merely to observe and keep quiet. It is no use divulging the secrets of God's ways prematurely. It requires the greatness and patience of God to understand His working. You have tried to pry into God's secrets, which you must not divulge. It is now time for us to part. But never mind. Before we part, I will explain to you the reasons for my deeds. "

"The boatman is a poor but pious man. When I took away a side-plank of the boat from a prominent place in its framework, I knew that a king of robbers was approaching in that direction. This

robber-king was collecting new and efficient boats to carry on his plunders and whenever he saw a good boat, he would snatch it away from the owners. However, he left untouched any boats which were in a broken and dilapidated condition. I took away a huge side-plank in order that the boat may look uninviting. Otherwise, the pious and poor boatman would be relieved of the only means of his livelihood. Now the Arab youth whom I killed was notorious and vicious. If he had lived, he would not only have perpetrated heinous crimes, but would surely have brought upon his pious parents an agonizing blasphemy, which they in no way merited. It was the will of divine providence that I should kill this Arab youth in order to save him from further sins and save his parents from the suffering of undeserved ill-fame. Now coming to the repairs of the wall. Be it known to you that one pious man has kept buried under it his valuable treasure with a desire that it may be of use to his sons. But, it is God's will that his sons must get that treasure when they grow up and that no one else should get it. If the dilapidated wall had further fallen, the treasure was in danger of being exposed to the sight of the wicked villagers, who would surely have taken possession of that treasure for themselves."

"Rest assured that all I did, which was your special privilege to observe, was not on my own accord or initiative but by the orders of our Divine Father whose real greatness even we as angels can only partially understand. God's ways might be inscrutable to the world, but His love for the world is unbounded and His justice is unfailing." With these words the angel parted, leaving the saint in deep contemplation. And the saint decided to live in complete resignation to God's will even when his limited intellect could not understand its real meaning.

Those with unclouded vision see the significance of all that life brings, in terms of the irresistible law of truth. They accept life as it is without bitterness or dissatisfaction. For them, the truth which they see and realize is enough. It stands fully self-justified. The Masters often are full of praise for the value and glory of that truth which they have realized. They say to the worldly-minded persons, "Truth alone has value. Leave all your false pursuits and attain the truth for yourself, even as we have realized it. There is no need for you to despair and no excuse for your postponing the effort to get at the truth."

This is just like some wealthy man who would press all poverty-stricken persons to earn money and encourage them by his own example. The praise which a wealthy man showers on wealth stands justified, because it actuates the poor people to become industrious and themselves become rich. Similarly the praise which the Master bestows upon the supreme value of God-realization also stands justified because it inspires and encourages others to seek and strive for the highest state. They praise God-realization to encourage others who are in bondage and not for themselves.

The world sometimes praises wealthy persons. But really speaking, it is not praising these persons, but only their wealth. In the same way, the world praises the Masters, who are stationed in the highest truth. But in doing so, the world is not really praising the Masters themselves, but only the truth which they have. There is no reason for the world to begrudge their praise. So far as the Masters themselves are concerned, they accept praise and blame with the same equanimity. For them, praise and blame are alike. They are supremely indifferent to both, being keen only about their divine duty of helping men to attain the truth by renouncing all cravings.

When the mind of man becomes conscious of its enslavement to the dispositional cravings to which it is subject, there arises a new force, the spiritual aspiration to realize that unlimited state which is like *conscious sleep*. Such aspiration is like a breeze that creates fire by union with other things. The generation of this dynamically creative energy is symbolized by the rising flame of consciousness. Therefore, worship and prayer are offered to fire in many religions. God as the Sun of Light can never be realized except through the aspirational fire of striving consciousness.

The Masters are constantly fanning the fire of spiritual aspiration. This is true worship and consecration of life to God as Truth. The divine task of the Masters is inscrutable for those who wish to understand it in terms of the world, because it directly counterbalances the dispositional inclinations by which the world is rigorously driven. Divine working sometimes appears ruthless and inexplicable. Its significance cannot be understood by those who are immersed in the world.

From Suffering to Peace

There is suffering in life. It can degrade or elevate man according to the manner in which he meets it and the use that he makes of it. If it is intelligently understood and dealt with radically and not merely superficially, it brings in its wake that understanding which leads to happiness. For, instead of merely complaining against suffering, man then turns to removing radically the deep-rooted ignorance which inevitably brings such suffering. When suffering leads to real and eternal happiness by inviting our attention to the Truth, it should not be avoided. The lessons which it brings should not be spurned. They should be squarely faced. You must summon courage to strike at the ignorance from which such suffering sprouts. It is to eliminate suffering that suffering has come.

People suffer because they are not satisfied. They want more and more. Ignorance gives rise to greed and vanity. If you want nothing you would not suffer. But you do want something or other. If you were really free from all want, you would not suffer even in the jaws of a lion.

The universal discontent in modern life is due to the great gulf between theory and practice, between the ideal and its realization in life. The spiritual and the material aspects of life are widely separated from each other. They ought to be inseparably united

with each other. There is no fundamental opposition between spirit and matter or between life and form. The apparent opposition is due to wrong thinking.

There is no escape from suffering as long as there is the limited ego. But the ego can be eliminated through love and service. The elimination of the ego leads to divine consciousness, in which there is freedom from suffering and joy. All moral and religious practices are intended to eliminate the ego. The more you live for others and the less for yourself, the less binding are your desires which lead you to unending suffering. The fewer desires you have, the thinner is your veil of ignorance, constituting the ego.

The root of all sufferings, individual or social, is self-interest. Eliminate self-interest and you will solve all problems and difficulties. Cults, creeds, dogmas, religious rites and ceremonies or lectures and sermons can never bring radical relief from suffering. If suffering and chaos are to disappear and real happiness and peace are to come in their place, there has to be selfless love and universal brotherhood.

Part 11

The Nature of the Soul

If you ask a man returning from a garden the question, "Where were you?", he would without any hesitation ordinarily reply, "I was in the garden." He sees himself as his own physical body and believes himself to be the body. He also sees the garden with the physical eyes and believes that the garden really exists. So, his reply about his whereabouts is quick and prompt. But though he is so definite about the truth of his reply, what he believes is nevertheless not ultimately true.

Man sees certain things and therefore concludes that they exist. But there are many things, which we do not see; and yet they are there with us, all the same. For example: anger, kindness, love, jealousy and so on, which exist in man, may not be visible to the physical eye; but they do exist. What man can see for himself with his own physical eyes is limited to the external physical body of another person. Even X-Ray exposure will only show the interior of the physical body and will not be able to show the mental thoughts, feelings and desires, which that person may be entertaining within himself. But though a man cannot see these mental realities, he can feel them, if he lives with that person for some days. After staying with that person for some time, he might be able to say that he is jealous or kind and so on. Ordinary man has some degree of power to understand these mental realities in others. But his arriving at that understanding is neither quick nor necessarily accurate or definite, as it often is mostly inferred from external physical things.

But it is possible to develop this understanding of mental realities in such a manner that it becomes quick, definite and accurate. It is possible for an advanced man to know directly and unmistakably the character and tendencies of another person merely by looking at him. But such power is very rare.

Ordinarily, a man gathers the knowledge of the minds of others gradually through association with them. And when we want to know anything about another person, we not only want to know about his physical body, but also about his mental life of thoughts, feelings and desires.

Man's curiosity is not restricted to the present. The mind often asks questions about the future, i.e. "What is going to happen tomorrow?" Future is a sealed book for the majority of persons. The forecasts do not interest the matter-of-fact persons who believe only their own eyes and none else. From morning till night nothing happens in their life to make them seek the higher perception, which has a direct access to the minds of others or which has a sure view of the future.

But even in the life of ordinary matter-of-fact persons, certain things happen and truly call forth interest and investigation, When a man sleeps, he stretches his body and closes his eyes. Slowly he forgets his surroundings completely. But he may begin to dream about wandering somewhere else. Some of these wanderings, which come as dreams, are not purely imaginative constructions of the mind. They often stand for actual journeys undertaken by the soul in the astral body. These wanderings in the astral body may be far and wide. In fact, there is no mountain which is too high, no sea which they cannot cross. These wanderings of the astral body are sometimes recollected in wakefulness as dreams. The astral body has a will and a power of its own. Actions, which are impossible for the gross body, are easily done in the astral body. After some time these wanderings might cease. Then deep sleep overtakes a person, who now experiences and feels nothing. It is necessary to pass through this complete self-forgetfulness in order to have rest and feel fresh for the next day.

It is ordinarily not possible for a person to experience waking

and dream at one and the same time. In the awake state he does ordinary things; but he does them with definiteness and full knowledge. In dreams, he may perform extraordinary things; but he does them with faint knowledge. Rarely, as in advanced persons, the wake and the dream are experienced simultaneously; and the extra-ordinary achievements of the astral body are clear and definite. In the same way, it is possible for very advanced persons to experience waking and sleep at one and the same time. If both are combined, a person can consciously experience in the awake state the unconditioned and unalloyed happiness of sound sleep.

Saints can help men to combine the awake state with the dream state on the one hand and with sleep on the other hand. The combinations can be effected also by yogic processes. But the state of full self-forgetfulness and complete bliss is a gift from a spiritual Master. The man who can combine dreaming and wakefulness is a bit more advanced than one who cannot combine these two states. But he is as much in the realm of imagination as the person of ordinary caliber.

But the man who can combine waking with sleeping attains the Truth and becomes the Truth. For him, the world does not exist; all that exists is God and nothing else. If you ask such a person, "Where were you?", he would truthfully answer, "I always was everywhere, am everywhere and shall always be everywhere." He knows himself to be other than his body and knows himself to be the Truth, which is everywhere. Therefore, from the point of view of his highest experience, he will, with unshakable certainty, affirm that he is and always was everywhere. It cannot even occur to him that he was in the garden, because he is not even conscious of his body. This knowledge and experience is very rare. But it is nevertheless the last truth of life.

As soon as the Self comes out of a tiny point, it descends in illusion and starts its journey in the world. Even advanced yogis, with all their supernatural powers, remain under the sway of illusion. They are bewildered and enraptured by the inner planes and become the victims of illusions. They are like ordinary persons, conscious of the shadow or reflection of the Self and not of the Self. But as soon as they disentangle themselves from the allurements of the planes, they return to and enter the initial tiny point

from which the soul emerged on its long journey. At this stage, the yogi experiences that the whole universe is coming out of himself. But as he succeeds in going beyond this point (often called the "Om" point) he becomes completely unconscious of the whole universe. For him, there are no forms, but only the Eternal Reality; and there are no fleeting joys or sorrows, but only the abiding bliss. This is the Truth or the import of sleeping wakefulness or waking sleep.

The process of getting bound and then unbound is charged with immense significance. The soul gets mixed up with the body and then gets caught up in it. The soul is like a parrot and the body is like a cage. When the parrot was outside the cage it was free. But it did not quite appreciate and enjoy freedom. When it goes through encagement it appreciates through agonizing bondage exactly what freedom is. And when it is set free again it really enjoys its freedom. The same thing happens to the soul when, through the grace of the Master, it is freed from the limiting nightmare that it is its own perishable body.

The soul is really God. To those, who are still caught up in the illusion that it is the body or the mind, this seems unthinkable. How can a person, who, for example, may be reclining in an easy chair, be regarded as being the same as a universal and almighty being? The soul cannot realize its own infinity as long as it is under the sway of ignorance. But nevertheless its being the same as God, is all the same, an irreversible fact. Just as the soul during deep sleep exists (though it does not in its usual way know itself as existing) the soul in reality is the same as God, though it is not conscious of this during the period of ignorance. The eyes of a person see many things, but not themselves, except in a reflection. In the same way, the soul is ordinarily conscious of the whole world, but not of itself (except through the illusory identification with the perishable body).

The soul, in its final self-knowledge of itself as Truth, knows that it is everything. Truth is everything. There is nothing but everything; therefore, everything includes nothing. This means that the illusion of the false world, though nothing in itself, can have its being, even as an illusion, only in the Truth and not outside it. The universe exists but has no reality, i.e. it exists in imagination, which is imposed upon the Truth.

Transcendent Understanding

Ordinary man identifies himself with his own physical body or form. This knowledge of one's self is different from the real understanding of one's true nature. The delusive self-knowledge which identifies the soul with the body presupposes full consciousness. Full consciousness is also absolutely indispensable for true understanding. When delusive self-knowledge is overcome, it becomes true understanding. But for both (delusive self-knowledge as well as true understanding), the ripeness of full consciousness, which is characteristic of human beings, is an inescapable prerequisite. True self-understanding is the goal of all creation throughout its pre-human and human evolutionary phases. But it is possible only at the human level and in the human form, because in the pre-human form, consciousness has not emerged in its fullness. In fact, life cannot fully understand itself even in its purely bodily aspects, unless there is in the human form an emergence of full consciousness along with all the evolutionary impressions and dispositions. But any man, irrespective of his spiritual status, can fully know himself in the purely bodily aspect and get falsely identified with the physical body, which is really only a vehicle of the Soul.

The knowledge which consciousness can yield in any particular form is circumscribed by the psychic impressions and dispositions ingrained in the ego-mind-heart or ego-consciousness. As these impressions and dispositions develop, the knowledge which consciousness can yield also increases. In the human form consciousness can yield full knowledge of the bodily form which is its vehicle. At the initial stages this is mixed up with delusion

because of dispositional or sanskaric identification with the body. But even such delusive self-knowledge is not possible at the pre-human level of under-developed consciousness. At the pre-human level, identification with the bodily form is instinctive rather than self-conscious.

Suppose a mirror is placed horizontally at some distance and that it is exactly in the line of the eye of the onlooker. Then the onlooker will not be able to see even a portion of his own body in the mirror. Now, if the mirror is gradually turned round its axis through increasingly greater angles, it will give the onlooker a full vision of his own reflected form.

In the above analogy, the turning round of the mirror through greater and greater angles corresponds to developing consciousness and increasing impressions or dispositions. Since both are full-grown in the human form, the onlooker can now get a reflection of his own bodily form through his conditioned or limited consciousness. The mirror of conditioned consciousness can, however, give a full reflection only of the form. It cannot yield the transcendent understanding of the Self, which has consciousness. It is only after consciousness is completely released from the conditioning imprints of gathered experiences that it can give the understanding of the Truth as it is. Conditioned or limited consciousness can yield only a semblance of knowledge with a preponderant admixture of unfathomable illusion.

The dispositional twists of the imprinted mind-heart are the real cause of the limiting ignorance. The imprint of the mind-heart is due to the engravings of past actions and experiences. It renders the psyche incapable of free functioning. Hence the problem of realizing the Truth is essentially the problem of deconditioning or liberating the mind-heart by erasing from the psyche the stamped imprints of past experiences. The mind-heart which is disfigured by the marks of uncomprehended experiences is like an injured limb. The influence of the restrictive imprints of the past has to be thoroughly undone. The psyche must be relieved of its acquired and perverting rigidity. Then it may perceive the Truth, instead of embracing illusions that arise out of the inescapable constraint of ingrained habits.

The intuitive and transcendent understanding of the Truth is simple and effortless. It only requires the disburdening of the

psyche. The psyche is modulated and contorted by the impressed experiences of the false. It cannot therefore intuit the truth. The truth remains inscrutably hidden from the grasping dispositional mechanisms. The truth is not in any way remote even from that consciousness, which is helplessly and rigorously determined by the distortions inflicted upon it by the environmental experiences of opposites. But the rigidity of the psyche prevents the intuition of truth. As soon as the psyche is released from the influence of the accumulated deposits of the past, it becomes Super-mind and unveils the truth, which so far had been mysteriously hidden by the ego-mind-heart itself.

In order to intuit the truth, consciousness has to be liberated from its ingrained and resistant inclinations. Intuition has been buried under the piecemeal lesson of the assailing experiences of the false. Learning is impressed from without, while intuition dawns from within. Learning thwarts intuition. Therefore, the teaching of the mind by external impacts has to be counteracted by inner awakening. Then and only then can intuition, in its transcendent understanding, truly judge without yielding to the stupor of uncritical impressionability.

Consciousness is impressed by joy and sorrow, success and failure, good and evil, pleasure and pain, and all the other opposites which invoke the reactions of attachment, repulsion, and the enticing complications of duality. This impressionability of consciousness keeps it from functioning freely. Lack of poise prevents it from moving on without the entanglements of attractions or repulsions, *i.e.*, from swift adjustments with the alternating opposites, which shower themselves upon it in quick succession. For example, while meeting joy, it thinks of the joys or sorrows experienced or anticipated in the past; and thus divided, it cannot understand the full import of the present joy.

In the same way, while meeting sorrow, it thinks of the joys or sorrows which it has experienced or anticipated in the past: and thus divided, it cannot understand the full import of the present sorrow. It cannot understand the real meaning of the present joy or sorrow, because of its being under the influence of past joys or sorrows, which also it experienced without understanding. Thus, there is the perpetuation of the delusion that binds consciousness

to the retarding remnants of past joys and sorrows and other similar opposites. Instead of slavishly hanging on to the past, it should face and accept life in freedom—freedom from clinging and freedom from fear or hope.

If consciousness can swiftly move with life, emancipating itself from the overpowering constraint of the past, it does not get involved or distracted; and it can function in integrity, retaining its poise or self-possession. Then it cannot only fully understand both joy and sorrow and the other opposites of life, but also meet, assimilate and transcend them through the intuitive understanding of their true values. Transcendent understanding is the other side of intuiting freedom. Understanding is essentially transcendent and illimitable, while impressionability is essentially a perpetual invitation to enslavement.

When one truly understands the real meaning of joy and sorrow and all the other opposites of life, they all, in their own way, confirm the intuitive perception that all life is really one, and that it is the everlasting and illimitable Reality that transcends all duality. It is the overpowered and deluded mind which imaginatively creates the illusion of the multicolored world of duality, and then clings to it, inviting upon itself the turmoil and the discord of separative and limited consciousness. It creates divisions where there are no divisions in reality. This separative functioning of the deluded imagination is like regrouping sunset colors in clouds according to one's own inclinations and filling the sky with variegated palaces and forests, forts and lakes, mountains and rivers, imaginatively projecting these multicolored patterns onto a void to which they are all foreign.

In the same way, consciousness, which is subject to dispositional and impressional determinism, seeks and creates an overpowering and false world, getting enmeshed in it and projecting into it a false value that must in the end, by its very nature, betray itself. It divides a reality which is essentially indivisible. It clings to a form which is essentially perishable. It glorifies itself in actions which are essentially binding and achievements which are essentially insignificant. It delights and suffers on the background of a void, thus depriving itself of any real happiness or

understanding. The only way to live in the sanity of undeluded understanding is to become aware of the impressional determinism of the ego-mind-heart and free it from this vitiating constraint.

The undeluded and transcendent understanding of the unconditioned Supermind reveals the Truth which remains forever an infinite Divinity that sustains itself in unbounded bliss, power and understanding. This is the unchallengeable Truth. The intuitive perception at once exposes the futility and nothingness of the temporal universe of forms, and affirms the ageless reality and fathomless significance of eternal divinity. The Truth, which is self-grounded and self-justifying Divinity, needs no complementary supplements just because it overflows with a fullness that knows no deficit. It is at once the only being and also its own justification for being.

The Meaning of Life

The limited 'I' (or separative ego) of ordinary human consciousness is a complex structure with intellect and feeling as important constituents. Its impressional or sanskaric dispositions get involved with each other in numberless ways.

None of them, by itself, nor their natural and haphazard combinations, can yield any permanent glimpse into the meaning of life. On the contrary, the infinite impressionary tangle covers up the Truth, obscuring it and making it impossible to get at. To cut the tangled thread at loops and knots is to lose the whole game. And the straightening of the tangled impressionary thread cannot be a mechanical process or an achievement through blunt application of unintelligent or loveless force. The process of straightening up the impressions must, in its very nature, be both delicate and difficult, requiring the discriminative wisdom and infinite care, which the Master alone can bring for the task.

Bits of relative meaning, locked up in each type of impressionary experience, have to be carefully gleaned. These have to be carefully pooled, correlated and absorbed in the meaning of other types of impressional experiences to which consciousness has been subjected. The meaning has to be gleaned and retained before the impressional tangle can be straightened. But this is far from being simple or easy. Very often the aspirant is unable to do this himself. The working of the Master often infuses into his impressional dispositions their appropriate meaning and enables him to straighten them and annul their restrictive functioning.

The process of annulling the restrictive effects of the impressions may be made clear by means of the analogy of the toy balloon made of rubber. When there is no gas or air in the toy balloon, it shrinks into small size. And its entire surface is covered up with creases and wrinkles. If anyone tries to take away these creases or wrinkles on the surface of the toy balloon, by external pressure or adjustment, he is bound to fail. For one wrinkle which may be straightened up there would be another one in its proximity. Or perhaps, for one previously existent wrinkle there would be in its place a number of new wrinkles on its surface, either in the same portion or in some adjacent portion.

The wrinkles have no chance of disappearing as long as there is merely external manipulation of the wrinkled surface. The existing pattern of the wrinkles can, no doubt, be disturbed and radically changed by external manipulation; but the wrinkles cannot be effaced or annulled completely by this method. In the same way, the binding action of mental impressions cannot be annulled by the process of mere external or mechanical adjustments.

But if in the above analogy the toy balloon of rubber is infused with gas or air, all the wrinkles will automatically get rounded up and annulled. There will be no creases distorting the surface of the balloon if it is blown up to its full capacity. In the same way, if the mind-heart is infused with the meaning of life, all the 'wrinkles' of impressional dispositions get effaced. And being free from all distortions, the mind-heart becomes sound. But the binding action of impressions becomes defunct only after they are made to yield their inner meaning. Their becoming defunct, as ignorant resistance to Truth, releases the free functioning of consciousness.

To put the matter paradoxically, in the Truth-experience of unlimited consciousness, what has been rendered defunct is not the impressions but their binding action. In annulling this binding action, the impressions can perform their true function of yielding their real meaning to the liberated consciousness. Thus, from this point of view, the impressions have been so altered they can contribute their quota to the plus-meaning of a free consciousness. The alteration of impressions is so drastic that it looks like annulment, because the readjustment ensures that the impressions will not be able to operate in their separateness in an exclusive or

semi-mechanical manner, which inevitably leads to inertia or inner conflict. Freeing the intelligence of the mind-heart-consciousness from impressional maladjustments is an essential and indispensable requisite of releasing the dynamic harmony of the liberated consciousness.

Life is eternally scrawling its own meaning on the ego-mind-heart. But its script is not intelligible to the consciousness entangled with it because of the distorting sanskaric or impressional engravings left upon it by past experiences. The ego-mind-heart cannot freely and intelligently function in the present with the necessary alertness and alacrity, owing to the inherent inertia and resistances created by these past engravings. The inevitable result is that it partly misses the import of the revelation of Truth in the eternal present. Thus, psychic distortions are due to inertia and inertia is due to psychic distortions; and there is an unending vicious circle. Suppose that in the above example of the deflated balloon, the wisest Truth had been written on its wrinkled surface; no one would be able to read the script. But if the same toy balloon is now infused with air or gas, the wrinkles will all disappear and the script on the finely rounded surface can be deciphered with utmost ease, making it possible for anyone to understand what the writer wanted to convey. In the same way, the meaning of what life has written on consciousness can be easily and unmistakably grasped only if the sanskaric distortions are mended and taken away by an act of the Master's grace, infusing it with a new life-force and receptivity to Truth.

The vicious circle that needs to be broken through is that the distorted mind-heart of the limited ego cannot see the meaning of life, and therefore, it also cannot free itself from its own distortions and resistances. The vicious circle can be broken only if the distorted ego-mind-heart of the aspirant becomes submissive to the Master and allows itself to be illumined by the infusion of meaning imparted by the Master.

The infusion of meaning may, in the initial stages, appear to take upon itself the limitations to which the mind-heart is subject, just as the air which goes into the toy balloon will seem to get conditioned as it occupies the diverse hollows of the inner surface. But this is only a temporary phase. It ultimately culminates in the

disappearance of all creases and wrinkles on the balloon, after inflating it to the full size. But this is the only way in which all creases and wrinkles could be removed. In the same way, the Master cannot infuse the meaning of life in the psyche of the aspirant except on the lines engraved upon it by his own past. He has to enlighten the aspirant by making use of the sanskaric or impressional dispositions previously acquired by the aspirant. He makes explicit the meaning which lies implicitly and inscrutably stored in the dispositions of his own ill-understood experiences by taking away their muteness, as it were, and giving them a voice.

Only after the mind-heart is fully infused with Truth, do all of its distortions disappear. But after that, in the place of the confusing and distorting inscriptions which yield no meaning, there appears in the unlimited mind-heart the lucid and unambiguous self-explanation of life, written by life itself. The Master does not graft on the disciple some alien Truth from outside. He enables the aspirant to decipher the code of life by restoring to his mind-heart the vitality that can heal all of its sanskaric distortions. This is the significance of the annulment of impressionary dispositions, the removal of the distorting wrinkles of mind-heart.

During the process of perfecting or rounding up, all the distorting contours of sanskaric or impressionary dispositions disappear; and they no longer limit the functioning of the mind-heart. But this does not mean irrecoverable loss of memory and the lessons of experience, or the destruction of the recorded history of the striving individuality. When the Truth-inspired mind-heart wants to remember its past, it can do so with utmost ease, not only vividly and clearly remembering the present life, but all the innumerable lives through which the striving and ascending individuality has arrived at the goal of the unlimited life of the Eternal. And this memory is clear, definite, and complete, in all the wealth of inexhaustible details of incidents and occurrences.

The Fulfillment

The Truth-realized person seldom has any incentive to look back upon his stored past as he becomes free of it, and is in no way influenced by it. But the point is that the memory is there, though it does not restrict or distort the Truth-realized consciousness. He may make use of this memory; but he is not bound by it. All unrest has been quieted; and all delusion has melted away, like mist before the sun. He has stepped outside the limiting and evolving individuality and knows himself as utterly different from it. He is not affected by its fortunes or misfortunes, any more than a painter who knows himself to be different from his own paintings. The painter knows all the incomplete and apparently meaningless and uninviting phases through which it has grown, before it assumed its last form. But now the scribbled lines have all been taken up in an entirely new and significant picture of eternal beauty.

As long as he was identifying himself with the false and perishing form through delusion, he could not escape the devastating impact of environment. He did actually enjoy and suffer vicariously for his own reflection or picture, through false identification. But now he knows that it was not really he as the Self who went through all this travail. It was not he as the Self who descended to the stone-state or ascended to the man-state. It

was not he as the Self who incarnated in numberless lives to taste the bitter-sweet fruit of duality, or enjoyed the pleasures of heaven or the sufferings of hell, or inch by inch toiled up the Path through the six planes of spiritual ascent. The Self remains what it ever was from the very beginning, the one immutable Reality, infinite in existence, knowledge, bliss and power.

What has gone through all this illusion is the limited and evolving individuality, which the Self now knows to be different from itself. The evolving individuality is now, in fact, known to be fictitious and unreal. It is at once the creation of illusion and its victim. The Self has not traveled the Path downwards or upwards. The Path has, as it were, traveled past the Self. And during that process, the Self, through false identification, took upon itself all the multitudinous vicissitudes that befell the evolving and limited individuality. The Self is like a spectator of the cinema-film, identifying itself with the hero of the film story. The spectator enjoys and suffers with the hero in each incident depicted on the screen in complete self-forgetfulness of his own true being. Then coming to himself at the close of the whole film show, he finds that nothing has really happened to him. All that the Self took upon itself through deluding identification really happened as part of the story of creation, of which the Self, in fact, was a witness.

But the show has not been seen in vain. It has played its part in the eternal life of the immutable Self, which now knows and enjoys its own fullness and infinite divinity as it never did before. The Self now knows itself to be beyond all the cosmic cycles of creation. It remains untouched by anything that can happen in the illusion of the time-process. It knows itself to be that immortality and eternity which always itself remains unaffected by anything. The game which the Self has witnessed is over; and it is in no way the worse for it. In fact, it was the Self itself that willed to enact and see the game. It was its will to get temporarily lost in the game through illusory identification; and it was its will to come back to itself, with a sigh of relief and the feeling of fulfillment.

If, however, the Self cares to glance at the film again, it no longer identifies itself only with the hero or any one of the other limited and evolving individualities, but with all the characters in

the show. It knows itself to be the hero and the heroine, the villain and the friend, the victor and the vanquished, the lover and the beloved. It knows that it itself has been and is all, individually and collectively, simultaneously and indivisibly.

In the light of the eternal Truth which the Self has attained it can see not only its own past, but also the past of everyone else in its true perspective.

As the sculptor stands apart from his work of art and views it with utter detachment, he discovers that all the time the chisel was at work, the ineffable and irresistible beauty which he now enjoys was taking shape, in spite of the grotesque and formless phases through which the statue went. In the final result, there is the reparation of all wrongs, the healing of all wounds, the success of all failures, the sweetening of all sufferings, the solace of all strivings, the harmony of all strife, the unraveling of all enigmas and the real and the full meaning of all lives—past, present and future.

True Freedom and Creativity

The real spiritual problem is to emancipate the mind from its impressionary dispositions without destroying all mentality. The accumulated sanskaras of impressionary dispositions of the ego-mind are all in a tangle of utmost complexity.

The impressions are comparable to a mass of thread, which due to careless use, gets into numberless complex knots and tangled loops. It is extremely difficult to get back one continuous, simple, useful thread out of such a tangle of impressionary thread. But it is just this very difficult task that the Master achieves through his insight, tenderness and controlled power.

It is easy to cut the thread into pieces or burn it to ashes. If the Master does this at one powerful stroke of grace, the wayfarer may realize the Truth. But he is unable to come back to the world or establish any connection with it. This is the state of the God-merged *Majzoobs*. As compared with the *Sadgurus*, the *Majzoobs* are not of any appreciable use in the divine game of duality. They are immersed in the Truth and are entirely oblivious of the needs of the world; and they are non-responsive to its happenings. Occasional imprints, which their consciousness receives from outside, spend themselves automatically through the sporadic expressions and actions, for which they are in no way responsible.

The *Majzoob*, though spiritually perfect, is, in respect to his action in the world, like a carriage whose horses run about without a driver. The horses are the sporadic impressions impinging upon his mentality from outside. They work themselves out without any control or direction from the driver, for the simple reason that the *Majzoob* does not have the intellectualized ego-mind, which, in the bound soul, functions like a driver. After his immersion in the Truth, the *Majzoob* never comes down. Nor does he care to take up a universal mind with any *Yogayoga sanskaras* or divinized impressions. He has absolutely no real link with the world.

The horses of sporadic impressions, which seek expression through the body of the *Majzoob*, are neither driven by any ego-mind nor by the Truth. The impressions are created by the occasional impacts of devotees, etc., from outside, and they work themselves out automatically. The impressionary horses run without a driver. But though sporadic and dependent upon external impacts, the apparent actions of the *Majzoob* (i.e., the expression of impressions through him) have immense spiritual benefit upon the targets of his action. For there is to his actions the background of Truth-consciousness. Although Truth-consciousness is self-absorbed and inactive or non expressive in the *Majzoob*, it is constantly at the background of all acts released through him. This makes the acts significant for the recipients, who derive immense spiritual benefit according to their own sanskaric merits. The result of the action is not what the *Majzoob* has in any way willed. He has no will. The result of what seems to be the act of the *Majzoob* is what the recipient has through the *Majzoob* invited upon himself by means of his own sanskaric action and preparation.

Unlike the *Majzoob*, the Perfect Master brings back his Truth-consciousness to the world of duality; and he does so along connections that have not been snapped asunder. He completely disengages himself from all connections when he is immersed in Truth-consciousness. But when he comes down to the world, he finds his descent easy, because, during his ascent to the goal, the channels of his connections with the world were retained intact. The thread of impressions in his case, had not been burnt or cut off, but merely, as it were, straightened and divinized. Owing to the retention of this straightened but unbinding under-structure,

the Perfect Master can establish significant, helpful and liberating contacts with the world.

The mind of the Perfect Master, which now has become universal and unlimited, divinely transmutes his previously straightened *sanskaras* into *Yogayoga sanskaras*, and is discriminately aware of the world of duality. He is not like a carriage without a driver. In his case, as in the *Majzooob* also, the ego-mind has completely disappeared. But all his actions are controlled and directed by the infinite knowledge, power and bliss of Truth-consciousness. That is why his life on earth is a blessing to all. In his case, the driver is Truth itself.

The Perfect Master, because of his unlimited powers, can often take upon himself the impressions of others and work them out for those others by inviting sufferings upon himself. This is like a free lift which some railway officer may, as a favor, give to any passenger, without his having to pay for it. But though the passenger does not pay for it, the railway officer has to pay for him. So, though the disciple may in such cases be exempt from having to work out or undo his gathered impressions, the Master has to work them out through his own voluntary and vicarious suffering invited upon himself, by himself, by the working of his universal mind.

The horses which move the carriage of the Perfect Master are the *Yogayoga sanskaras* or divinized impressions, which he has given to himself, while descending in the world of duality. The lower ego-mind with all its determinative impressions does not exist for him. It is replaced by the higher Universal Mind, functioning through the *Yogayoga sanskaras*, which it takes upon itself without getting bound by them. *Yogayoga sanskaras* are as it were the 'straightened' and divinized thread of previous impressions. The impressions were limiting the ego-mind because of the tangled complexities, loops and knots of all sorts and their distorting inertia-mechanism. But now the thread has been straightened and rewound in a way that is available for use merely as an instrument without itself getting into binding complications. The Master uses this reel of thread at will for his universal work, without any curtailment of his freedom; it cannot interfere with his Truth-consciousness or creativity.

These new straightened or divinized impressions can serve as the horses of the Master's carriage. But it is not these horses

themselves which drive the carriage. Nor are these horses driven by the ego-mind or the nucleus of organized and binding sanskaras of ignorance, as in the case of the limited individuality. The horses of the Master's carriage are driven by his Truth-consciousness through his universal mind. He does not get caught up in the separative consciousness characteristic of the duality-ridden ego-mind. While remaining free, his universal mind merely makes use of these 'horses' for divine work. The work itself has been planned independently of the influence of these sanskaras. In other words, the *Yogayoga sanskaras* or the divinized impressions provide the sub-structure of definitive channels for the Master's activity; but they do not by themselves determine his actions. In themselves, they are lifeless or powerless, bereft of all influence on him. They are merely used as submissive instruments for particularized expressions according to the nature of the spiritual work which the Master has set before himself in complete freedom.

The *Yogayoga sanskaras* or the divinized impressions might be compared to a road which is available for the person who desires to travel on it. The road by itself cannot and does not make anyone walk on it. But it can help anyone to walk, if he himself chooses to do so. The *Yogayoga sanskaras* of the Perfect Master are like this road. They cannot have any initiative in releasing an activity. But they enable the activity to be released if it has been decided upon by the Master, in his unrestricted and illimitable freedom.

It is exactly in this respect that the *Yogayoga sanskaras* of the Master are utterly different from the binding sanskaras of the ordinary limited individuals. In limited individuals, the impressional dispositions of the ego-mind have their own directive and goading power. They are not merely the channels for the flow of psychic energies, they are themselves tendencies. They are active engravings on the limited ego-mind. They store certain definite units of psychic energy within themselves and have their own driving power.

This driving power stored in them is generally subject to the control of the ego-nucleus, which can check, release or transmute those dispositions within certain definite limits. That is why the ego-mind is compared to the driver who drives the horses of impressionary dispositions. However, the driving by the ego-mind

is neither unailing nor perfect. It is not unailing, because the horses are not always submissive to its dictates. The impressionary horses have a tendency to pull the carriage according to their own inclinations, irrespective of the decisions of the ego-mind. And the driving is not perfect, because the ego-mind, which is the driver, is itself blind, aimless and bound, being the cumulative but organized resultant of the pulls, the goadings and the inhibitions of these impressionary 'horses' themselves.

The *Yogayoga sanskaras* of the universal mind of the Master are not tendencies with any locked-up energy of their own. They are merely definitive channels without any independent driving power. The impressionary horses cannot run without the driver nor can they exercise any propulsion, pull or inhibition on the driver, which in the Master is the Truth affirming itself through his universal mind. Therefore, the Master's driving of his carriage is both unailing and perfect.

The divinized impressions in the Master's mind are more like a motor car than like a horse. The motor car is perfectly under the control of the driver. The functioning of the motor car is distinctly different from the functioning of the horses. While the horses have their own tendencies, exercising a degree of propulsion, pull or inhibition on the driver, the motor car has no such interfering inclinations of its own. It will be completely submissive to the will of the driver, without having any influence on his choice. It is an instrument that does not dictate anything should or should not be done. It has no tendencies of its own. (We are here envisaging a motor car which is in complete order and which is so perfect that it can function smoothly and efficiently under all circumstances.) The universal mind, with its self-given divinized impressions, is like a perfect machine, which never goes out of order and never fails. Though completely inert in itself, the machine is available for the creative manifestation of infinite Truth-consciousness with unailing efficiency and unlimited submissiveness.

The ego-mind feels and exercises its limited and illusory freedom when it chooses to succumb to one impressional disposition rather than another. It seems to enjoy freedom in and through its choice. But this freedom is only apparent. It is not freedom of choice. The impressionable disposition has utilized the ego-mind and secured its fortifying sanction in order to get released into

expression or activity. The ego-mind chooses. But it has no real choice in choosing. Its choice is illusory.

The universal mind, on the contrary, feels and exercises its unlimited freedom when it chooses to vivify and release any particularly divinized impressions rather than others. It has full freedom of choice. It may or may not choose that particular activity and is therefore really free. The ego-mind chooses; but it chooses in ignorance and restricted freedom. The universal mind also chooses, but it chooses in the knowledge of the Truth and in unlimited freedom. Restricted freedom is no freedom at all; it is an illusion of freedom.

The unlimited freedom of the Truth-realized person is the only real and full freedom. It is only in the dynamic freedom of such a Master that the Self as Truth can manifest itself through the divinized impressions of universal mind. The divinized impressions are infinitely efficient because they are infinitely submissive to the Self, and they release creative and divine action which is not limited by any fragmentary ends or purposes. But the ordinary binding impressions of the ego-mind are unendingly aggressive on the Self and are seeking their own fulfillment and subjecting it to the tyranny of endless pursuits. The binding impressions are thus infinitely limited in efficiency and creativity.

Divinized imprints are not detractive but creative, not restrictive but expansive. They thus are radically different from ego-prints. The divinized impressions are essentially complementary assets added to the universal mind. Their function is not that of curtailment or restriction but of supplementary increment. On the other hand, the binding impressions of the ego-mind are restrictive and detractive.

The difference between the binding impressions of the ego-mind and the divinized impressions of the universal mind is a difference in kind, not merely a difference of degree. In the same way, the difference between the freedom of the ego-mind and the freedom of the universal mind is not one of degree but of kind.

The binding impressions are infinitely limited in efficiency because, though they might seem to produce a huge mountain of results in time, the entire mountain of results may have no real value at all. And they are infinitely limited in creativity, because

they cannot produce anything really new. They can only bring into existence what has been previously experienced, though perhaps in novel combinations and contexts. Their creativity is confined to the regrouping of what is essentially old. But the divinized impressions through which the Perfect Master works, are infinitely creative, because whatever they achieve in the world of duality is towards the real fulfillment of the infinite, and as such, has real and infinite value overflowing all limiting patterns.

The divinized impressions of the Perfect Master are infinitely creative. They help the self-realizing infinite to incarnate in time; and such incarnation is not a routine of ordinary time-process. The act of a Perfect Master is not merely repetitive. It is not the mere redoing of something previously experienced. It is not the repetition of the temporal past in the context of a new setting. It is the doing of something that can never be done as a result of the experience of duality. It is a creation of the utterly new, a descent of the Truth into the false. Hence its Creativity is unlimited and infinite. The redeeming act of the Perfect Master is a flash of the Eternal in the midst of what is otherwise nothing but rigidly determined causation. This is the mystery of Divine Grace descending through the Perfect Master.

True Spirituality

One who is keen about true spirituality must loose all self-will. He has to accept the Divine Will irrespective of whether it happens to be in line with his cherished inclinations or against them. This is a veritable death to the ego-life. It means that the ego-mind must not demand anything. It must become lifeless, i.e., it must stop or cease to function. When a man is under the influence of chloroform or when he faints or when he gets hysterical fits, then also his mind stops for all purposes. However, at this time this does not happen with consciousness. It takes place in under-consciousness.

When the mind is stopped by the administration of drugs or by the influence of external physical things or forces, the state is like deep sleep with its full oblivion or ignorance. But when the mind stops through conscious efforts with the spiritual help available from another 'Super-Mind', it is different. When stopping the mind takes place in full consciousness, it gets transformed into super-consciousness, with its real knowledge of the one Self or Reality.

The Self of selves is the one Truth. It cannot be said to be one in the sense of half of two or one-third of three, etc.; i.e., as being a unit in a series. Nor can it be said to be two or many, as it does not admit of the divisibility that runs through the would of duality. It cannot be described as personal; nor can it be

described as impersonal. It is limited by no attribute. Yet, it is this very Truth or Self of selves that manifests itself as the universe through all its multitudinous distinctions.

To realize the Truth in this indescribable Beyond State is the ultimate goal of all spiritual endeavor, irrespective of the particular form it takes, according to temperamental inclinations or exigencies of the situation. Although the Paths are diverse, the goal for all is the same. One important point is, and has to be, invariably common to all Paths. The aspirant must sincerely and fervently follow his own conscience or the inner light of his own Higher Self. Other details of the Path get determined by his free choice according to his own tendencies, attitude, aptitude and surroundings.

The essence of the Path does not consist in leaving the gross world and going to other worlds. Otherworldliness has nothing to do with true spirituality. Going to other worlds is not at all a rare or a special occurrence. Every soul has to move about between the gross world and the subtle world. The subtle world is like a waiting room for spending the interval between the incarnations on earth. A few souls get into the mental world. But if they get there during the interval between incarnations they spend a much longer time there than the soul who spends his interval in the subtle world. However, even those who get into the mental world have to come back to the gross world. But when they thus come, they bring with them the powers of the mental world.

The soul dwells alternately in the gross and the subtle worlds and in rare cases, in the gross and the mental worlds. There is no special spiritual advancement in merely going from the gross world to the subtle world or even to the mental world. It amounts to going back to the place from which the soul has descended on earth. Instead of trying to go to some other worlds, the souls should go from the gross world into the planes of advancing consciousness. The subtle or the mental world is not to be regarded as situated at a considerable distance from the gross world. It is possible to dwell in them consciously even during the stay in the gross world. They are, as it were, worlds within worlds instead of being worlds separated from each other by distance.

The spiritual planes are connected with the subtle and mental

worlds. One has to start his journey in the gross body and also realize the Highest Truth in the gross body. The planes correspond to the inner changes of the states of consciousness. It is possible to pass through these planes in darkness (i.e., without knowing it), or with knowledge. Ceaseless rounds between the gross and the subtle or between the gross and mental worlds do not necessarily mean spiritual progress. Nor is spiritual progress ensured by them.

Spiritual progress is much more than mere change of surrounding environment. It is a radical transformation in the very structure and attitude of the functioning consciousness. If the spiritual pilgrim is being taken onwards with his eyes open, he may, while crossing the inner planes, get experiences and powers of the subtle worlds (even while remaining in the gross body), according to the plane in which he is stationed. This is the state of many Yogis. But if he is taken blindfolded, he passes by them often without registering even their very existence and certainly without getting involved in them. The seven planes are directly connected with the spiritually advancing states of consciousness and indirectly connected with the subtle and mental worlds.

For actually crossing the planes, what is necessary is true spirituality. True spirituality requires the real love for God. A person cannot be said to love God if he cannot accept His Will without discontent or resentment. There was one real devotee of God. He was a multi-millionaire, enjoyed good health and reputation and had a happy family life. But as luck would have it, he came to be deprived of all his wealth. His friends asked him, "What is your God doing? Why do you not ask him to help you?" The devotee replied, "God's will be done." He did not allow the peace of his mind to be disturbed. He then lost his wife also. But he continued to remain resigned to the Will of God and remained happy. Other said, "He has a good reputation that keeps him happy"; and they became jealous, though he had lost so much at the hands of fate.

He then happened to catch a nasty disease, abominable germs entering his body all over and rendering it ugly, painful and loathsome to look at. His body began to stink so horribly that even his

best friends and nearest relations, who used to flatter and obey him, began to keep themselves at a distance. But even then he retained his equanimity, resenting nothing and accepting the Will of God with undaunted fortitude and unyielding cheerfulness. This was his real test. He passed through the ordeal of accepting the Will of God without protests and retained his faith in Him under the severest and most trying circumstances. He was then hailed by others as being the lover of God, which he was.

Utter submission to the orders of the Master means renunciation of all argument or questioning. Meeting what life brings in its wake with contentment is the real test of the surrenderance, love and faith, which a disciple has in His Master. His love is true and unchanging because it does not ask anything. He faces all the good and bad vicissitudes of life with unchallengeable equanimity.

True spirituality requires the surrenderance of the ego-centered outlook and attitude. The ego-centered consciousness looks upon everything and the entire world as a possible field for its own enjoyment and appropriation. It tries to glean the meaning of everything that exists or comes within the ken of its experience from its own point of view. A thing is good or bad according to how it affects that particular ego-centered being. If it does not, in any way, affect that being or 'I', it has no meaning at all. This mode of gleaning meaning from life is disastrously false and misleading. The query is vitiated by wrong assumptions from its very starting point.

A wrong perspective must give wrong results. It is not correct to look upon the one reality as being intended solely for any one manifestation of itself. It is saner to look upon each and every manifestation as being intended for the one Reality. This means that the ego-centered point of view has to be fully surrendered to appreciate and know the Truth. God does not merely exist for any one form. All forms exist for the sake of God. God is in all forms; but the significance of His being is not to be measured or understood in terms of any one form. The significance of all the forms taken collectively must be measured and understood in terms of God or Truth. They have no meaning in themselves apart from God. Nor can anything else reveal its true purpose or meaning if it is

taken exclusively in relation to some particular form or forms.

This is the key to unraveling the true meaning and purpose of everything. All things and forms, individually as well as collectively, derive their existence as well as value from God. As soon as any form is taken in its separateness from God it loses its significance. Far less can it endow other things (entering in relation with it) with any real significance or purpose. The ego-centered outlook has to be replaced by the Truth-centered outlook. Only then is there a correct appraisal of anything in the world. Only then is there any true spirituality.

The Past **and the** **Present**

Realization of the Self should not be confused with the intellectual understanding of the Divine Theme. Exceptional exercise of the intellect makes one a philosopher, a poet, a scientist or an artist. But Self-realization is undeniably the special privilege of those who are mad for God.

Orthodoxy, whether it be Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Zoroastrian, Buddhist or of any other faith, is tolerable only up to a certain point, and only in the earlier phases of the evolution of the masses, since it conserves certain dynamic values coming down through tradition. But it must be of the discriminative type and should not be allowed to degenerate into politics. When orthodoxy denies to itself the spiritual light coming from any quarter, it inevitably reduces itself to a body without a soul, leading to separative ignorance, conflicts and misunderstandings.

Loyalty to the incarnated greatness of the past and mere possession and knowledge of the traditional lore is not all that is to be desired. It may preserve your individuality as a religious and cultural unit and make of you a powerful political factor. But in the spiritual domain, it makes you a nonentity—a tree without its life-giving sap.

Today, there are three factors which prevent the world from realization of true spirituality: (1) The church of each organized religion trades in the past and fights every inch of ground before adjusting itself to the times and the circumstances; (2) The educated delude themselves into thinking that they have done their part and have laid the whole creation and the Creator under deep gratitude by merely talking on the subject from the purely intellectual point of view; (3) The masses have a superstitious, mercenary attitude towards saints and spirituality. Their approach to saints is invariably from a materialistic point of view.

I have come to give a new understanding of spiritual value and truth to everyone. This truth is unlimited and cannot be imprisoned in any dogmas or creeds, religions or sets of beliefs. Inherit this vast Truth which is ever-renewing, while I am in your midst!

Part 111

Sayings of Meher Baba

* * * * *

Your own religion, if put into practice, is sufficient to bring salvation to you. It is a mistake to change one's own religion for that of another. The surroundings and circumstances in which you find yourself are best suited to work out your destiny or to exhaust your past karma.

The various religions are like patent medicines. Just as it is necessary to approach a specialist for a speedy and radical cure, so it is imperative to approach a spiritual Master in order to become spiritually perfect.

* * * * *

To speak metaphorically, God is in the center of a circle, the circumference of which is the universe. The various radii from the circumference to the center are the various religions. The points on the radii near the circumference are distinctly and widely apart from each other; but as they approach the center, they come increasingly close to each other. In the same way, the more a person becomes spiritually minded, or advances towards God, the more tolerant he becomes and the less differentiation he sees.

* * * * *

Freedom can be realized in its true and original form only after having experienced bondage.

How can one know happiness unless he has known unhappiness?

The degrees of bliss proportionately correspond to the degrees of previous suffering.

* * * * *

There are two aspects of human nature—one pertaining to the angels, and the other to the animals; the former relies on the soul and the latter on the flesh.

* * * * *

Love is God; lust is Satan.

* * * * *

In the cosmogony of this universe, this earth of ours has a special significance, being much nearer to the spiritual sphere. There are other worlds where much mental development is marked; but spiritual progress really begins on this earth.

* * * * *

Unless you question, you can never learn. Let not the false sense of propriety or fear of blasphemy deter you from questioning the why and wherefore of your being. The answer to these questions will lead you to perfection.

Do not expect the living saints to answer these questions for you. If they do give answers at all, they are of no avail to you. The answer must come from within your own self.

* * * * *

What can come out of Truth except Truth? Know then that Thou art That.

* * * * *

The state of ecstasy brought on by music or by some extraneous influence like drugs does not mean spirituality. It is a state in which the mind overpowers itself and is a weakness to be guarded against. Instead of running wild, the mind should be self-composed; this comes through control.

* * * * *

To speak well is good. To think well is better. Above all, to live well is best.

* * * * *

One who upsets nothing is a good man; and one who is upset by nothing is a God-man.

* * * * *

The more you become a student, the more are your chances of becoming a teacher.

* * * * *

Unintelligent advancement often results in downfall.

* * * * *

One who tries to excuse himself deceives himself.

* * * * *

Greed brings war; contentment brings peace.

* * * * *

Greatness lies in not overlooking smallness.

* * * * *

The really happy are those who are always contented with their lot.

* * * * *

The real untouchables are those who cannot enter the temple of their heart and see the Lord therein.

* * * * *

Sin is weakness; virtue is strength. What one regards as sin may turn out to be virtue, and vice versa.

* * * * *

The standard of goodness is determined by the circumstances prevailing at that particular time.

* * * * *

A jolly devil-may-care fellow may have a better heart than a dry-as-dust ascetic.

* * * * *

Suppression of emotion results in physical and mental emaciation.

* * * * *

It is not wise to avoid or conceal one's knowledge of oneself.

* * * * *

Real understanding means seeing through illusion.

* * * * *

Be sane as a saint and innocent as a child.

* * * * *

Take life lightly where material affairs are concerned and seriously where spiritual development is in question.

* * * * *

Try to be cheerful even in trying periods.

* * * * *

The Path of Truth is not a bed of roses.

* * * * *

You have not to give up your religion, but to give up clinging to the outer husk of mere ritual and ceremonies.

* * * * *

I can make man become what he cannot achieve by himself. You need Me.

* * * * *

No amount of intellect can fathom Me. No amount of austerity can know Me.

* * * * *

Truth is beyond the reach of mind. Mere intellectual understanding does not bring God nearer to you.

* * * * *

It is easy to ask questions, but it needs past preparation to grasp what I explain.

* * * * *

There is no difference in the realization of Truth either by a Muslim, Hindu, Zoroastrian or a Christian. The difference is only of words and terms. Truth is not the monopoly of a particular race or religion.

* * * * *

To serve the God-Man, who serves all, is serving the universe.

* * * * *

To faithfully love God-Man is to truly worship God.

* * * * *

It is love, not questioning, that will bring God to you.

Readers who wish to know more about Meher Baba are referred to the following:

God Speaks by Meher Baba. The theme of Creation and Its Purpose. First published in 1955. Dodd, Mead & Co., New York, 1973. Cloth.

Discourses by Meher Baba. These Discourses first appeared in the Meher Baba Journals, 1938-1942. The 1987 seventh edition is available from Sheriar Press. Paperback and cloth.

God to Man and Man to God, a one volume edition of Meher Baba's Discourses edited and condensed by C. B. Purdom. First published in England in 1955 by Victor Gollancz; reissued in 1975 by Sheriar Press. Paperback and cloth.

The Everything and the Nothing by Meher Baba. Discourses given in the late 'fifties and early 'sixties, compiled by Francis Brabazon. Available from Sheriar Press. Paperback.

The Perfect Master by C. B. Purdom. The story of Meher Baba's life up to 1936. First published in England in 1937; reprinted in paperback by Sheriar Press, 1976.

The God-Man by C. B. Purdom. A full and rich biography of Meher Baba up to 1962. Published in England in 1964 and reprinted in 1971 by Sheriar Press. Cloth.

There are many books by and about Meher Baba. For a free booklist or further information contact:

Sheriar Press
3005 Highway 17 ByPass North
Myrtle Beach
South Carolina 29577

"Unless and until man stops seeking escape from his ultimate destination by losing himself in the childish play of illusory pleasures, he cannot grasp spirituality seriously. It is time to stop playing with the scintillating toys of illusion and yearn for the attainment of the One and Only Reality." - Meher Baba